



**March 2021 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more**

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## Senior Living Full Court Press Team Explores Residential Care Models

On March 4, the Senior Living Full Court Press (FCP) Team met to discuss senior residential living models and to advance plans for the Teaching Research Nursing Home Pilot Project introduced at the last meeting by Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN, President and CEO of the John A. Hartford Foundation.

A range of stakeholders from academic nursing and geriatrics programs, long-term care providers, and health systems led a review of the model and its benefits.



Jackie Dunbar-Jacob, Dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing emphasized the great educational opportunities that the model would create. Nursing students would gain a better understanding of patients' needs in long-term care and engage in quality improvement projects, she said, while students and faculty could serve as patient and staff educators.

Valerie Njie drew from her experience with the Bidwell Training Center to note the importance of creating career pathways for long-term care health workers. In particular, certified nursing assistants could climb the ladder and feel more valued if on-the-job training were made available through a teaching nursing home.

Bobbie Gray, Senior Director of Presbyterian Senior Care noted that the model offers opportunities for professional development in nursing and to advance innovations in healthcare, such as telehealth, increased mobility, and more efficient prescribing.

Molly Langford, Senior Director of Clinical Practice at Genesis Physician Services drew focus to the opportunity to translate metrics into good, evidence-based practice. The model could improve patient care and unite the entire care team.

David Nace, Chief Medical Officer at UPMC Senior Communities said that teaching nursing homes could support research on best practices for real-world care and could help healthcare workers apply knowledge at the bedside. In addition, the model is advantageous to hospitals, he said, because it allows greater information sharing when transferring patients between facilities.

In smaller groups, the team delved further into the logistics of how to operationalize the pilot project in three regions of the Commonwealth of PA. Team members provided advice on how to refine the structure, activities, and key players to be included in this model.

As a follow up to the previous Senior Living Full Court Press Team meeting, JHF COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts presented a series of promising senior residential care models and suggested building blocks that illustrate how each model could best serve different subsets of the senior population. Nancy noted that there are currently few options for those of middle income. The suggested new models include: PACE models, smart homes, greenhouses, intergenerational and campus-based housing, and continuing care retirement communities.

Future discussions will focus on the teaching nursing homes model, which will advance thanks to JHF's partnerships with the John A. Hartford Foundation and schools of health professions across Pennsylvania.

## National Experts Bring Insights to Patient Safety Full Court Press Team

On March 30, the Patient Safety Full Court Press Team heard from several national experts on the opportunity to apply the aviation industry's safety model to health care, using electronic health records, data collection, and cutting-edge technology to support the proposed National Patient and Provider Safety Authority (NPSA).

From MITRE, Senior Principal Wally Feerrar spoke on how the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing (ASIAS) Program built trust and a culture of sharing safety data in the aviation industry. Wally listed the ingredients of success, including federal and industry partnerships, voluntary participation, transparency, and using de-identified data to support this culture and successfully prevent accidents.



*The Patient Safety Full Court Press Team met and discussed the proposed NPSA.*

MITRE's Deputy FFRDC Director Lisa Tutterow then shared results from a research project with several children's hospitals, which showed that the aviation industry model has great potential to reduce adverse events in health care, save lives, and avoid injuries, as well as save health care costs and reduce waste and inefficiency. Lisa emphasized that having a neutral, trusted third party in these projects to manage data and sensitive information was crucial for success.

Lisa Simpson, CEO of AcademyHealth introduced Lee Fleisher, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Director of Center for Clinical Standards and Quality, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Lee spoke on current and future aspirations to collect reliable data for patient safety indicators at CMS. Lee noted the path to the future will include harnessing and expanding high quality clinical data and using technology to leverage and retrieve the data already collected through electronic health records automatically, to reduce burden on clinicians.

José-Alain Sahel, MD, Distinguished Professor and Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine then spoke on “digital twin” technology and how it can be used to inform diagnoses and prescription and treatment decision making for better, safer care. The patient-centered “digital twin” technology creates a model of an individual patient that can simulate diagnostics and outcomes of various therapies, to provide individualized treatment and safety monitoring. This can inform decisions of both the clinician and the patient and contribute to a data pool that benefits each subsequent patient who would use the technology.

