



November 2021 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more

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2021 Salk Health Activist Fellowship Concludes

The Salk Health Activist Fellowship wrapped on November 16, culminating in a program featuring presentations by fellows and remarks from esteemed experts in public health. The fellowship encouraged the next generation of health leaders to reimagine the U.S. public health system with technology upgrades, empowered leadership, and lessons gleaned from past and current public health movements. The 27 fellows learned from inspirational thought leaders and collaborated with peers to develop updated solutions for population health problems and public health inequities. Fellows also added new skills to their activist toolkits as they considered the politics of institutionalizing change.



2021 Salk Fellows

Throughout the fellowship, participants explored the challenges and opportunities within regional, state, and national public health systems, even borrowing from global best practices. Sessions covered HIV/AIDS and autism activism, COVID-19 vaccine organizing, behavioral science, data analytics, and the latest in technological applications for health care and public health. In small groups, fellows collaborated to design new, innovative solutions to public health problems. Fellows pitched their ideas during the finale to panelists Deborah Bogen, MD, director of the Allegheny County Health Department, and John Auerbach, MBA, director of intergovernmental and strategic affairs at the CDC.

Fellow Sarah McKendry, a student in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program and a graduate research assistant at the University of Pittsburgh, said, “[The Fellowship] has certainly given me a better idea of how I might contribute to activism, and consequently made the idea of being an activist that much more doable.”

Keynote speaker Arjun Srinivasan, MD (CAPT, USPHS), associate director for healthcare-associated infection prevention programs in the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, spoke on Building Back to Normal.

The fellows pitched solutions for addressing patient safety, medical mistrust, access to health care, nutrition communication, expanding postpartum care, rural food insecurity and healthcare access, coordination of community resources, and social media public health misinformation.

Fellow Caroline Passerello, MS, RD, LDN, community coordinator and instructor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences dietitian nutritionist program, said of her fellowship experience, “One change for me is thinking about being an activist every day in small ways, when the opportunity arises. I’ll be searching for more opportunities and not just waiting for the ‘next big one.’”

Thank you to the guest speakers featured throughout the fellowship sessions:

Vincent Mor, PhD, MEd, Florence Pirce Grant University Professor, Professor of Health Services, Policy and Practice, Brown University School of Public Health

Gretchen Chapman, PhD, Head and Professor of Social and Decision Sciences, Carnegie Mellon University

Luciana Randall, MRC, Executive Director, Autism Connection of Pennsylvania

Joseph Vernon Smith, Autism Advocate and Photographer

Elizabeth Miller, MD, PhD, FSAHM, Professor of Pediatrics, Public Health and Clinical and Translational Science; Edmund R. McCluskey Chair in Pediatric Medical Education; Division Director, Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, University of Pittsburgh

Roni Rosenfeld, PhD, MSc, Head of the Machine Learning Department; Professor of Machine Learning, Language Technologies, Computer Science, and Computational Biology, Carnegie Mellon University

Divya Venkat, MD, Inclusion Health Track Director, Center for Inclusion Health, Allegheny Health Network

Everette James, JD, MBA, Director, Health Policy Institute, University of Pittsburgh

Carlye Lauff, PhD, Assistant Professor of Product Design, University of Minnesota; Principal, Carlye Lauff Consulting LLC; Senior Instructor, LUMA Institute

Donald S. Burke, MD, Distinguished University Professor of Health Science and Policy, Jonas Salk Chair in Population Health, University of Pittsburgh

Judith Monroe, MD, President and CEO, CDC Foundation

Michael Seltzer, Distinguished Lecturer, Baruch College

Sheila Taylor, Community Member

Crystal Morrison, PhD, MS, Co-Founder, Meerkat Village; Founder and CEO, EverRise LLC

Audrey Russo, MPA, President and CEO, Pittsburgh Technology Council

Dan Swayze, DrPH, MBA, MEMS, Vice President of Community Services, UPMC Health Plan; Director of Operations, UPMC Innovative Homecare Solutions

Pittsburgh Renews Efforts to End the HIV Epidemic 40 Years After First Cases Reported

On November 18, Mayor Bill Peduto designated Pittsburgh as a [Fast-Track City](#), making Pittsburgh the latest member of a global network of over 300 U.S. cities and municipalities committed to ending the HIV epidemic by 2030. Through the Fast-Track City initiative, the City of Pittsburgh has pledged to work towards zero new HIV infections, zero AIDS-related deaths, and zero stigma against people living with HIV, the only city in Pennsylvania to join the initiative to date. This renewed local commitment bolsters the ongoing work of [AIDS Free Pittsburgh](#) (AFP) and community partners to support people living with HIV and other key populations impacted by the epidemic, just over 40 years after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention first reported on what would become known as HIV in June of 1981.



