

## June 2022 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more

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## Too Hot for July Takes to the Streets in a Triumphant Return

After a two-year hiatus, [Too Hot For July](#), Pittsburgh's only HIV Biomedical Awareness Event, made its triumphant in-person return on June 2 outside KLVN Coffee Lab in Larimer. Hosted by [AIDS Free Pittsburgh](#) in partnership with [True T Pgh](#), the event kicked off Pride Month festivities in the region with an unparalleled combination of entertainment and education. More than 1,000 people attended the free event, which was created to recognize, commemorate, and celebrate those in our community who are most affected by HIV.



Photo by: Ryan Michael White

This year marked the fourth Too Hot For July event. The pandemic put a pause on the in-person celebrations, but AIDS Free Pittsburgh hosted a virtual event in 2020, [Too Hot for July: Black AF](#), which featured an HIV mini-conference, a [Queer State of the Union](#) led by True T Pgh, and a Quarantine Ball. More than 6,000 people tuned in to view the programs.

Educating the public about HIV can be difficult. The purpose of Too Hot For July is to honor those lost to, living with, and affected by HIV, and to educate the community about advancements in prevention and treatment that can end the epidemic. HIV prevention and treatment strategies have exponentially improved over the last decade, and while local HIV infections have decreased, there are still alarming disparities among certain populations, particularly young Black men who have sex with men. While HIV can affect anyone, these statistics indicate a public health crisis that is completely preventable, but often overlooked. Awareness events like Too Hot For July bring much-needed attention to this issue in the community.



Photo by: Ryan Michael White

This year's event took over a full block on Hamilton Avenue and featured a street dance party with pumping sets by premiere Pittsburgh DJs Clark Price, Huny, Based Grace, and DJ Pills; a vogue dance battle with cash prizes and trophies coordinated and judged by leaders from Pittsburgh Ballroom; performances by SUPA N x C, Timbeleza, and The Pittsburgh Samba Group; and an energetic headlining performance by nationally known artist Saucy Santana. Watch a recap of the extravaganza [here](#) by filmmakers Andy Esper and Jordan Taylor.

In addition to the lively music and dance performances, the event highlighted resources for health and wellness for the LGBTQIA+ community. Free HIV and STD testing and other wellness services were provided by Allegheny Health Network's Center for Inclusion Health, Allies for Health + Wellbeing, and Central Outreach Wellness Center. Healthcare professionals were available to answer questions about HIV prevention, treatment, and general wellness. New this year was a marketplace highlighting businesses owned by women, BiPOC, and

LGBTQIA+ Pittsburghers. During the event, 84 people were tested for HIV and 27 community partners provided health awareness education.

Too Hot For July is a gift to Pittsburgh made possible through the support of many community partners and the following sponsors: Allies for Health + Wellbeing, Central Outreach Wellness Center, Highmark/Allegheny Health Network, Jewish Healthcare Foundation, Metro Community Health Center, Pitt Men's Study, Pittsburgh Pirates, Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania, and Shepherd Wellness Community.

AIDS Free Pittsburgh is a coalition of regional stakeholders to support and improve the care of people living with HIV/AIDS as well as those most affected by HIV. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is a founding member. True T Pittsburgh is a community platform for LGBTQIA+ resource sharing, queer arts, activism, and entertainment.



JHF Staff at Too Hot for July.

## PA Department of Health Awards Ryan White Program over \$10 Million for Services for People Living with HIV

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation's (JHF) HIV/AIDS program has been awarded over \$10 million from the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) for the 2022–2023 fiscal year, which will be used to improve the quality of and access to medical care and support for people living with HIV across Pennsylvania. The award includes both Ryan White Part B funding for people residing in the 11-county region of southwest Pennsylvania and Minority AIDS Initiative funding for Black, indigenous, and people of color residing across the Commonwealth. This award is an increase on previous annual funding and builds on 30 years of partnership between PA DOH and JHF.



As the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program fiscal agent for Part B and Minority AIDS Initiative services, JHF's HIV/AIDS team will manage the grant and partner with organizations across the Commonwealth that provide medical or supportive services to people living with HIV. In addition to the 21 service organizations funded through this grant in recent years, three more organizations are set to receive funding beginning in the 2022–2023 fiscal year. The total amount awarded to service organizations is also an approximately 25% increase relative to recent years, which will allow all organizations to grow and expand their services.

Combined, these organizations expect to serve over 5,000 people living with HIV and will provide services including housing support, food access, assistance paying utility bills, transportation assistance to medical appointments, mental health support, peer support, health education, and medical and non-medical case management.



This award is in addition to the \$1.2 million of Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) funding granted to the Southwest Pennsylvania region for the upcoming fiscal year, which provides short-term and permanent housing services and support to people living with HIV. JHF also serves as this fiscal agent for HOPWA funding.