JHF Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson then introduced Regina Hoffman, MBA, RN, Executive Director of the Patient Safety Authority, who spoke about the role of patient safety authorities and patient safety organizations, and the role of the patient safety databases network. Regina echoed earlier comments about the importance of independent patient safety organizations in their capacity to develop relationships. She said that a NPSA that supports automated data collection and monitoring would resolve current issues with relying on human reporting of events.

Overall, the session emphasized the great potential for an NPSA to fill a national gap in patient safety monitoring and reporting, and that existing and upcoming technology innovations can support this proposed infrastructure.

To build on the meeting’s discussion, JHF President and CEO Karen Feinstein would like to collect responses on two questions:

**What are the best, reliable, respected patient safety indicators?**

**What other data sources, in addition to EHRs, should we be mining for patient safety indicators?**

Responses can be sent to Robert Ferguson at [ferguson@jhf.org](mailto:ferguson@jhf.org).

## Maternity Full Court Press Reviews Proposed Federal “Momnibus”

On March 31, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation Maternity Full Court Press Team met to discuss the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021 and its implications for Pennsylvania.

Women’s Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal) Community Engagement and Policy Associate Morgan Overton led an overview of the Momnibus. Overton reviewed how the Momnibus would improve maternal health outcomes and equity. Proposed initiatives include strategic investments in community-based programs and social determinants of health; new studies and more comprehensive data collection; expanding the perinatal workforce; support for maternal mental health conditions, substance use





disorders, incarcerated moms, Native American moms, and maternal vaccinations; and innovation in digital tools and payment models.

Nan Strauss, Managing Director of Policy, Advocacy and Grantmaking at Every Mother Counts provided a brief update on advocacy at the federal level. Strauss said that Every Mother Counts has focused their advocacy on the twelve bills and related issues included in the Momnibus, and that the most crucial work focuses on equity and accountability in maternal health.

A state legislative panel followed, featuring Majority Whip [Representative Donna Oberlander](#), Women's Health Caucus Co-Chair [Senator Judy Schwank](#), and Women's Health Caucus Co-Chair [Rep. Mary Jo Daley](#). Jewish Healthcare Foundation Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson moderated the panel.

The panelists commented on the Momnibus and its implications for Pennsylvania and discussed the opportunities in Pennsylvania to advance the Full Court Press agenda, to modernize midwifery, certify and reimburse doulas and perinatal community health workers, and increase enrollment in the WIC Program and connections to wraparound services.

The panel was followed by a discussion among the entire Maternal Health Full Court Press Team to explore how the provisions of the Momnibus related to team members' work, how the Full Court Press could help to advance the Momnibus, and how current work in Pennsylvania reflects the Momnibus and could inform the Full Court Press Team's work.

The team noted a great need to help people improve their health and quality of life before pregnancy through diet and health coaching, and to support health after pregnancy through one year postpartum. They noted how both the Momnibus and the Full Court Press's provisions support these goals through workforce development, social determinants of health, and extended eligibility.

The team also discussed how the Momnibus and Full Court Press can help establish respectful care and address implicit bias in maternal health care. They explained how doulas can fill an advocate role and serve as a buffer between patient and provider, and how a more diversified workforce will also support more respectful patient encounters. Overall, they called for greater education, attention, and accountability on this issue.

## 2021 Death and Dying Fellowship Concludes

The all-virtual 2021 Jewish Healthcare Foundation Death and Dying Fellowship concluded its nine-session run on March 22. The Fellowship takes on the challenge that professionals are not well prepared to deal with death, dying, and grieving families, especially during an era of COVID-19. This year's Fellowship enabled 36 fellows to learn, confront, and discuss the legal, medical, social, cultural, familial, and spiritual aspects of death and dying within a multi-disciplinary group in a low-pressure environment. The 2021 Fellowship also took advantage of a virtual world's opportunities, as the program welcomed speakers from outside of Pittsburgh.



