



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

A Message from Karen Wolk Feinstein

Greetings to all as we approach the Winter Solstice. As always, the solstice is a time for reflection on the past year as well as a time to create hopes and dreams for the coming months. As the earth takes its farthest tilt away from the sun, we experience the shortest day knowing that it is the start of a new awakening. How fitting it is, this year, to reflect on the extraordinary two years we've just experienced and to hope that 2022 will be brighter and merrier with less fear and caution. I'm so appreciative that our team at JHF, our board members, community and national partners have together weathered this pandemic with solidarity and unpredictable productivity.

For now, I wish everyone a brief respite, a time to be grateful and peaceful as we honor our mutual connection to friends, family and the natural world.

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The Jewish Healthcare Foundation Approves \$1.6M in Grants Including New Funding to Catalyze an Autonomous Patient Safety Industry in Pittsburgh and to Support an Arts and Education Program to Combat Hate

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) on December 6 approved new grants to begin the journey for Pittsburgh to become a national center for autonomous patient safety solutions and to support bringing a music and education program with a message of unity and healing from racial and ethnic violence to Pittsburgh.



Establishing Pittsburgh as a Leader in Autonomous Patient Safety Solutions

JHF approved a two-year, \$500,000 grant to the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) to support a healthcare safety and technology project that will advance the Pittsburgh region to emerge as a hub of autonomous patient safety solutions and to build on the region's assets in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), advanced informatics, big data, predictive analytics, and life sciences innovation.

The effort to establish a center for innovation in patient safety within the Pittsburgh region—a region strong in tech innovation, healthcare expertise, and advanced transportation, space travel and manufacturing autonomous safety discoveries—reflects JHF's decades of work in healthcare safety. This project will attempt to connect local partners in Pittsburgh with each other and, when appropriate, with national patient safety experts to explore how autonomous technologies, such as AI, ML, big data analytics, and robotics, can improve our understanding of the preconditions for medical errors and our discovery of fail-safe solutions. The Pittsburgh region aspires to be a national center for autonomous solutions; why not patient safety solutions?

"The time is right for this investment to move Pittsburgh's growing resources and talent in autonomous technology to transform patient safety," said Ronald Poropatich, MD, director of the Center for Military Medicine Research at the University of Pittsburgh and PRHI Board member. "Many of us in Pittsburgh are working at the cross-section of health and technology, and this funding will help to create the strategy and academic/medical/industry partnerships to make the region a global leader in patient safety."

"JHF has spent decades activating our community to address medical error, and this new phase of the work could generate promising collaborations among our universities and private tech companies," said Audrey Russo, president & chief executive officer of the Pittsburgh Technology Council, and JHF Board member.

This grant will provide funding from January 2022 to June 2024 to support development of a regional Autonomous Patient Safety Blueprint to document our regional resources; seed funding for the most promising breakthrough product and technology ideas in autonomous patient safety; support for regional conferences focused on AI and health care; and development of a prototype to adapt hospital and health-system command centers to anticipate and prevent medical errors.

"We envision Pittsburgh as a global leader in autonomous patient safety, building on our edge in eds, meds, and technology," said Karen Wolk Feinstein, president and CEO of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation. "This is long overdue. Healthcare safety technology is at the cottage stage; we're aiming now for a moonshot, and it should come from Pittsburgh."

Using Arts and Music to Create Awareness of and Healing from Racial and Ethnic Hate in Pittsburgh

JHF approved a two-year, \$50,000 grant to bring *Violins of Hope*, an arts and education program that celebrates humanity's ability to rebound from depravity and hate to Pittsburgh for a six-week period starting in mid-October 2023.

The Eradicate Hate Global Summit held in Pittsburgh this fall forced an acknowledgement of the clear and present danger of Americans consumed by hate. The Greater Pittsburgh area has already experienced several hate-based attacks, the most significant of which resulted in the murder of eleven Pittsburghers at the Tree of Life on October 27, 2018. The Jewish community lives in a state of heightened anxiety, knowing the potential of what these irrational, toxic animosities can create. *Violins of Hope* is an effort to bring healing to the region through the power of music and the human spirit.