Richard Smith, chief relationship officer at JHF and chair of AFP, spoke during the Fast-Track City signing.

In front of key stakeholders, including AFP members and other representatives from community organizations that provide services to people living with HIV, Mayor Peduto stated that he hopes efforts to end the HIV epidemic would not only be done “through the lens of medicine but the openness of minds and hearts.” The mayor also acknowledged the significance of the Fast-Track signing falling just weeks before World AIDS Day (December 1), a day of remembrance and activism.

“While our local HIV infections have decreased in the last five years, there are still alarming disparities among young Black men who have sex with men ... AFP has spent the past few years with community members and organizations to bring awareness to these disparities and work collaboratively to eliminate stigma and systemic racism so all citizens of Allegheny County can access the HIV-related services they need with equal equity, dignity, and respect,” said Richard Smith, chief relationship officer at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and chair of AFP.

Since 2015, AFP has played a crucial role in local efforts to end the HIV epidemic in Allegheny County through working to [normalize HIV testing](#); increasing access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a medication that can reduce a person’s chances of getting HIV; and improving linkage to care for those newly diagnosed with HIV. Employing a collective impact model, AFP functions as a collaborative public health initiative comprising government agencies, healthcare institutions, and community-based organizations. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) has served for 29 years as the fiscal agent for funding from Ryan White Part B, State 656, and HUD HOPWA (Housing and Urban Development – Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS) in the southwestern

Pennsylvania region, supporting AFP's work. These funding streams facilitate the delivery of health care and supportive and housing services to eligible individuals living with HIV/AIDS and prevention/education services to at-risk populations.

AFP's efforts have proved successful: Allegheny County saw a 43% reduction in new HIV cases in between 2015 and 2020. In 2020, there were 2,982 people living with HIV and 79 new cases of HIV in the county, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health ([2020 Annual HIV Surveillance Summary Report](#)).

In collaboration with JHF's Ryan White Part B program, AFP launched a redesigned website (aidsfreepittsburgh.org) with information on HIV testing and PrEP as well as resources for providers. The website provides [an interactive map](#) that allows individuals to easily identify healthcare providers and community organizations throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania who provide HIV testing, prevention, treatment, and supportive services closest to them based on zip code. The new site is part of JHF's large [Ryan White program media campaign](#), funded by a \$900,000 Pennsylvania Department of Health grant. This campaign expands AFP's existing outreach beyond Allegheny County, to increase awareness of support services available to people living with HIV in Allegheny County and Southwestern PA.

In honor of World AIDS Day, agencies across Pittsburgh and Allegheny County are hosting events that include free HIV testing, COVID-19 vaccinations, information on housing resources, and virtual panel discussions about HIV. (More information [here](#).)

Though the tools exist to achieve an AIDS-free county, progress is still needed to reduce health disparities, increase testing, employ prevention strategies, and ensure rapid linkage to care. AFP continues to work alongside government and community partners to end the HIV epidemic by 2030 and ensure a sustainable and equitable impact.

Read more here in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: [Pittsburgh joins international initiative to end HIV epidemics by 2030](#)

Up Next for Patient Safety Podcast Episodes Cover Health Equity, Pandemic Preparedness

[New episodes of Up Next for Patient Safety available now!](#)

Are Black and Brown people at greater risk of medical errors in the U.S.? What are federal agencies doing to track and reform practices to make health care safer for those most at risk of preventable harms? In Episode 5, “Not Without Equity,” host Karen Wolk Feinstein and special guests Dr. Cara James, president and CEO at Grantmakers In Health, and Dr. Kimá Joy Taylor, founder of Anka Consulting and a nonresident fellow at the Urban Institute, explore health equity issues within patient safety and the work that is needed to create a fair and just opportunity for every person in the U.S. to be as healthy as possible.



In Episode 6, “Pandemic Preparedness,” hear what the COVID-19 pandemic can teach us about patient safety and how can we make sure that the systemic problems that led to unnecessary suffering are fixed once and for all. Host Karen Wolk Feinstein and special guests Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive vice president at the American Public Health Association, and Chris Johnson, president and co-CEO at TeleTracking, explore how lessons learned through the flawed pandemic response can be applied to healthcare safety.

Listen [here](#).

NPSB Policy & Advocacy Coalition Calls for Patient Safety in Mental Health

In November, the National Patient Safety Board Policy & Advocacy Coalition called for the Senate Finance Committee’s attention to patient safety in mental health. The growing coalition of health care experts say that by building a National Patient Safety Board (NPSB), the U.S. could establish a national infrastructure to monitor and prevent safety events in mental health settings.

This call to action responds to a September 21 bipartisan request from Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-ID) for information for legislative ideas to improve healthcare services for Americans with mental health and substance use disorders. The Behavioral Health Package contemplated by the Senate must address the crisis in preventable medical errors that has been escalating in the U.S. for two



decades. Prior to COVID-19, medical errors were the third-leading cause of death in the United States, after heart disease and cancer.