*The 2021 Death and Dying Fellowship concluded on March 22.*

During the finale session, Dr. Robert Arnold, Chief Section of Palliative Care and Medical Ethics at the University of Pittsburgh presented to help fellows establish how they can have better conversations about end of life. He discussed the importance of improving skills through practice, expert guidance, and developing an understanding of yourself as a provider.

The fellows then went into breakout sessions to practice end of life conversations using case studies, with feedback from expert facilitators.

The session closed with reflections from fellows, staff, and guest faculty, who discussed how the fellowship has impacted their work.

"My time with the Death and Dying Fellowship has been an eye-opening experience to the current discussions and topics surrounding death and dying, especially in the COVID-19 world," said Noah Dimas, PhD student of Catholic Healthcare Ethics at Duquesne University. "I am very grateful to the JHF for allowing me to experience this fellowship and I look forward to utilizing these skills and knowledge I gained as I venture further into my studies in Healthcare Ethics."

## Transportation Industry Partners Inform National Patient Safety Policy Proposal

A few months into the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF)'s [Full Court Press initiative](#), we are optimistic about the progress toward a National Patient and Provider Safety Authority (NPSA), in part due to support and information from new partners in the transportation industry. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has done for the transportation industry what we aspire to do for health care: create an ongoing improvement trajectory of increasing safety. Having one central federal agency focused on safety appears to be a “missing link” for health care.



*Chairman Robert Sumwalt and Dr. Hassan Shahidi*

The NTSB has for decades successfully applied autonomous technologies and safety principles to prevent accidents. By collaborating on investigations and sharing data among partner agencies, key stakeholders in the aviation industry, for instance, anticipate mishaps and make corrective actions. We have sought guidance from two top leaders in transportation safety: NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt and Dr. Hassan Shahidi, President and CEO of the Flight Safety Foundation, who have been our guiding lights as we advance policy for an NPSA.

The NPSA Full Court Press Team was honored to have Chairman Sumwalt as a guest speaker during a recent meeting. Chairman Sumwalt shared information on the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)'s structure and functions, emphasizing the benefit of the federal agency's independence in its ability to investigate adverse transportation events. In-depth, impartial, multi-disciplinary investigations are crucial components in building powerful solutions with credibility, Chairman Sumwalt noted.

NTSB relies on ASIAs to collect critical data essential to its investigations. While at MITRE, Dr. Shahidi helped to create ASIAs, the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing program sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration. With its predecessor the Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST), ASIAs supported a ten-year aviation safety overhaul. By adopting new technology, data sharing, and a non-punitive approach, the programs achieved an 80% reduction of accidents and revolutionized the industry's safety reporting infrastructure.

ASIAs has already inspired a similar approach in the auto industry (the National Highway Safety Administration, launched through MITRE) and presents an applicable model for health care. We are grateful to both Chairman Sumwalt and Dr. Shahidi for their insights, which have greatly informed our understanding of policy to create a positive trajectory of safety in health care.

## The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle is as Important as Ever

When Jim Busis took over the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle in 2012, it was on the verge of collapse. Faced with a number of challenges, including a constantly-evolving media landscape, the paper was failing. It was time to rethink how the Chronicle did its reporting, how it served the community, and how it operated its business. After a near-decade of organizational restructuring, thanks to Busis' leadership, the Chronicle has established its place as a critical local media service in the community.



These changes fostered a culture of constant innovation and flexibility that have enabled the Chronicle to cover two enormous community crises in two years: the shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue and its aftermath, which remained ongoing almost right up until the COVID-19 pandemic began. The insightful reporting provided by the Chronicle throughout this time has demonstrated the value of an inquisitive local news source that shares community narratives through a Jewish lens.

"There are more stories than you can possibly cover... it has been a nonstop marathon for us over the past two-and-a-half years," said Jim Busis, CEO of the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle. "I'm enormously proud of our staff. I'm enormously proud of them for soldiering through this time. We've tried our best to cover a broad range of stories of things that people want and need to know in the community."