The centerpiece of *Violins of Hope* is a collection of more than 85 restored violins, violas, and cellos played by Jewish musicians during the Nazi regime. The efforts to bring *Violins of Hope* to Pittsburgh began in 2018 under the leadership of project chair Sandy Rosen and co-chairs Linda Simon and Pat Siger. These instruments have survived concentration camps, pogroms, and many long journeys to tell remarkable stories of injustice, suffering, resilience, and survival. Each instrument has a unique and inspiring story that connects listeners to the history of the Holocaust in a deeply emotional way.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh is coordinating the *Violins of Hope* exhibit in Pittsburgh, and it will be the centerpiece of a six-week landmark community-wide collaborative fighting antisemitism, racial bigotry and intolerance through arts and education. The project has already secured commitments from more than 35 non-profit arts groups, religious institutions, and other community agencies to be partners in this initiative by providing unique programs related to the *Violins of Hope* mission. The exhibit will be housed at the University Art Gallery at the University of Pittsburgh, with related exhibits at the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh in conjunction with Chatham University. *Violins of Hope* will be a landmark collaboration of non-profit groups, religious institutions, community organizations, and musicians.

JHF is contributing \$50,000 in funding to be released in two payments, one each in 2022 and 2023. This commitment is part of the \$1 million total budget for the project and intended to aid the *Violins of Hope* Committee with their additional fundraising efforts.

Supporting Independent News Coverage for the Jewish Community in Southwestern Pennsylvania

JHF approved a one-year, \$50,000 emergency grant to the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle to provide coverage of issues of interest to the Jewish community of southwestern Pennsylvania. The award-winning newspaper is an important voice in the community, and it has played a vital role in connecting and strengthening the Jewish community in Pittsburgh.

Grant Renewals

JHF also renewed the following grants:

- A one-year, \$900,000 block grant to the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, which is distributed to beneficiary agencies to address the health needs of the Jewish community. Since its founding in 1990, JHF has provided an annual block grant to the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. The block grant, which benefits the Jewish Association on Aging, the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family and Community Services, Riverview Towers, and Jewish Residential Services, represents 60% of the \$1.5 million distributed annually by the Federation to the local community for aging and human service needs.
- A one-year, \$68,000 grant to the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania Impact Fund. JHF has provided a yearly grant to the Impact Fund since it was launched in 2002 to support the United Way's core partner agencies and address critical community needs.
- A two-year, \$50,000 grant to PublicSource to provide independent coverage of healthcare issues of interest to the residents of southwestern Pennsylvania.

Read more in the Pittsburgh Business Times: [\\$500K grant boosts patient safety tech hub in Pittsburgh](#)

Read more in the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle: [JHF grant supports Chronicle, Jewish organizations and causes](#)

JHF Hiring Project Director for Autonomous Patient Safety Solutions

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation aims to identify, connect, and activate Pittsburgh's regional assets, leveraging our strengths in AI, ML, and life sciences innovation, to become a global leader for autonomous patient safety solutions. To that end, JHF is hiring a **Project Director of Autonomous Patient Safety Solutions** to (1.) provide support for the ongoing work of setting up our region as a pioneer in autonomous patient safety technology; (2.) construct an Autonomous Patient Safety Blueprint for our region; and (3.) collaborate with interested parties outside the region to build partnerships for specific autonomous patient-safety solutions, modified as appropriate for local conditions. This position has the option to be either part-time or full-time, depending on the candidate's preference and availability.



[Job Description: Project Director, Autonomous Patient Safety Solutions](#)

To apply, please send resume and cover letter to careers@jhf.org with the subject line: "Project Director, Autonomous Patient Safety Solutions"

Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative Celebrates 2021 Successes, Discusses Future Priorities

On December 15, the [Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative](#) (PA PQC) convened for a virtual learning session focused on the PA PQC's 2021 successes and upcoming 2022 initiatives, which will include a focus on substance use. The collaborative, consisting of 60 birth sites and neonatal intensive care units and 14 health plans across the Commonwealth, aims to reduce maternal mortality and improve outcomes for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), maternal Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), maternal depression, severe hypertension, access to long-acting reversible contraception, and racial/ethnic disparities. In total, the PA PQC health care teams led 107 quality improvement initiatives on these priority areas in 2021.