The coalition said that establishing a NPSB, modeled after the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), is a crucial component of the solution.

“Our nation must increase the safety and reliability of mental health care to protect patients and providers, increase the public’s trust in mental health providers, and help reduce the stigma associated with receiving mental health services,” writes Dr. Karen Wolk Feinstein, chair of the National Patient Safety Board Policy & Advocacy Coalition.

The NPSB Policy & Advocacy Coalition is composed of representatives from hospitals, health systems, insurers, patient safety groups, consumer advocates, foundations, universities, technology companies, employers, and other purchasers of health care. A list of coalition members can be found at npsb.org.

The NPSB’s three core functions would improve patient safety in mental health settings in the following ways:

- 1. Identifying Patient Safety Events.** The NPSB would establish an interagency coordinating committee to review, update and prioritize patient safety indicators in mental health settings. Once adverse events are identified, the NPSB would autonomously collect anonymous data from electronic health records and other data sources.
- 2. Studying the Root Causes of the Patient Safety Events.** A study division at the NPSB would determine the systemic risk and potential learning. The analyses would have one sole purpose: to establish facts, circumstances, and causes or probable causes of patient safety events.
- 3. Issuing Recommendations to Prevent Patient Safety Events.** The NPSB would then create nonpunitive recommendations for providers and healthcare agencies.

To learn more, visit npsb.org and subscribe to “Up Next for Patient Safety,” a podcast series examining the ongoing patient safety crisis in the U.S. and what must be done about it. The newest episodes examine health equity within patient safety and pandemic preparedness.

Teen Mental Health Collaborative Gathers for In-Person Celebration

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) convened members of the [Teen Mental Health Collaborative](#) for a celebration of their year-long work to promote teen mental health. The November 5th gathering took place at Friendship Circle and provided a long-awaited in-person networking opportunity for the Collaborative members. The Allegheny County community-based organizations forming the Collaborative, with support from emergency grants provided by JHF, have worked to integrate mental wellness programming into their initiatives and collectively address the ongoing teen mental health crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. JHF Program Manager Deborah Murdoch, MPH, Policy Assistant Sarah Pesl, MSPPM, and Practice Transformation Specialist Carol Frazer, LPC, organized and facilitated the event.



Teen Mental Health Collaborative, facilitators, and JHF staff gathered at Friendship Circle.

The JHF Adolescent Behavioral Health Team asked grantees to reflect on and summarize their work as part of the Collaborative, which was translated to visual posters displayed around the Friendship Circle space. Friendship Circle Director Rivkee Rudolph and Carol Frazer led attendees in a discussion about lessons learned and challenges the organizations experienced over the past 20 months of the pandemic.

Center of Life Family and Community Engagement Coordinator Kiyomi Knox, MSW, then led attendees in an activity from [A Window Between Worlds](#), an organization that works to connect creativity and mental wellness. Through the Garden of New Beginnings activity, participants were invited to plant flower bulbs that symbolize future growth. This activity and the discussion that followed helped attendees visualize how lessons from this past year will influence work for supporting teen mental wellness going forward.

Center of Life Director of Development Patrick Ohrman and Boys & Girls Clubs of Western PA President & CEO Lisa M. Palmieri, PhD, led a design thinking exercise aimed at identifying opportunities for collaborative partners to work together to promote community-based organization and health system collaborations, leverage the network for shared advocacy and training, and plan for joint youth programs.

Going forward, the Collaborative plans to meet quarterly and form smaller workgroups based on specific areas of interest. Some of these include educating and empowering teens as mental health ambassadors, fostering connections with schools and health systems, organizing community-wide events, and connecting with policy makers.

Pittsburgh Media Covers JHF Teen Mental Health Advocacy

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation's (JHF's) work to promote teen mental health was featured in a *Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle* article on November 15. Since 2018, JHF has managed the [PA Youth Advocacy Network](#) to raise youth voice on this important issue, and the Foundation began the Teen Mental Health Collaborative in 2020 to convene community-based organizations in response to the rising teen mental health crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Read more in the *Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle* here: [‘Teens are in trouble’ as national mental health crisis escalates](#)

Read about youth advocate Abby Rickin-Marks' journey with the PA Youth Advocacy Network in the *Pittsburgh City Paper*: [Pittsburgh teen uses own experiences with anxiety and depression to help others](#)

LTC COVID-19 Documentary Selected for L-DUB Film Festival

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is pleased to announce that our short documentary, *What COVID-19 Exposed in Long-Term Care*, was selected for the [L-DUB Film Festival](#), based in Lake Worth, Florida, and screened on November 7. This is the sixth film festival selection for the documentary, after screenings by WQED and at nationwide senior health and aging organizations.

