

April 2017

THE WINDOW



A round-up of JHF news, events, milestones, publications, and more.

Health Activist Network Launches with Speakers Series Event Featuring Community Catalyst's Rob Restuccia

Out of college and contemplating whether he should apply for medical school, Rob Restuccia worked as an orderly in a surgical unit at a hospital in San Jose, CA. Restuccia became engrossed in social justice issues as a high school student in Massachusetts, but what he witnessed out west solidified his activist path.

The hospital, lacking air conditioning, baked in the summer. The patients served, primarily uninsured, swam against complex social, financial, and environmental currents.

"I saw the contradiction between what this country aspires to be, and what was happening to people," Restuccia said. "I saw the disparities in health care, and knew that I had to translate it into action."

Restuccia shared that story during the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative's (PRHI) inaugural [Health Activist Network](#) Speakers Series event, held at the ACE Hotel on April 27. During the event, more than 70 attendees engaged in a "fireside chat" with Restuccia—executive director of consumer advocacy organization Community Catalyst—and learned how to mobilize their own campaigns through the Health Activist Network.

The Health Activist Network empowers health

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Health Activist Network



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to create the health system you want



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professionals to create the health system they want to work in by accelerating health policy and care delivery improvements. Through the Network, interdisciplinary health professionals who are passionate about patient safety, quality, and affordability have the opportunity to attend in-person and virtual events, learn from national health reform advisors, and join Champions Programs, which provide tools and training to lead improvements in their work settings. PRHI manages the Health Activist Network, with funding from the DSF Charitable Foundation and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF).

“We have been working on healthcare transformation for 20 years,” said PRHI/JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, while welcoming attendees to the Speakers Series event. “There are three big levers right now that will dramatically change health care: AI, technology/analytics, and new payment models. It’s a brave new world. We’re forming a network with the more than 900 participants from our fellowship and internship programs at the core, but we’re going way beyond that to a national membership. Together, they can create the healthcare system in which they’d want to work.”

Through an interview with Dr. Feinstein and an audience Q&A, Restuccia shared his beginnings as a health activist, strategies for building high-impact campaigns, and advice for nascent activists.

Restuccia played a key role in developing the grassroots movement Health Care For All, which started in Massachusetts and grew into a national template for expanding insurance coverage. At Community Catalyst, Restuccia has guided efforts to expand children’s health insurance, protect consumers’ rights, and strengthen Medicaid, among other initiatives that have taken the organization to more than 40



Community Catalyst Executive Director Rob Restuccia and PRHI/JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, take part in a “fireside chat” with more than 70 attendees of the Health activist Network kickoff event at the ACE Hotel on April 27.



Michael Osnard, a recent MD/MPH graduate from the University of Pittsburgh, asks a question during the Health Activist Network kickoff event.

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states.

During the Speakers Series event, Restuccia explained that Martin Luther King Jr. serves as his inspiration for collaborative, substantive action.

“We try to bring out the best in people, and bring them to the table,” Restuccia said. “Advocacy has emotion and science, and you need to blend the two.”

To launch an effective campaign, Restuccia suggested that Health Activist Network members identify opportunities in which a problem, politics, and policy converge. He also stressed the importance of medical education reforms that emphasize team-based care and community-based work.

“We need to do a better job of engaging consumers at the community level, letting them know that their

voices matter,” Restuccia said. “We won’t change things unless that happens.”

With the Health Activist Network, health professionals have a dedicated space to share, learn, and draw inspiration from their peers. Members will spark conversations in the Health Activist Network forums, form action groups for real-world change, and engage in more Speakers Series events, including a virtual one with Vineet Arora, MD, MAPP, on June 5.

“I have noticed a shift in conversations—QI, patient safety, and policy are being discussed on campus,” said Michael Osnard, a recent MD/MPH graduate from the University of Pittsburgh who joined the Health Activist Network after previously taking part in JHF’s summer internship program and Patient Safety Fellowship. “Student groups are getting active. We’re being heard, and making progress.”

HEALTH ACTIVIST NETWORK MAKING HEADLINES

[“Jewish Healthcare Foundation launches network for young health care professionals”](#) (Pittsburgh Business Times)

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DSF Charitable Foundation Executive Director Nick Beldecos and Robert Ferguson, MPH, JHF/PRHI's director of government grants and policy as well as the manager of the Health Activist Network.