PA Physician General Denise Johnson

As a result of their quality improvement work in 2021, the PA PQC observed a 55% increase in the percent of sites using a validated screening tool for substance use in pregnancy, a 32% increase in the percent of sites using clinical pathways for maternal OUD such as medications for OUD, a 31% increase in the use of standardized non-pharmacologic protocols for NAS, and a 50% increase in the maternal depression teams stratifying perinatal depression screening and follow-up rates by race to close gaps in racial disparities. In 2021, PA also became the first state to integrate the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health's severe hypertension bundle with the racial/ethnic disparities bundle and the fourth state to receive the Vermont Oxford Network's (VON) State of Excellence in Education and Training for NAS.

A state leadership panel, featuring PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs Secretary Jen Smith, PA Department of Human Services Acting Secretary Meg Snead, PA Department of Health Acting Secretary Alison Beam, and PA Physician General Denise Johnson, MD, focused on the PA PQC's collective statewide impact and 2022 priorities. The speakers thanked the PA PQC health care teams for their work and emphasized how they can continue to address maternal health disparities in 2022. Jewish Healthcare Foundation Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH, recognized that the PA PQC exists due to the support and leadership of the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

Additional presentations by PA PQC health care teams from Wayne Memorial, Doylestown Health, and UPMC Williamsport focused on improving care for birthing people and newborns affected by opioids and on improving access to immediate postpartum long-acting reversible contraception. A panel from the Philadelphia Early Intervention program and the Penn Medicine Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania reviewed strategies for engaging families in early intervention services. The PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence delivered a keynote presentation on strategies for responding to secondary trauma and burnout.

In regard to the PA PQC's upcoming 2022 initiatives, the Chairs of the PA PQC Work Groups on Maternal Substance Use and Substance Exposed Newborns reviewed the updated set of key interventions and measures for these priority areas. The PA PQC will be engaging birth hospitals and NICUs in the 2022 initiatives during the first quarter of 2022.

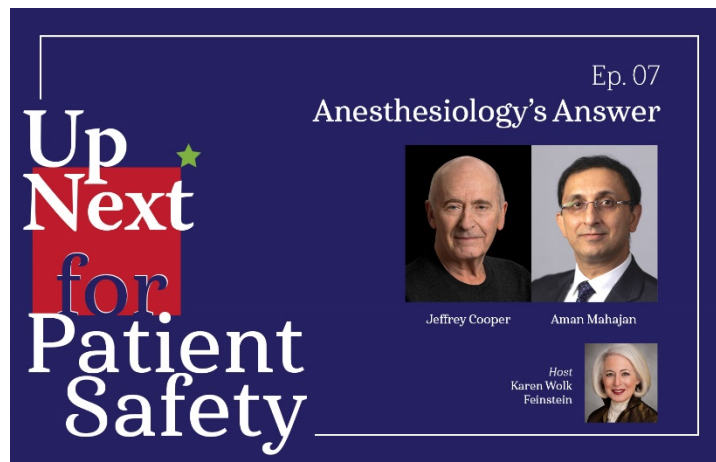
Up Next for Patient Safety New Episode Explores Anesthesiology

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

Why are some industries far ahead in applying safety technologies and making continuous progress? Why is health care behind? One medical specialty, however, defies this track and has even created its own [Safety Foundation](#) to help create and spread safety improvements.