The 20-minute documentary explores the causes behind the COVID-19 crisis in long-term care facilities across the United States, weaving the stories of long-term care experts, journalists, employees, and family members to present a comprehensive perspective. JHF hopes the documentary continues to resonate with audiences across the country to inspire positive change and action for long-term care.



Senior Living Full Court Press Meets on Community-Based Senior Living, Dementia Care, and Technology

The November 1 Senior Residential Living Full Court Press meeting focused on creative models for community-based senior living. Through guest presentations on urban aging, living with dementia in the community, and applications of innovative technology, the team explored ways to maximize health and supportive care for older adults.

The team viewed a presentation by a group of fellows who developed and pitched a new model of senior care as part of the 2021 Patient Safety Fellowship, which offered a unique opportunity for participants to explore the challenges and opportunities facing senior residential living and senior care. The fellows developed a new model that supports safe living for community-dwelling seniors. Their proposed solution, urban aging, revolves around seniors' needs based on their level of independence, offers cottages paired with green spaces, and integrates smart technology.



JHF Senior Quality Improvement Specialists and Dementia Friends Pennsylvania Coordinators Stacie L. Bonenberger, MOT, OTR/L, and Anneliese Perry, MS, NHA, then presented on opportunities for providing supportive, compassionate care for people in the community living with dementia. Their presentation highlighted that more than two-thirds of people living with dementia are community-dwelling and need some sort of supportive services. These individuals often live alone and are cared for by their families. They emphasized the need for support to ensure that care partners can sustainably provide care while remaining healthy themselves and adequately financed. Bonenberger and Perry discussed Pennsylvania's response to needs of people living with dementia and how Dementia Friends Pennsylvania has collaborated with state leadership to increase awareness of dementia across the Commonwealth, particularly the program's inclusion in the State Plan on Aging 2020–2024. They noted ongoing opportunities to arrange Dementia Friends sessions for individuals, organizations, schools, or businesses and encouraged Full Court Press Team members to contact them if they were interested in arranging sessions for their organizations.

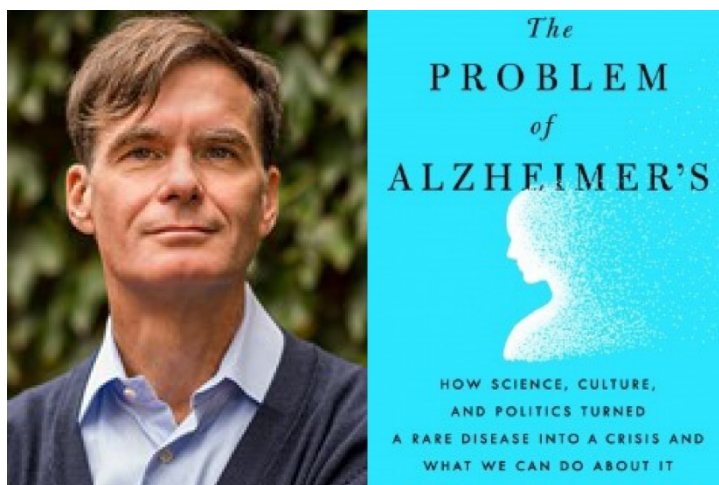
Reid Simmons, PhD, research professor in robotics and computer science, and John Zimmerman, PhD, Tang family professor of artificial intelligence and human-computer interaction (HCI) of Carnegie Mellon's HCI Institute, then presented on National Science Foundation AI-CARING (Artificial Intelligence Institute for Collaborative Assistance and Responsive Interaction for Networked Groups), for which they had been awarded a grant. This collaboration aims to establish interactive, intelligent technology that can support older adults and their care network. Examples include supporting day-to-day activities, mitigating cognitive decline, and assisting through abrupt life changes. Dr. Simmons and Dr. Zimmerman asked for the Full Court Press Team's insights on the applications of artificial intelligence for seniors and their caregivers. The team discussed needs and opportunities around medication adherence, emergency preparedness, tailoring voice-activated technology for people with Parkinson's, providing transportation, and supporting the

differing needs of rural residents. In addition, the team emphasized the importance of fitting technology to the needs and cognitive capacity of each senior, avoiding stigma associated with use of assistive technology, introducing technology before it is needed, ensuring seniors and care teams have appropriate access to data collected by technology, and gaining seniors' trust to encourage adoption of technology.

Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society Holds Virtual Fall Program on Alzheimer's

The Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society–Western Division (PGS-WD) held its Virtual Fall Program on November 10. The program was sponsored by Presbyterian SeniorCare Network, and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation provided technical support for the event.