(L-R): Tanya Fabian, PharmD, PhD, director of Pharmacy Research and Pharmacy Services Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic; Rick Cancelliere, CEO of Treatspace and a past member of JHF's QI²T Health Innovators Fellowship; and Karen Feinstein.



During the Speakers Series event, attendees connected with other reform-minded peers and learned how to mobilize their own campaigns through the Health Activist Network.



Jewish Healthcare Foundation Approves \$300,000 Grant to Boost Senior Exercise, Recreation Options

Since its establishment in 1990, JHF has demonstrated a commitment to the physical, psychological, and social well-being of seniors, as well as their caregivers. In 2016, the Foundation launched its *Senior Connections* initiative, which aims to strengthen a suite of service opportunities for older adults, including transportation and housing, exercise and recreation, geriatric-friendly health care, and caregiver supports.

To advance the goals of *Senior Connections*, JHF has approved a two-year, \$300,000 grant to increase opportunities for local seniors to meaningfully engage in a variety of exercise and recreation programs throughout all four seasons. The exercise and recreation initiatives are the result of a community-wide charrette, or planning event, that JHF convened in the summer of 2016 with more than 100 people representing health providers, foundations, environmental and recreational groups, aging organizations, insurers, community service providers, and activist groups. The Foundation will convene future charrettes focused on the other components of Senior Connections.

The multi-faceted approach to help seniors engage in exercise and recreation will include:

- Launching a pilot project to allow seniors of varied abilities to engage in health-focused, guided outings in South Park and Frick Park. The programs in both parks will be designed to appeal to older adults with a wide range of fitness levels and interests. Venture Outdoors and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy are the lead partners in developing programming for the pilot project. JHF has also partnered with AARP to recruit park ambassadors, who will help raise awareness of exercise and recreation opportunities and accompany seniors on such outings.
- Developing a mobile-friendly, senior-friendly application that uses maps, text, and images to highlight curated walks, events, and other attractions focused on a senior audience of varied interests and physical abilities. The application can be used directly by seniors, as well as by healthcare and social service providers. The Allegheny County Parks Foundation and GreenInfo Networks will develop the application. These materials will also be available in print.



Through a JHF-funded pilot project, seniors of varied abilities to will have opportunities to engage in health-focused, guided outings in Frick Park (pictured) and South Park. (Photo credit: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy)

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- Engaging members of the medical community to hold guided walking tours with seniors and their families. Physicians, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, and many other types of healthcare professionals will be recruited to lead the walking tours in conjunction with a Venture Outdoors staff member. The Allegheny County Medical Society and UPMC Rehabilitation Services will assist with recruitment efforts.
- Developing online exercise and recreation programming that seniors can use to stay active during the winter and during inclement weather, and if they are unable to attend in-person activities. The online programming will be housed on JHF's soon-to-be-launched Virtual Senior Academy, a platform which connects community-dwelling seniors to interactive online classes and a peer network.
- Creating communications materials that emphasize the importance of exercise and recreation on the health and well-being of older adults. JHF will partner with the Allegheny County Health Department and its Live Well Allegheny campaign to develop the senior-focused health messaging.

SENIOR CONNECTIONS MAKING HEADLINES

[“Seniors: It’s Time to Get Outside and Move”](#) (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

JHF will serve as the convener for all *Senior Connections* recreation and exercise activities, and will also establish an advisory board of local experts to guide the initiative.

JHF Stress Tests New Model to Help Adolescents, Families Experiencing a Behavioral Health Crisis

Back in [January of 2017](#), JHF brought together a broad swathe of stakeholders to create a 2017-18 community action plan focused on strengthening the Pittsburgh region’s capacity for responding to behavioral health crises among adolescents. Since then, JHF has worked to synthesize the ideas and service barriers identified during that strategic visioning meeting into a demonstration project, to be piloted in the community later this year. The pilot project aims to expand crisis services in the community, reduce the time from the onset of a mental health or substance use crisis to



On April 18, local behavioral health service providers and advocates gathered at the Allegheny County Emergency Operations Center to learn more about a pilot project that JHF is developing to expand crisis services in the community.