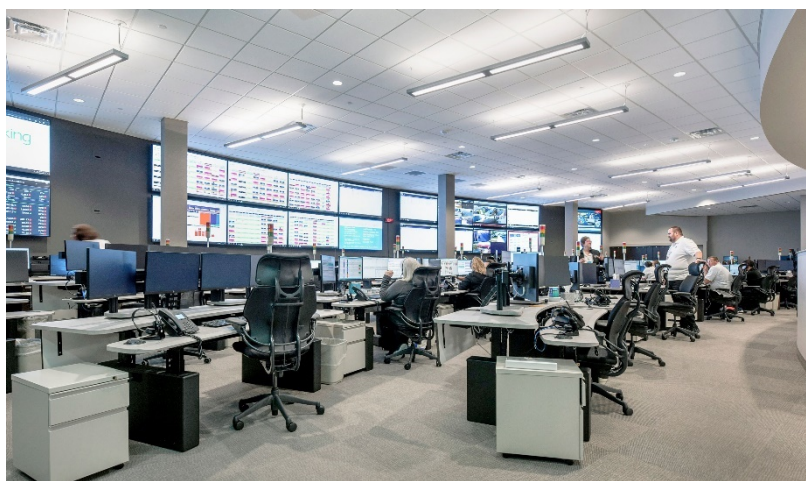
Join host Karen Wolk Feinstein and special guests Dr. Aman Mahajan, professor and chair of anesthesiology and perioperative medicine, bioinformatics, and pharmacology and professor of bioengineering in the Swanson School of Engineering at the University of Pittsburgh and chair of UPMC Perioperative Services, and Dr. Jeffrey Cooper, professor of anesthesia at Harvard Medical School and founder of the Center for Medical Simulation, as they explore how the specialty of anesthesiology has embraced technology and a culture of safety in ways that others have not.

[Listen to *Up Next for Patient Safety* here.](#)



Patient Safety Full Court Press Team Visits a Command Center

The Patient Safety Full Court Press Team met December 13 to take a virtual tour of a hospital command center. Increasingly popular, command centers deploy existing technology to track the movement of patients and ensure the rational use of equipment, supplies, and personnel. But the very technology that permits these efficiencies could also, potentially, increase effectiveness, safety and quality of care. The new Healthcare Safety and Autonomous Technology Initiative, through a Jewish Healthcare Foundation grant to the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, aims to encourage, among other activities, the configuring of command centers for research and experimentation in autonomous patient safety.



The KH Operations Command Center (Photo courtesy Kettering Health)

Jodie Cremeans, RN, executive director of the Operations Command Center at Kettering Health (KH) and Nicholas Squillace, MPH, RN director of the Operations Command Center at KH provided a virtual tour of their command center and how it is used to address COVID-19. The KH Command Center was fully functional pre-COVID, and its use was expanded in an emergency capacity during the pandemic, to connect various departments of the health system. The KH Operations Command Center helps manage admissions and transfers, availability of staff, bed status, patient census analytics, and EMR data. It displays video feeds of helipads and emergency entrances and has a capability for weather and news feeds. The KH Operations Command Center can also monitor capacity across facilities, and even in other health systems in the region, to anticipate high demand areas and begin early intervention.

Cremeans and Squillace were joined by Christopher Johnson, MBA, president and co-CEO of TeleTracking, for a Q&A and discussion with the Patient Safety Full Court Press Team to explore the potential of command centers to advance safety. The group discussed detailed aspects of command center design and operations, and how such centers—with full access to the electronic health record—could deploy existing technology for new purposes such as safety.

In 2022, the Patient Safety Full Court Press Team will hold further meetings to continue their role as a think tank for both the National Patient Safety Board effort and for local Healthcare Safety and Autonomous Technology research and demonstration.

JHF Hosts U.S. Department of Defense Officials for Healthcare Safety & Technology Discussion

On December 15, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) welcomed representatives from the United States Department of Defense Joint Artificial Intelligence Center team, through JHF's collaboration with Ronald Poropatich, MD, director of the Center for Military Medicine Research at the University of Pittsburgh and PRHI Board member. Along with Dr. Poropatich, JHF welcomed Major Brian Lee, Mission Manager at the Department of Defense Joint AI Center, Colonel Cory Plowden, Chief Medical Modernization at Army Futures Command, and Ann Gleeson, MS, Center for Military Medicine Research Managing Director for a meeting.