Over 65 internists, family practitioners, geriatricians, pharmacists, nurses, nursing home administrators, and social workers attended the event to hear from distinguished author Jason Karlawish, MD, who presented “The Problem of Alzheimer's: How It Became a Crisis and What We Need to Do About It.”



Dr. Jason Karlawish

During his presentation, Dr. Karlawish reviewed the history of Alzheimer's beginning with the start of the Alzheimer's Association in 1980 and proceeding to the present. He emphasized the crisis based on the numbers: 6 million Americans are directly affected by the disease, plus untold numbers of caregivers and family members. He also reviewed the healthcare systems' failures and potential solutions in helping to provide a better quality of life for all individuals with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. JHF Medical Consultant Judith Black, MD, MHA, secretary/treasurer of PGS-WD, and Neil Resnick, MD, Thomas Detre professor and chief of the Division of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology and associate director of the Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services at the University of Pittsburgh, facilitated a question-and-answer session with the virtual audience.

In conjunction with the program, Dr. Black also led the PGS-WD's annual fall business meeting. As part of this update, the Dementia Friends Pennsylvania program, coordinated by JHF, was highlighted. More than 7,200 Pennsylvanians have become Dementia Friends, changing the way people think, act, and talk about dementia.

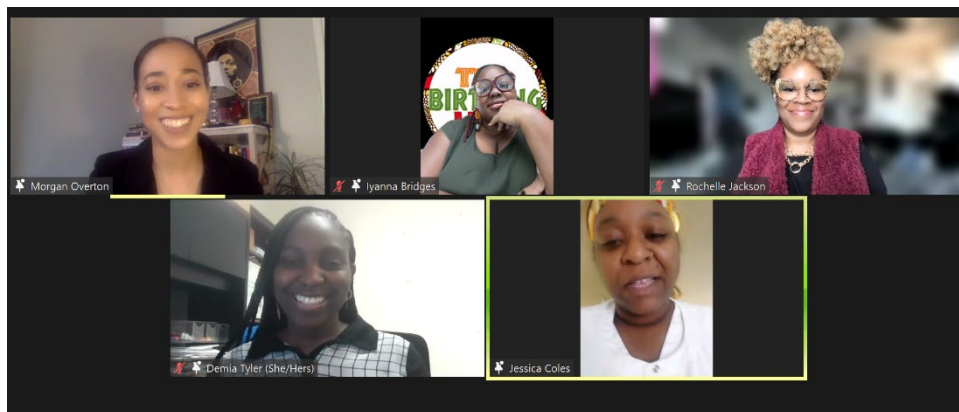
Death & Dying Fellowship Applications Due Dec. 13

The Death and Dying Fellowship is now accepting applications for its 2022 session, which will be held virtually with the potential for in-person site visits. Fellows will learn, confront, and discuss the legal, medical, social, cultural, familial, and spiritual aspects of death and dying within a multidisciplinary group in a low-pressure environment. [Apply today.](#)



Opt in PA Event Highlights Pennsylvania Postpartum Medicaid Extension Opportunity

On November 4, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and [Women's Health Activist Movement Global](#) (WHAMglobal) partnered with State Representative Morgan Cephas' office to host **Opt in PA: A Panel on Postpartum Medicaid Extension**, the 2021 installment of the annual Birthing a Movement event series. This year's event focused on Pennsylvania opting in to extend postpartum Medicaid.



Birthing advocates joined the Opt in PA panel.

President Biden's American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 included a provision that gives states a new option to extend Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 1 year postpartum. The new option can take effect beginning April 1, 2022, and would be available for five years.

Medicaid covers almost half of births nationally and 35% of births in Pennsylvania as of 2019. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, pregnancy-related mortality and morbidity is more prevalent during the postpartum period and impacts Black and Native American women three times higher. Conditions that contribute to maternal mortality and morbidity—such as hypertension, depression, and cardiovascular disease—require longer-term care. Medicaid coverage up to a year postpartum would provide access to preventive services and continuity of care.

During the event, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Secretary Meg Snead and Pennsylvania State Representative Morgan Cephas, 192nd Legislative District (Philadelphia) gave opening remarks. Secretary Snead and Representative Cephas noted the importance of ensuring birthing people have access to services for a full year after birth. Representative Cephas added that maternal mortality is a “quiet crisis” in Pennsylvania, and that Medicaid extension is part of a broader suite of policy changes needed to address systemic racism that impacts health outcomes, especially for birthing people of color and their families.

The event featured a panel discussion, moderated by WHAMglobal Community Engagement and Policy Associate Morgan Overton, MSW, that included Iyanna Bridges, founder and owner of The Birthing Hut, Jessica Coles, community member, Rochelle Jackson, founder and director of the Black Women's Policy Agenda, and Demia Tyler, director of strategic partnerships at Healthy Start Inc.