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stabilization and recovery, and provide comfort to adolescent and parents through trying times.

On April 18, JHF invited some of the region's leading adolescent behavioral health service providers and advocates to "stress test" the pilot project model during an interactive meeting within Allegheny County's Emergency Operations Center. Attendees evaluated how the pilot project could reduce the time from the onset of a behavioral health crisis to stabilization, improve the adolescents' and families' experience, and reduce ER visits and inpatient admissions.

"Back in 2001, many of us gathered here after 9/11 to develop a plan to protect Pittsburgh from the threat of bioterrorism," said Karen Feinstein while welcoming attendees to the April 18 event. "Our goal is to treat problems with young adults in crises with the same urgency."

The simulation meeting was part of JHF's [Adolescent Behavioral Health Initiative](#) (ABHI), a community-wide effort launched in 2016 to improve access to effective services from crisis to stabilization for adolescents experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis in Allegheny County. The ABHI is guided by a 40-member advisory group and funded by JHF, the Staunton Farm Foundation, and The Pittsburgh Foundation.

During the April 18 event, ABHI Manager Kevin Beckovich, MBA, explained that JHF is developing the components of the demonstration model by observing local crisis to stabilization services, organizing focus groups with adolescents and parents, [collecting stories](#) from parents, and crunching data.

Beckovich unveiled key components of the demonstration model. He explained how it would offer walk-in crisis, assessment, and stabilization services; employ a peer family partner who would follow up with the adolescent and caregiver until a resolution is reached; and use common measurement tools to drive continuous improvement.

"It would also have a calming, respectful environment where adolescents and families can receive the resources they need to address this crisis in their lives," Beckovich said.

Ideally located in a neighborhood with a high volume on behavioral health-related calls, the model would

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Adolescent Behavioral Health Initiative Manager Kevin Beckovich, MBA, explains JHF's findings from observations of local crisis to stabilization services for adolescents.

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serve as an alternative to emergency department drop-offs and have a referral process for those experiencing an acute behavioral health crisis.

JHF Unveils new HIV Regional Needs Assessment for southwestern PA

As the fiscal agent for state and federal HIV/AIDS funding in southwestern PA, JHF is committed to partnering with consumers and providers to enhance the quality of HIV/AIDS services in the 11-county region. To further that mission, the Foundation recently completed a multi-pronged [HIV Regional Needs Assessment](#), compiled through a survey of 120 consumers in southwestern PA who receive HIV/AIDS services through the Ryan White program, interviews with local providers, and a literature review.

On April 4, HIV Planning and Evaluation Coordinator Chris Garnett, MSS, shared the assessment's key results—and the Foundation's plans to operationalize them—with members of the Regional HIV Strategic Collaborative. The Collaborative, launched by JHF in 2014, features healthcare providers, researchers, health department officials, and consumers who share the goal of continuously improving HIV/AIDS services in southwestern Pennsylvania.

During the meeting, Garnett explained that the new needs assessment centered on age, race, gender, and geographical disparities in HIV care, as well as barriers to access and provision of services. The needs assessment explored issues including primary care, HIV medications and adherence, housing, substance use and mental health treatment, HIV risk reduction, HIV knowledge and resources, and aging.

Garnett said that consumers surveyed were largely happy with their primary care (more than 93% rated their care as “good” or better). About half of consumers indicated that the most important component of their care is engaging with health providers who are culturally competent and understand the particular needs of HIV-positive individuals. About 40% of consumers rated having easily accessible HIV/AIDS services as their top concern.

The consumer survey also uncovered some service and policy barriers, Garnett noted. Consumers in rural areas of southwestern PA may have particular difficulty in accessing HIV/AIDS specialty care. About 40% of consumers indicated that they have trouble securing affordable housing, due to issues that include stringent eligibility requirements that may disqualify those with a criminal background or credit

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JHF's HIV Planning and Evaluation Coordinator Chris Garnett, MSS.

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problems, waiting lists, and overall escalating housing costs in the region. About 88% struggle to pay their rent, mortgage, and utilities.