From left: Major Brian Lee, Ann Gleeson, Megan Butler, Karen Wolk Feinstein, Dr. Ron Poropatich, and Colonel Cory Plowden

JHF announced, on December 7, a \$500,000 grant to the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) to advance a healthcare safety and automated technology center in Pittsburgh, reflecting JHF's decades of work in patient safety. JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, presented JHF's and PRHI's history and vision to the Department of Defense officials and discussed opportunities to encourage innovation and the use of artificial intelligence in the healthcare system. JHF sought feedback on plans to strategically collaborate with other regions in Pennsylvania and across the United States, as well as stakeholders in Pittsburgh.



Dr. Feinstein and U.S. Department of Defense representatives toured a Pittsburgh helipad.

On the previous day, Dr. Feinstein had the opportunity to tour the STAT MedEvac Command Center and helipad based in Pittsburgh, along with Department of Defense representatives.

JHF Features Israeli HER Program at IWF Meeting

On November 30, Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, and COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts helped to organize the International Women's Forum (IWF) Pittsburgh program on "Supporting Persons Who Seek to Exit Prostitution, Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Violence: A Global Challenge for Women's Health." [Dr. Feinstein interviewed Iris Stern Levi](#), an Israeli social activist and cofounder of [HER Academy](#), a vocational school for women coming out of sexual exploitation and violence in Israel. Levi presented the academy's work as an international best practice model for training and supporting women from diverse backgrounds and connecting them with professionals in various fields, so they may gain economic stability in a new profession.



Iris Stern Levi

The IWF program also featured a panel on Pittsburgh's resources and responses to sex work and sexual exploitation, moderated by Elizabeth Miller, MD, PhD, FSAHM, Division Director, Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics, Public Health and Clinical and Translational Science from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and featuring panelists Shayla Sojourner, LSW, supervisor of Project Traffick Stop, Pittsburgh Action Against Rape; Twanda Clark-Edgal, chief program officer of Gwen's Girls; Rashod Xavier Brown, Community

Health Specialist at Project Silk; and Yasaswi Kislovskiy, MD MSc, director of reproductive infectious disease in the department of OB/Gyn and the Women's Institute at Allegheny Health Network.

Watch Karen Feinstein's interview with Iris Stern Levi [here](#).

JHF Guides PA Doula Commission to Launch as Nonprofit

The PA Doula Commission is pleased to announce its official launch as a nonprofit organization! The mission of The PA Doula Commission is to promote equitable access to doula services through workforce development for the doula profession while facilitating childbirth with dignity, improving perinatal health outcomes, and eliminating barriers by reducing healthcare disparities. The founding mothers of the Commission are Gerria Coffee, President; Aleta Heard, Vice President; Theresa Pettaway, Treasurer; and Lauren Pietrowski, Secretary.



The Commission is focused on five priorities for the next year, including fair reimbursement strategies for doulas, working on Pennsylvania state certification and standards development through the PA Certification Board, developing a provider type for Medicaid Reimbursement with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, furthering the recognition, promotion and protection of the doula profession, and establishing the PA Doula Commission Advisory Board.

The PA Doula Commission is the result of efforts by the statewide Doula and Perinatal Community Health Worker Advisory Group. The Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal) and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) convened the Advisory Group's 100+ members in April 2021 to create more equitable access to doulas and to develop a statewide infrastructure to support the work of doulas and perinatal community health workers across Pennsylvania. Within the Advisory Group, a Doula Alliance led by five doulas has gained consensus on definitions, core competencies, and standards to create a doula certification program in Pennsylvania and to reimburse and certify doulas. Uplifting doulas' work is a core component of JHF's strategy to address maternal health inequities, as doulas bridge the gap between birthing families and healthcare teams, especially for Black birthing families. This development builds on JHF and WHAMglobal's work to improve maternal health through management of the [Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative](#) and participation in the [Moving on Maternal Depression](#) and [Safer Childbirth Cities](#) initiatives.

For more information or to apply as a Doula Commission Advisory Board member, please email contact@padoulacommission.org or visit www.padoulacommission.org.

Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home Initiative Presents to CDC and Shares Progress Report

In December, the [Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home Initiative](#) (RTNH) shared reports of their work from the past six months to advance the pilot project to trial and validate a better model of residential care for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's frailest residents. This work is made possible by funders The John A. Hartford Foundation, the Henry L. Hillman Foundation, The Independence Foundation, and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF).