On top of these catastrophes that have impacted every aspect of life, the Chronicle continues to navigate an ever-evolving landscape of challenges. COVID-19 has put a financial burden on all media services, and the Chronicle is no exception. But in an era of excess disinformation, the value of a reputable voice for local, national, and international news has never been so critical. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) relies more heavily on the Chronicle's local reporting than ever before, and, as part of JHF's COVID-19 Emergency Fund, the Foundation [recently provided the Chronicle with a two-year grant](#) to help address shortfalls in funding due to COVID-19's impact.

During the pandemic, owing to their exceptional reporting of these crises, the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle was invited to apply for the inaugural Jewish Journalism Fellowship by the [Maimonides Fund](#), a yearlong program designed to help local Jewish news outlets thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century media landscape. In February [it was announced](#) they were one of just five Jewish publications from across the nation to be accepted. This fellowship, along with Busis' leadership and his strong staff, the Chronicle will continue to adapt to the ever-evolving needs of the community and effectively reach Pittsburghers.



“It’s often said in Pittsburgh, and it maybe sounds a little trite, but it’s absolutely true that this Jewish community is unique in how well we all play together and how closely knit we are,” said Busis. “Throughout this crisis, from our perspective where we are working with organizations and trying to write news stories about them, I am just so happy that we get along so well together. It makes us more effective for our partners in the community. It is a terrific aspect of Pittsburgh.”

## National Patient & Provider Safety Authority in the News

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is drawing attention to the Full Court Press proposal for a National Patient and Provider Safety Authority (NPSA) in local and national media.

Read JHF President and CEO Karen Feinstein’s op-ed on the NPSA in the Pittsburgh Business times [here](#).

Through news outlet Mediaplanet, the NPSA was also featured in a USA TODAY publication on patient safety at the end of March. Read the article [here](#).



*The Mediaplanet/USA TODAY publication cover*

## Long-term Care COVID-19 Vaccine Webinars Draws Over 1000

In an effort to reduce COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, the Commonwealth has asked the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) to hold statewide webinars for long-term care facility employees and employees of the Office of Developmental Programs as part of [JHF's involvement](#) in the [Regional Congregate Care Assistance Teams](#) (RCAT) program. In March, JHF's latest vaccines webinars featured speakers from the Departments of Health, Developmental Programs and Human Services, as well as consumers and providers who stressed the importance of encouraging healthcare workers to become fully vaccinated to protect themselves and those they serve. These webinars attracted over 1000 attendees. The webinar for long term care and skilled nursing facilities also featured the long-awaited guidance and examples of how to safely reopen facilities to family visitors, many of whom had not been able to see relatives in over a year!



## Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative Promotes 10 COVID-19 Vaccine Tips

The [Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative](#) is promoting COVID-19 vaccines across the Southwestern Pennsylvania region with ten important messages:

### COVID-19 Vaccine Top Ten Tips

1. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.
2. Register for a vaccine when it is your turn. For more information, visit [www.pa.gov/guides/get-vaccinated/](http://www.pa.gov/guides/get-vaccinated/).
3. Seniors and adults with disabilities can contact PA Link for help: call 1-800-753-8827
4. The COVID-19 vaccine is free for you.
5. Only share personal, insurance, and financial information with those you trust.
6. You may need to show proof of age or eligibility.
7. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection.
8. Complete the full vaccine course your provider recommends for the best protection.
9. Continue to wear a mask and keep physical distance in public, for now.
10. Share this with a neighbor or friend!

### COVID-19 Vaccine Top Ten Tips



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COVID-19 vaccines are **safe and effective**.

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You may need to show proof of age or eligibility.

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You may have some side effects, which are **normal** signs that your body is building protection.

8.

Complete the full vaccine course your provider recommends for the best protection.

9.

Continue to wear a **mask** and keep **physical distance** in public, for now.

10.

**Share this with a neighbor or friend!**

These messages are part of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Contact Tracing Consortium's campaign to reach Pennsylvanians eligible for the vaccine.

The Southwestern PA COVID-19 Contact Tracing Consortium was launched by the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) in May 2020 as the first regional consortium to support contact tracing in the Commonwealth, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Allegheny County Health Department. The consortium is made up of over 100 members, which include community-based organizations, health organizations, counties, and social service agencies, among others. The consortium is managed by PRHI and JHF and is possible due to the support from the Henry L. Hillman Foundation. Most recently, the consortium's work has shifted to support promotion of COVID-19 vaccines in the SWPA region.