Garnett said that many providers also expressed concerns about a lack of affordable housing near HIV/AIDS care, and advocated for greater access to harm reduction services. Providers also noted challenges in engaging young HIV-positive patients in care, and in helping older patients navigate issues such as treatment fatigue, isolation, and depression.

Garnett explained that JHF will use the findings of the Regional Needs Assessment to implement new learning and technical assistance sessions for HIV/AIDS stakeholders in between the quarterly HIV Collaborative meetings. The goal, Garnett said, is to learn what service providers need to build on existing strengths and capitalize on opportunities identified in the needs assessment.

After the regional needs assessment presentation, AIDS Free Pittsburgh (AFP) Project Manager Julia Och shared how several members of AFP made their voices heard on a national stage during AIDSWatch 2017, held in Washington, DC on March 27-28. During AIDSWatch, AFP partners ALPHA Pittsburgh, Coordinated Care Network Pharmacy, and Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force joined with more than 650 people from across the U.S. to advocate for increased access to HIV prevention and care, and meet with legislators to educate them on issues including healthcare programs, housing, quality sexual health education, HIV criminalization, and the federal response to the HIV epidemic. AFP members joined the Pennsylvania AIDSWatch delegation, which also included colleagues from Philadelphia AIDS service organizations and the advocacy group ACT UP Philly.



Pennsylvania representatives who attended AIDSWatch 2017, held in Washington, DC on March 27-28.

Launched in late 2015, AFP is a coalition of government agencies, healthcare institutions, and community-based organizations working together to eliminate new AIDS diagnoses in Allegheny County and reduce new HIV infections by 75% by 2020. AFP is financially supported by the Allegheny Singer Research Institute (Allegheny Health Network) and UPMC Presbyterian Shadyside, and is managed by JHF.

PRHI Board Envisions Future of Health Systems Board Governance

Through a February 2017 event that it hosted and a national presentation at the Pay for Performance Summit in March, PRHI has explored the systems, structure, and culture needed to transform health system boards into a strategy-setting competitive asset. During a meeting on April 26, PRHI continued the conversation by challenging its board members to envision the future governance structures of healthcare organizations from across the competitive spectrum.

During the meeting, PRHI board members broke into three groups. Two groups focused on boards for a large consolidated health system network, while the other focused on boards for a regional network of independent organizations. All groups discussed how they would prepare their board for alternative payment models, activated consumers, technological breakthroughs, and care delivery/workforce changes in a total cost of care environment.



On April 26, PRHI Board members (L-R) Jay Srinivasan, MBA, MS, Chief Strategist of SCS Ventures; Theresa Brown, BSN, RN, PhD, a clinical nurse and author; Donald S. Burke, MD, dean of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health; JHF Board Chair Nancy L. Rackoff, JD, member at Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC; and David Blandino, MD, a physician at East Liberty Family Health Center discuss the future of health systems boards at the QI²T Center.

“Pink and Blue” Film Screening, Panel Discussion during JFilm Festival Explore BRCA Risks, Options

For nearly a quarter of a century, the JFilm Festival has showcased Jewish-themed films from around the world and complemented them with thought-provoking supplemental programs. On April 23 at the Manor Theatre, JFilm attendees took in a screening of “Pink and Blue: Colors of Hereditary Cancer” and a post-film panel discussion featuring JHF COO/CPO Nancy Zions, MBA as well as Bryna Siegel Finer, PhD, peer support group co-leader of Pittsburgh FORCE (Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered), and Jamie Stern, MD, MPH, clinical associate professor of medicine at UPMC.

“Pink and Blue” explores the clinical, social, and familial implications of BRCA1 and BRCA2 genetic mutations, which put both women and men at a higher risk of developing numerous cancers. JHF and JFilm have partnered to make “Pink and Blue” available to audiences throughout the Pittsburgh region. Without treatment, women who have a BRCA genetic mutation are seven times more likely to develop breast cancer and 30 times more likely to develop ovarian cancer by the age of 70, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. BRCA mutations may also increase the risk of pancreatic,

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prostate, and breast cancer among men. Ashkenazi Jews are at a higher risk of possessing BRCA genetic mutations than the general population.