Members of the RTNH team presented on long-term care workforce engagement and expansion during a December 6th webinar for state health departments and long-term care stakeholders. JHF COO and Chief Program Officer and RTNH Primary Investigator Nancy Zionts, MBA, and Andrew Naugle, nursing home administrator of Centre Crest Nursing and Rehabilitation Center shared examples of innovative [education-based collaborations](#) that could be models for supporting expansion of the geriatrics/long-term care workforce in partnership with public health agencies across the country. The webinar was hosted for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention by The John A. Hartford Foundation.

On December 13, the RTNH National and Statewide Advisory Group, chaired by Alice Bonner, PhD, RN, FAAN, senior advisor for aging with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, held their second quarterly meeting. The group had not met since the early days of the initiative and were brought up to date on the activities of the partners from nursing homes and schools of nursing which have been working to implement the RTNH strategies, including the Age Friendly Health Systems framework for resident care. Since August, the RTNH members have worked to determine measures to track the workforce and resident progress over the course of the initiative. Howard Degenholtz, PhD, professor of health policy and management and faculty affiliate of the Center for Bioethics and Health Law at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health has been named as the project evaluator and will support project and survey data collection and analysis of insights from nursing students, faculty, and nursing home staff and administrators. The Advisory Group meeting included a discussion on education and challenges being faced by the project partners and national counterparts, such as retention and recruitment of frontline workers and disruptions to training and clinical site placements caused by COVID-19.

The PA Health Funders Collaborative Sets 2022 Priorities and Strategies

The PA Health Funders Collaborative (PHFC)—a network of 40 health foundations across PA that works at the intersection of health philanthropy and policy—held its 14th Annual Conference on December 1 and 8. PHFC is chaired by Jewish Healthcare Foundation President and CEO Karen Feinstein and HealthSpark Foundation President and CEO Russell Johnson and directed by Ann Torregrossa.



PHFC members attended the virtual conference.

PHFC members presented position papers on seniors, the safety net system, the health care workforce, strengthening the public health systems, reviving the PA WIC program, and behavioral health (including the transition to the 988 crisis response system). The position papers were further informed by presentations by Brian Castrucci, DrPH, MA, president and CEO of the de Beaumont Foundation, and Matt Wintersteen, PhD, assistant professor and director of research in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Thomas Jefferson University/Jefferson Medical College. Christopher Borick, professor of political science and director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion, also discussed what we can learn from the current polling insights as we look ahead to important Pennsylvania elections in 2022.

Throughout the conference, PHFC members identified several priority areas for 2022 in addition to the position paper topics, including education function, early childhood health and wellbeing, workforce development, countering misinformation, the continuing opioid epidemic, and teen mental health. The members also identified cross-cutting priorities around advancing health equity, leveraging financing structures, and supporting the capacity of the non-profit sector and safety net system. They expressed strong interest in disseminating data-driven messages and organizing fact-based informational meetings on these topics with key policymakers, staffers, and stakeholders in 2022. The conference concluded with a widespread sentiment that health funders can make a large, collective impact when they work together on shared aims and priorities.

Coalition for Quality at the End of Life Explores Communication on Advance Care Planning and Hospice/Palliative Care

The Coalition for Quality at the End of Life (CQEL) held a statewide quarterly meeting on December 2, organized by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF). Forty attendees joined the Zoom meeting, hosted by JHF COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts, MBA, and JHF Medical Advisor Judy Black, MD. The virtual format implemented since the start of the pandemic has helped to increase participation of CQEL members from across the commonwealth. In-person meetings typically drew half as many attendees, noted Zionts.



Experts from across Pennsylvania joined the CQEL meeting.

The first presentation featured James W. Joseph, MD, HMDC, FAAFP, medical director at Geisinger Hospice and Geisinger at Home Palliative Care and co-leader of Geisinger's myCareChoices program, and Karen L. Adams, RN, BSN, program director of advanced illness for Geisinger Health System and co-leader of myCareChoices. They discussed their approach to educating clinicians on person-centered communication with a particular focus on patients' understanding of their illness and their choices for treatment and the approach to measuring success.