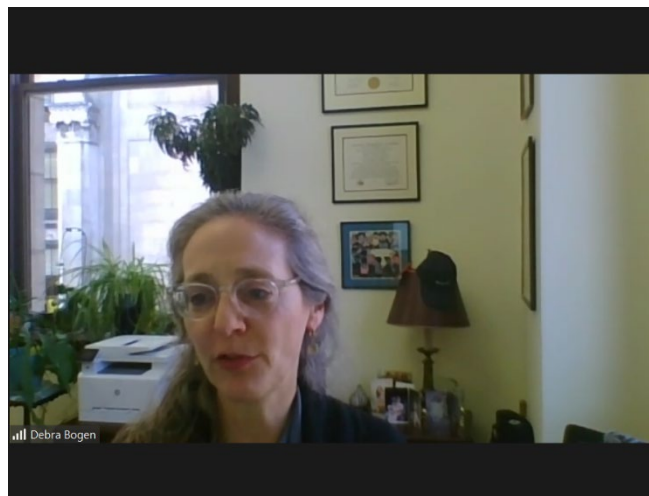
The panelists discussed why Medicaid extension is so important for birthing people and families, focusing on the racial disparities of heart-related complications and maternal mortality, which, the panelists noted, disproportionately impact Black women due to systemic discrimination and racism. Many Black mothers are single parents, the panelists said, and their increased mortality risk impacts their children, families, and the community significantly. The extension would also support the work of postpartum doulas and increase long-term access to their services.

Beyond improving access to Medicaid, the panelists called for higher-quality and antiracist health care, which can be supported by training programs in cultural competency and antiracism for the medical and health professions, they said. Healthy Start and The Birthing Hut are collaborating with University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine students and Duquesne Nursing students to pilot such programs.

Overall, the panelists advocated for policymakers, healthcare leaders, and providers to trust Black women and birthing people (especially birthing people of color) as experts of their own experiences and for future policy change to center on birthing people's needs beyond Medicaid.

Maternity Full Court Press Team Convenes on PA WIC Collaboration

On November 29, the Maternity Full Court Press Team met to explore collaborative opportunities to help achieve common service delivery goals for Pennsylvania's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). WIC participation in Pennsylvania has been decreasing for years, and stressors of the COVID-19 pandemic have hastened this trend. The Maternity Full Court Press Team and guests provided input on the development of a state WIC advisory group, and how stakeholders can help to achieve this vision and pursue a collective action plan.



Dr. Debra Bogen spoke during the Maternity Full Court Press meeting.

Cindy Findley, deputy secretary for health promotion and disease prevention at the PA Department of Health, and Faith Haussler, director of intergovernmental affairs at the PA Department of Health, spoke about the statewide goals for WIC. The state WIC Bureau conducted outreach to WIC stakeholders to determine characteristics of WIC advisory board groups and will incorporate stakeholder feedback into their development. A main goal is to increase WIC participation, and many stakeholders surveyed expressed interest in serving on the WIC advisory board.

Debra Bogen, MD, director of the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), shared her goals and aspirations for WIC services in Allegheny County. She shared that ACHD is actively evaluating the WIC Program and planning for innovative services, such as co-locating WIC sites at birth hospitals and pediatric practices and a travelling WIC van to meet clients where they are. They also plan to increase access to both large chain and small grocery stores in areas of need. Dr. Bogen called for a need to examine WIC regulations to determine whether they benefit people who use WIC or create barriers.

JHF Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH, led a discussion of next steps on the PA WIC Program, and how to address challenges families are facing. The team's suggestions included conducting data collection on family needs through social worker outreach, encouraging practitioners to refer more families to WIC, providing transportation support, simplifying the process to enroll and access benefits, exploring how to support sustainability of projects at WIC agencies, and addressing workforce challenges.

Maternity Full Court Press Team Lead Pat Siger closed the meeting and shared that the team has made progress in 2021 to put a process in place for doula certification in 2022 and Medicaid reimbursement in 2023. The Health Careers Futures Board will resume its regular meetings in 2022, and it will focus those meetings on maternal workforce issues in 2022 and invited team members interested in this topic to remain connected to JHF.

JHF, PA DHS Recognize UPMC Magee's PA Perinatal Quality Collaborative Work

On November 16, representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PA DHS), UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) met for a roundtable discussion to highlight UPMC's work to promote greater use of best practices in perinatal care, especially to address perinatal depression and improve health equity.

UPMC Magee participates in the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PA PQC), a network of 16 hospitals across Pennsylvania that aim to address maternal health disparities and improve quality of perinatal care. In partnership, JHF and PA DHS lead the PA PQC and participated in the Center for Law and Social Policy's Moving on Maternal Depression Initiative (MOMD) from 2018–2020 to improve care for families affected by perinatal depression. As part of MOMD, UPMC Magee has grown its doula program and launched a program for Black and Brown women's health care providers called UPMC Health Equity Now. UPMC also implemented new perinatal depression and mood disorder screening across 15 birthing sites and pediatric offices. These actions aim to address disparities in pregnancy-related complications and death that disproportionately affect Black women.