During the panel discussion, Zionts explained that the community film screenings of “Pink and Blue” are designed to promote empowerment through education about genetic risks and opportunities for early intervention. The film is available for additional screenings, and she encourages anyone who would like to get a copy of “Pink and Blue” for screenings (e.g., for consumer groups, healthcare providers or community members) to get in touch with JFilm or JHF.



Bryna Siegel Finer, PhD, peer support group co-leader of Pittsburgh FORCE (Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered); Jamie Stern, MD, MPH, clinical associate professor of medicine at UPMC; and JHF COO/CPO Nancy Zionts, MBA.

In addition to Dr. Finer’s role with Pittsburgh FORCE, she is an assistant professor of English at Indiana University of Pennsylvania who focuses on how “previvors”—women with genetic breast cancer mutations—use writing to push for cultural and policy change. She explained how knowing her own BRCA status helped save her life, and inspired her to become a health activist.

Dr. Stern discussed how “Pink and Blue” highlighted that breast cancer is not solely a women’s issue. She stressed the importance of engaging men in breast cancer education, screening, and treatment. Dr. Stern also noted the importance of family histories, and encouraging certain patients at a higher risk for mutations to have genetic testing. Dr. Stern requested a copy of “Pink and Blue” to help train UPMC residents who are learning more about patient-physician communication and women’s health issues.

Karen Feinstein, Public Stakeholders Committee Work to Make NBME Tests and Tools Patient-Focused

For more than a century, the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) has developed tests and tools to ensure that healthcare professionals are prepared to deliver quality care to patients. But how does the NBME ensure that these assessments reflect the needs and concerns of today’s healthcare consumers?

That’s where the NBME’s Public Stakeholders Committee enters the picture. The Public Stakeholders Committee is a subset of the larger, approximately 80-member NBME, which features academics,

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government representatives, licensing professionals, and community advocates. In 2015, Dr. Feinstein was elected to a four-year term as a member-at-large of the NBME.

On April 5-6, Karen Feinstein and the 13 other national leaders who comprise the Public Stakeholders Committee gathered at the NBME offices in Philadelphia, PA. During the meeting, the committee met with new NBME President Peter J. Katsufakis, MD, MBA, and discussed how the NBME can engage healthcare professionals and the public around issues such as improving end-of-life care, addressing healthcare disparities, and strengthening patient-provider communication.



JHF Partner from Israel Featured at Health Datapalooza

On April 27, a leading figure in Israel's journey toward safer, higher-quality, and more patient-directed care was a featured speaker during AcademyHealth's 2017 Health Datapalooza in Washington, DC. Ran Balicer, MD, PhD, MPH, chief physician office of Clalit Health Services and director of the Clalit Research Institute, has collaborated with JHF on a cross-national learning partnership to improve healthcare safety in quality in Israel and in the U.S.

JHF-CLALIT PARTNERSHIP FEATURED IN THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

["Creating a Safer Culture"](#) (Jewish Chronicle)

During Health Datapalooza, Dr. Balicer took part in a panel on using data to drive hospital performance and also delivered a presentation on personalizing clinical trial data. Health Datapalooza

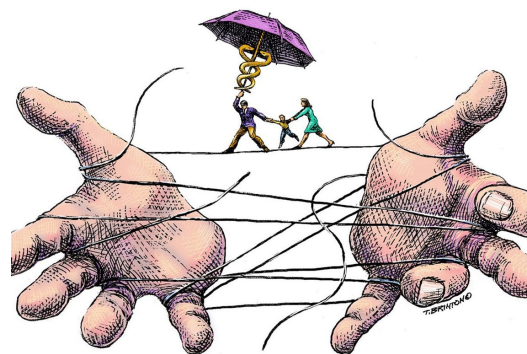


Ran Balicer, MD, PhD, MPH, chief physician office of Clalit Health Services and director of the Clalit Research Institute, presents during Health Datapalooza.

brings together an audience of more than 1,500 public and private-sector leaders to explore the latest trends in collecting, analyzing, sharing, and acting upon healthcare information.

PRHI Founding Director Featured in the P-G

Ken Segel, managing director of Value Capture LLC and PRHI's founding director, recently published an [op-ed in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) on the importance of moving beyond ideology in conversations about healthcare reform.



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