Justin A. Yu, MD, MS, assistant professor of pediatrics and assistant director of community outreach at the Palliative Research Center in the divisions of Supportive and Palliative Care and Pediatric Hospital Medicine at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, presented on research looking to address racial inequities in use of hospice and palliative care as well as advance care planning. His project involves developing a church-based curriculum to train lay health ministers to have conversations about these topics with members of Pittsburgh's Black community.

Richard Weinberg, MD, clinical associate professor in the Division of General Internal Medicine, Section of Palliative Care and Medical Ethics at the University of Pittsburgh, discussed proposed legislation in Pennsylvania on medical and geriatric parole, which would make incarcerated people who have a chronic medical condition or terminal illness or who are 55 years or older and have served 25 years or half their sentence eligible for parole.

A highlight of the meeting was the unveiling of the new PA POLST curriculum, which will launch in 2022, funded by a grant from the McElhattan Foundation. Dr. Black walked the attendees through examples of the revised curriculum on the PA POLST website, which will incorporate self-paced online learning as well as an abbreviated virtual course and an updated in-person course. The curriculum features video learning components and interactive CQEL members are invited to review and provide feedback on the curriculum prior to launch.

The next CQEL meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 17th, 2022, from 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm and will feature a discussion about the intersection of advance care planning policy and practice with Dr. Robert Arnold and Dr. Emily Jaffe, moderated by Dr. Alexander Nesbitt.

PA POLST Featured in New Edition of Seniors Blue Book

The PA POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) program, coordinated by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, is featured in an article in the Hospice Care section of the Fall 2021–Winter 2022 Greater Pittsburgh Area Seniors Blue Book, a directory of resources related to aging well. The article describes the purpose of the POLST form, a medical order completed by a healthcare provider to document patients' wishes for care as their health declines. It also differentiates between advance directives and POLST. The digital version of the Blue Book is available [here](#). Print copies can be picked up at local Walgreens pharmacies, or contact Apryl Garrett at 412-551-5951 to request a mailed copy.



JHF Staff and Salk Fellows Gather for Holiday Celebration and Networking Session

To celebrate the end of another challenging but rewarding year, the JHF staff and 2021 Salk Health Activist Fellows gathered for a holiday celebration event on Wednesday, December 1st at [Contemporary Craft](#). Attendees took in exhibitions on art sustaining community and food insecurity and enjoyed social time together.



An exhibit on food growth captivated JHF staff and Salk fellows.



Staff enjoyed meeting some of the Salk Fellows in-person.

JHF, HCF, PRHI Boards Meet in New Offices for First Time, Welcome New JHF Board Members

On December 6, the Boards of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF), Health Careers Futures and the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, gathered in-person for the first time since early 2020. Board members toured the new offices and heard a state of the union presentation from Ford Koles, Jr, vice president and national spokesperson at Advisory Board, titled *A Generational Opportunity to Reshape the Industry*.

The JHF Board approved and welcomed new JHF Board members starting in 2022:



Board members listen to a presentation from Ford Koles, Jr.

Rick Siger, Sr. Advisor to the President for Economic Development & Community Engagement, Carnegie Mellon University
David Finegold, Dphil, President, Chatham University
Ken Ho, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, Medical Director, Pitt Mens Study, University of Pittsburgh/UPMC

Harry P. Litman, Esq., former U.S. Attorney and Deputy Assistant Attorney General and current host of the Talking Feds podcast

Daniel Pituch, MD, DMD, Chief of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, UPMC Mercy and UPMC Shadyside

Roni Rosenfeld, PhD, Professor, Carnegie Mellon University

Caryn Rubinoff, JD, President, The Rubinoff Company

Maria Kalevitch, PhD, Dean, School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science and Associate Provost for Innovation and Academic Outreach, Robert Morris University

Apply for the 2022 Teen Mental Health Advocacy Series

Make your voice heard and join a movement for change! **Apply for the 2022 Teen Mental Health Advocacy Series**, a weekly series for high school students in Pennsylvania, hosted by the PA Youth Advocacy Network.