Jeonna Hodges, lead doula at The Birth Circle Doulas of UPMC Magee, speaks at the roundtable. Photo courtesy of UPMC.

The November 16 roundtable created space for discussion between UPMC Magee's leadership, JHF, and state representatives on UPMC Magee's progress in addressing health inequities, and on future priorities for sharing their best practices and building on the partnerships through the PA PQC.

PA DHS Acting Secretary Meg Snead shared that PA DHS is committed to addressing maternal health disparities and promoting maternal health, especially during the postpartum period, and expressed gratitude towards UPMC Magee and JHF for their partnership in the PA PQC.

Jeonna Hodges, lead doula at The Birth Circle Doulas of UPMC Magee, spoke on the importance of doulas' work to address maternal health disparities and provide support and connection to care for birthing people of color throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. Two participants in the doula program at UPMC Magee called in to share their experiences with the group, and they emphasized the critical importance their doulas have played in their lives, pregnancies, and birth experiences.

Read more from PA DHS: [Department Of Human Services Highlights Partnership With UPMC Magee To Enhance Maternal Health Services](#)

Dr. Elizabeth Miller Elevates Pittsburgh Communities through Public Health Advocacy

A beloved member of the Pittsburgh community and a longtime partner of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, Elizabeth “Liz” Miller, MD, PhD, FSAHM, is a champion of adolescent medicine and public health. She is a professor of pediatrics, public health, and clinical and translational science at the University of Pittsburgh. She holds the Edmund R. McCluskey Chair in Pediatric Medical Education at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and she is the director of the Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine and the medical director of Community and Population Health. She serves as the Academic Co-Director of Community PARTners (the community engagement core) for the Clinical and Translational Science Institute. As a pediatrician with deep ties to on-the-ground community advocates, she



Dr. Elizabeth Miller

collaborates with community-based organizations to connect young people to necessary care. She is an active researcher in sexual violence prevention, adolescent mental health, and community health, publishing over 280 peer-reviewed articles, and she has played a critical role in organizing COVID-19 vaccine clinics and information sessions to reach marginalized communities across Allegheny County. With her warm, welcoming personality and varied background of expertise in both medicine and anthropology, Dr. Miller is a major force in promoting Pittsburgh’s public health.

Growing up in Kobe, Japan, Dr. Miller was raised bilingual and bicultural. She was inspired to go into the health field when she read a book about nursing in fourth grade. Her best friend at the time encouraged her to become a doctor, and her father, providing a social-justice influence, reminded her every day before school to “do the right thing.” Summers spent with her grandparents in Mississippi, where she was exposed to racism and bias-based discrimination, later fueled her commitment to racial equity. Dr. Miller’s family doctor, a Belgian nun at a Japanese community hospital, further encouraged her to pursue a medical career focused on social justice.

Dr. Miller attended Yale for an undergraduate degree in art history, but always keeping a medical education on the horizon, she then went on to complete medical school at Harvard. Throughout her medical education, she was focused on social issues in medicine. She created a feminist health organization with other woman-identifying medical students in her first year, and she later studied health care for the homeless in Japan. Dr. Miller was mentored by Jim O’Connell, a national leader in street medicine and medical anthropologist. This inspired Dr. Miller to then complete a PhD in medical anthropology at Harvard.

While completing her residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at Massachusetts General Hospital, Dr. Miller volunteered at a clinic in a Boston neighborhood with concentrated disadvantage, which served unstably housed youth who were system-involved or gang-affiliated. She then became a school physician for a Boston community school district, where she started a

clinic in the high school and remained for six years, and she began her research career focused on intimate partner violence and sexual violence prevention. A nurse practitioner and a community organizer mentored Dr. Miller, further expanding her knowledge of adolescent health and community health. The community organizer began a substance use coalition in response to the local opioid crisis, at a time when “a bag of heroin was actually cheaper than a six-pack of beer,” Dr. Miller says. Through experiences of collaborating with school boards and community organizations to address the crisis, the community organizer taught Dr. Miller foundational knowledge of advocacy and community-partnered research principles.

Today in Pittsburgh, Dr. Miller is involved with a myriad of projects at the intersection of community and adolescent health and health equity. Her research focuses on reproductive coercion and intimate partner violence, her most recent [publication](#) investigating prevalence of these experiences among American Indian and Alaska native women. With UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, she is the primary investigator for a [program](#) that conducts outreach with youth involved in the juvenile court system without a mental health diagnosis, [supported by a grant](#) from the Jewish Healthcare Foundation. This program connects teens with mental health resources and teaches skills that enhance resiliency through a yoga intervention with an antiracist framework, aiming to overcome barriers to mental health resources that youth may experience. “What we have learned from our work with court-involved youth is that the systems are set up to make mental health and behavioral health delivery really challenging,” Dr. Miller says. This issue intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, as restrictions required a shift to virtual sessions.