## Town Hall Raises Awareness of Maternal Health and Medicaid Barriers

On March 11, the Philadelphia-based PA Prenatal to 3 Collaborative, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, and Maternity Care Coalition of Philadelphia held a Maternal Health Town Hall.

The event featured Representative Morgan Cephas, who was joined by moderators Simone Snead, MPH, CLC, Maternal Mortality Review Community

Action Team Coordinator at the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and Morgan Overton, MSW, Community Engagement and Policy Associate at [WHAMglobal](#) of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation.

Simone Snead and Morgan Overton moderated discussion among a panel of community members who have given birth. The panelists shared their experiences and spoke to barriers they encountered while enrolled in Medicaid during pregnancy and throughout the pregnancy and postpartum experience. The panelists called for greater advocacy in healthcare systems to address daily instances of discrimination and implicit bias, for greater coverage and Medicaid reimbursement for doula services, and for expanded access to behavioral health providers of color.

Representative Cephas closed out the event by advocating for a more accessible and empowering maternal health system for Pennsylvanians. She noted how the COVID-19 pandemic created an opportunity to rethink the U.S. maternal health system and how pre-pandemic disparities have persisted alongside disparities in access to COVID-19 supports throughout the past year. Representative Cephas called for Pennsylvania to extend pregnancy Medicaid for a full year postpartum, to increase insurance coverage, and to expand the workforce for midwives, doulas, and community health workers. Representative Cephas to promote equitable maternal health outcomes and improve the health and well-being of PA families.

A recording of the session can be viewed [here](#).

**PENNSYLVANIA PRENATAL TO 3 TOWN HALL ON MATERNAL HEALTH**

Thursday, March 11, 2021 from 11am - 12:30pm

**DID YOU USE MEDICAID AS YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE DURING A RECENT PREGNANCY?**

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.**

**Featuring:**  
Representative  
Morgan Cephas

**Moderator:**  
Simone Snead, MPH,  
CLC

**Moderator:**  
Morgan Overton

Register today at [bit.ly/maternalhealthtownhall](https://bit.ly/maternalhealthtownhall)



## Jewish Healthcare Foundation Amplifies WIC and Doula Work

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) staff presented during the March 16-18 National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference, co-sponsored by Feeding America and the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC). JHF Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson and Global Health Associate Hanifa Nakiryowa presented on JHF's work with WIC. They highlighted how JHF convened the first-ever [Pennsylvania WIC Stakeholders' Collaborative Summit](#) in October, and they shared JHF's Full Court Press policy priorities for WIC. These include supporting the establishment of regional WIC action groups to address region-specific needs.



On March 24, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation joined with the [National Council of Jewish Women Pittsburgh Section](#), the [Jewish Women's Foundation of Greater Pittsburgh](#), and the [Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh](#) to present an event, "[Doulas... The More You Know!](#)"

The panel discussion presented information about the role of doulas in improving maternal health outcomes and how they provide critical support to Pittsburgh's moms and families including support for perinatal loss. Panelists included:

Brandy Gentry, Founder and Executive Director of Oli's Angels Birth and Bereavement Services and a certified birth and bereavement doula; Heather Bradley, Director of Pittsburgh Doula Network and Executive Director of Pittsburgh Bereavement Doulas; and Katie Hyre, Project Coordinator at AHN Center for Inclusion Health for immigrant and refugee doula services.

Dr. Tammy Murdock, MD, MMM, OB/GYN at Squirrel Hill Health Center moderated the panel.

## Summer Patient Safety Fellowship Applications Open

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation's 2021 Patient Safety Fellowship will offer a unique curriculum to explore the challenges and opportunities facing senior residential living and senior care. After the disruption of COVID-19, options for seniors must embrace creative solutions that help individuals age well and safely in a range of settings. Fellows, working across disciplines, will explore existing and conceptional models for transforming our community and healthcare systems that maximize quality of life for seniors and families. [Apply by May 9.](#)