With teens in the lead, the PA Youth Advocacy Network created a starter [agenda](#) of priorities for teen mental health across Pennsylvania. Our goal is to connect youth across Pennsylvania with opportunities to advance these priorities and promote teen mental health.

Teens participating in the series will learn key advocacy skills like community organizing, using data and community-based participatory research in advocacy, building energy and action around your cause, and connecting with elected officials.

Teams of participants will develop advocacy projects based on the PA Youth Advocacy starter agenda, like promoting a mental health awareness and plan for Teen Mental Health Awareness Day events to be held in May 2022, advocating for school counselor resources by meeting with policymakers, and helping to inform mental health curriculum plans in schools.

Sessions will be held weekly starting February 2nd, 2022 through March 23rd, 2022, on Wednesdays from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm on Zoom, and there may be an opportunity for optional in-person workgroup meetings. The series is open to high school students living in Pennsylvania. No previous advocacy or teen mental health experience is required, and each participant will receive a \$150 stipend upon completion of the series.

Apply by Friday, January 14th, 2022. [Click here to apply](#)



Youth Advocates Connor Dalgaard and Luna Plaza Call for Teens to Join Mental Health Cause

Over the past year, youth mental health advocates Connor Dalgaard and Luna Plaza have been important leaders in the [PA Youth Advocacy Network's](#) work to promote teen mental health. Gearing up for a [new teen leadership series](#) in February, Dalgaard, Plaza, and the Network are calling for more teens across Pennsylvania to get involved.

At the encouragement of his school psychologists, Dalgaard joined his school's mental health club and later become involved with the PA Youth Advocacy Network. Now a senior at West Allegheny High School, he helped to draft a [proclamation](#) to declare May 23 as Teen Mental Health Awareness Day in the city of Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania, which was approved by the Pittsburgh City Council and Governor Tom Wolf. Dalgaard is also a freelance writer published in [PublicSource](#), a youth voice and innovation fellow with the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh, and he plays tennis and volunteers at his local library.



Luna Plaza (left) and Connor Dalgaard

Plaza, who is completing her senior year at Pittsburgh CAPA for dance, grew up with an eating disorder and had difficulty accessing resources. The supportive environment she found at Pittsburgh CAPA led her to advocate for better mental health resources for other students, and she joined the PA Youth Advocacy Network in 2021. Plaza also acts with the Urban Impact Foundation's theatre troupe, teaches younger dance students at Urban Impact, and organizes for social justice causes in her community.

After the events of the past two years, "We need to promote healing," says Plaza. To find joy in small moments, Plaza spends time outside in sunny, green spaces with her dog and enjoys delicious meals. Dalgaard finds mornings motivating, especially his early walks to the bus stop.

Both Plaza and Dalgaard are committed to expanding mental health resources for teens and raising awareness. With the guidance of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation teen mental health team, Plaza, Dalgaard, and other Pittsburgh teens drafted an [agenda](#) of advocacy priorities for the PA Youth Advocacy Network. Dalgaard and Plaza are focused on changing school policy to allow mental health days, raising awareness, and building connections in the community.

In spring 2022, the PA Youth Advocacy Network will invite high school students across Pennsylvania to join the [Teen Mental Health Advocacy Series](#). In weekly virtual sessions, youth advocates will learn key activism skills and join projects based on the Network's agenda of priorities, to promote teen mental health.

This program is driven by feedback from teens on how to best promote teen mental health, and Dalgaard and Plaza are excited to meet the future participants. "You'll be learning things about

policy, storytelling, how to spread a message. You'll meet a lot of other like-minded teens and build relationships, both professionally and personally," says Dalgaard. The advocates encourage teens to get involved, even if they have no previous advocacy experience.

To new youth advocates, Dalgaard advises, "Be excited to meet new people." He says that through the Network, he is glad to have met Plaza and to combine their different experiences through advocacy. Their collaboration has been powerful in calling for change around teen mental health.

Plaza says, "We all have a voice, and we all should use it, and share it, and get the word out about issues that are impacting our communities."