When the COVID-19 vaccines became available to the public, Dr. Miller and a team of academics and community organizers sprang into action, creating the [Community Vaccine Collaborative](#) (CVC), an innovative community–academic partnership centered on mitigating the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black and Latinx communities. Through virtual Speakers Bureau events with Black and Latinx healthcare professionals, the CVC has provided COVID-19 vaccine education and worked to form trust between minoritized communities and the medical community. Trained community health deputies recruited by the Neighborhood Resilience Project provide accurate information about COVID-19 to answer community members’ questions, and the CVC collaborates with organizations, after-school programs, and school districts to create opportunities for people to connect with medical professionals. Dr. Miller emphasizes the importance of identifying trusted sources of information for community members, removing barriers to scheduling information sessions, and taking an open, respectful approach to answering any question. “You always have an obligation, as a health professional, to center community voices and community experiences. And to always take an asset-based approach,” she says, to promote recognition of communities’ strengths.

Throughout the chaos of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Miller says she has found joy and celebration in seeing young people become connected to care and in supporting community-based vaccine clinics. At home, Dr. Miller says she is “fortunate to have an amazing spouse who feeds me well,” and that she enjoys sharing time with her spouse after long days of Zoom calls. Her kitchen and garden have provided a place of respite, so that she can return to her heroic work in the Pittsburgh community.

JHF Is a Sponsor of Magee-Womens Summit Advocacy Session

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation was pleased to be a sponsor of the [2021 Magee-Womens Summit](#) Advocacy session held on November 16 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. The session, Advancing Health Equity Through Community Based Solutions, addressed health disparities and highlighted the critical importance of tackling tough issues with communities that are facing adversity so that we can build a better future together.

The afternoon featured a lineup of expert speakers, including Deirdre Cooper Owens, PhD, Charles and Linda Wilson professor and history of medicine director in the Humanities in Medicine Program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Benjamin S. Danielson, MD, pediatrician and clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington School of Medicine, Father Paul Abernathy, CEO of the Neighborhood Resilience Project and pastor at St. Moses Orthodox Church, and special virtual guests U.S. Senator Bob Casey and Pittsburgh Mayor-Elect Ed Gainey.



A panel gathered during the advocacy session during the 2021 Magee-Womens Summit. Left to right: Dr. Deidre Cooper Owens, Dr. Idhaliz Flores, Dr. Sharee Livingston, Dr. Hy Simhan, Dr. Doug Jacobs, and Dr. Ellen Beckjord. Photo courtesy of UPMC.

The 2021 Magee-Womens Summit brought together world-class scientists, clinicians, thought leaders and advocates to explore women's health research across the lifespan. Following the afternoon of advocacy, the summit featured two full days of research and clinically focused keynote talks and panel discussions on November 17 and 18.

Ellen Kessler Awarded Volunteer of the Year

Congratulations to Ellen Kessler, who has been named the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle 2021 Volunteer of the Year for the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and has served on JHF's Board for the past six years. Read more in the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle [here](#).



Ellen Kessler

Welcome to Mayor-Elect Gainey and Well Wishes for Steve Irwin

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation extends warm congratulations to Pittsburgh Mayor-Elect Ed Gainey. JHF also wishes longtime Board Member Steve Irwin well in his recently announced campaign for public office. JHF looks forward to future opportunities for collaboration to promote the health of all in the Pittsburgh region.

Read more from 90.5 WESA here: ['You proved that we can have a city for all': Ed Gainey becomes Pittsburgh's first Black mayor](#)

Read more in the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle here: [Congressional hopeful Steve Irwin on health care, CRT and Israel](#)



Ed Gainey (left) and Steve Irwin

In Case You Missed It: High Tech + High Touch Discussion on Senior Care

How can high tech enhance high touch when it comes to caring for frail older adults? Listen in to an interview with senior care experts Emily Jaffe, MD, MBA, vice president and executive medical director for Highmark Home and Community Services; Eric Rodriguez, MD, associate professor at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Medicine's Division of Geriatric Medicine; and Judy Black, MD, MHA, medical advisor for the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, as they explore opportunities for improvements in how we care for frail seniors. The discussion is hosted by Mildred Morrison, a member of the Health Careers Futures Board, an operating arm of JHF and past administrator of the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging and the YWCA Retirement Fund in New York City. Listen on the [Pittsburgh Technology Council's TechVibe Radio here.](#)

