



# Celebrating 25 Years of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation

Treating Both Body & Mind in Primary Care, Beyond



As the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) marks its 25th anniversary, we passionately embrace one of the Foundation's most important lessons of recent years: behavioral health and physical health are intertwined and cannot be treated without regard to the other. For us at JHF, there is only *Health* — a view that informs both our grantmaking and our demonstration projects.

In 2008, JHF researchers discovered that many patients with frequent hospital admissions for chronic diseases also had behavioral health problems like depression and substance use disorders — comorbidities that can make managing a chronic disease very challenging. The finding led JHF to launch a series of demonstration projects — first in Pennsylvania, and then with partners across the U.S. The projects show how people with behavioral health problems can be identified and treated sooner by a team of physical and behavioral health providers in a primary care office.

The first project, Integrating Treatment in Primary Care (ITPC), was launched with support from JHF, The Fine Foundation, and the Staunton Farm Foundation. Trainers and coaches from the University of Washington and JHF's supporting organization, the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), trained

providers at three community health centers to identify and treat depression and reduce unhealthy alcohol and other drug use. The initiative uncovered many barriers to integrating physical and behavioral health care (what we now call "integrated care") — from training to reimbursement. To facilitate the rapid exchange of ideas on overcoming these barriers, the Foundation formed a national network called *Champions for Integrating Care*.

ITPC was followed by Partners in Integrated Care (PIC), with national funding from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. PIC brought integrated care to 57 additional primary care sites in Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts.

Finally, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation granted a Health Care Innovation Award to more than 190 primary care practices supported by partners across eight states. PRHI led the initiative in Pennsylvania. Called the Care of Mental, Physical, and Substance Use Syndromes (COMPASS), the program helped primary care practices better identify and treat their patients with sub-optimally managed depression plus diabetes or cardiovascular disease. Many of the 740 participating patients in Pennsylvania experienced real improvements in their levels of depression, lowered their blood

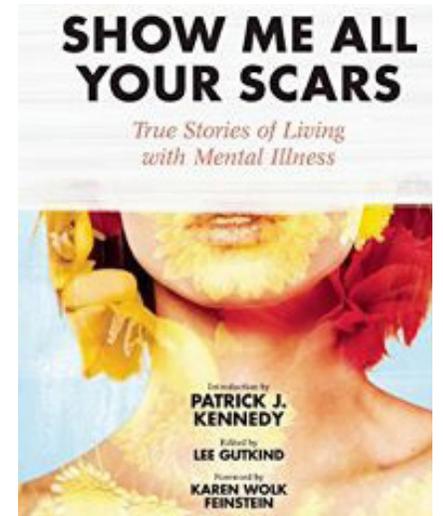
sugar, and controlled previously high blood pressure.

To strengthen behavioral health agencies' ability to use outcome measures to drive improvements, PRHI — in partnership with the Conference of Allegheny Providers (CAP) and Allegheny HealthChoices, Inc. — is piloting a capacity-building training and coaching program for 13 behavioral health organizations on how to collect, measure, and act on data to improve patient outcomes. The Training Center for Outcomes-Based Integration (TCOBI) was launched in the fall of 2015 with funding from the Staunton Farm Foundation.

Recently, JHF published a special edition of its ROOTS magazine which shares successes and lessons learned in integrating behavioral health treatment into primary care settings. *Meeting the Challenge: Behavioral Health Integration in Primary Care* is available under the Publications and Videos section of JHF's website ([jhf.org](http://jhf.org)), and can also be ordered by contacting Carla Barricella ([barricella@jhf.org](mailto:barricella@jhf.org)).

JHF has also partnered with Creative Nonfiction on two collections of essays that explore first-hand accounts of mental health challenges and breakthroughs — both from the perspective of providers (*Same Time Next Week: True Stories of Working Through Mental Illness*)

and patients (*Show Me All Your Scars: True Stories of Living with Mental Illness*).



Today, JHF is preparing to launch a multi-partner initiative in our region to understand and respond to grievous shortcomings in the availability of diagnostic and treatment support for teens with behavioral health problems. Behavioral health issues among adolescents may be accurately described as a public health crisis.

Nationally, 21% of 13-to-18 year olds experience a seriously debilitating mental disorder, and 46% experience a mental disorder. There are also high rates of suicidal and self-harm thoughts. Yet, less than half receive mental health treatment when needed and even fewer receive treatment for substance abuse.

Most of us are only one or two degrees separation from a troubled adolescent. For frightened parents, the numerous challenges range from knowing when to seek help, to navigating a confusing healthcare system, to actually finding openings among local behavior healthcare specialists. In the months and years ahead, JHF is determined to be part of the solution.



Sheila Fine (left), co-founder of The Fine Foundation and founder of LEAD Pittsburgh, and Staunton Farm Foundation Executive Director Joni Schwager (right) are strong advocates for integrated physical and behavioral health care and have provided critical support to JHF's efforts in this space.



Learn more about JHF's journey to better health and health care by ordering our 25th Anniversary ROOTS magazine (contact Carla Barricella at: [barricella@jhf.org](mailto:barricella@jhf.org)).