## Patient Safety Technology Challenge Advisory Board Holds First Meeting

Imagine that you had the opportunity to build a safer healthcare system from scratch. What would you envision?

This is the question at the core of the upcoming *Patient Safety Technology Challenge*, launching this fall. The recently appointed advisory board for the Challenge met for the first time on June 21 to discuss the details of the upcoming two-part initiative, which will incorporate a competition and a virtual exhibit of the winning ideas. Members of the country's leading patient safety organizations and academic centers reviewed the components of the Challenge and provided input on key considerations to further refine the concept.



The Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), lead sponsor of the Challenge, will invite both student teams and collegiate teams (student and faculty) to pitch technological solutions to address the most common patient safety challenges facing health care today. The winners will then contribute toward a virtual exhibit that will serve as a window into the future of health care, planned for early 2023. The Challenge will encourage students to create interdisciplinary teams and collaborate across their schools—or even across universities—to come up with novel approaches to patient safety challenges. The collegiate teams will similarly unite faculty and students from within a university to re-envision health care with fresh ideas to improve safety.

Students are the future clinical and administrative leaders, leaders in artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics and autonomous systems who will work for the leading tech companies across the globe, and this competition aims to catalyze their ideas and solutions for a better future. Aviation, oil, gas, nuclear power, and space tech industries have all rapidly developed and implemented innovative technologies, but health care is severely behind. COVID-19 further exposed the deficiencies in health care that have existed for decades, and data now validates that the pandemic exacerbated the rate of preventable patient harm. Some of the most successful national patient safety improvements such as central line-associated blood stream infections suffered significant setbacks.

Progress can be made when technological solutions are paired with the sociotechnical aspects of care, and the Challenge seeks to empower students and faculty to break through apathy and inaction to paint a picture of a safer healthcare system.

The *Patient Safety Technology Challenge* would not be possible without the partnership of many of the nation's leading patient safety organizations and academic centers for technological advancement in health care, including:

- AcademyHealth
- Auton Lab at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU)
- Center for Lean Engagement & Research (CLEAR) at the University of California, Berkeley
- Center for Military Medicine Research (CMMR) at the University of Pittsburgh
- Center for Patient Safety Research and Practice at Brigham and Women's Hospital
- HealthySimulation.com
- Innovation Works
- Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)
- The Leapfrog Group
- MedStar Health National Center for Human Factors in Healthcare
- National Quality Forum (NQF)
- Partnership to Advance Responsible Technology (P.A.R.T.)
- Patient Safety Movement Foundation
- Pittsburgh Center for Artificial Intelligence Innovation in Medical Imaging

To learn more about the Challenge, join one of the three upcoming informational sessions in July.

- [RSVP here](#) for Tuesday, July 12, from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm ET
- [RSVP here](#) for Wednesday, July 20, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm ET
- [RSVP here](#) for Monday, July 25, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 pm ET

## JHF Sponsors First Annual PART Summit in Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh is setting the course for more thoughtful and ethical technological innovations, and this work gained momentum at the first Responsible Technology Annual Summit on June 14. The inaugural Summit was hosted by the [Partnership to Advance Responsible Technology \(PART\)](#), an independent, Pittsburgh-based nonprofit focused on working with the public and private sector to ensure technology is in the right direction for the benefit of the many. The Summit explored the ways the Pittsburgh region can lead the global discussion on what responsible technology means, and how it can influence society and the future.



The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) was the presenting sponsor of the Summit, giving attendees across the academic, technology, startup, corporate, and nonprofit sectors the opportunity to learn about the great opportunity to translate artificial intelligence and big data solutions to address the challenges of medical error. Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, JHF president and CEO, outlined JHF and the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) patient safety innovation initiatives, including the effort to establish a [National Patient Safety Board](#) and PRHI's work to establish Pittsburgh as a global hub of autonomous patient safety. Dr. Feinstein's tone-setting presentation set the groundwork for the action-oriented discussions throughout the day. The agenda included a panel on disinformation and technology; a discussion on AI engineering for change; a conversation about individual readiness and economy preparedness focused on equity and education; and a concluding keynote from Renée Cummings, an AI ethicist, criminologist, criminal psychologist, urban technologist, instructor, and data activist at the University of Virginia. JHF was proud to support the continuation of PART's work and looks forward to building out further the broad coalition of partners working toward thoughtful and innovative autonomous safety technology.

## Patient Safety Fellowship Takes a Fresh Look at the Persistent Problem of Medical Error

Harms related to preventable medical error remain a leading cause of death in the United States, but health care has been slow to adopt solutions that have shown promise in other complex industries to create safer outcomes. To foster and inspire future leaders who can advance a safer, technology-enabled future, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's 2022 Patient Safety Fellowship explores pathways to bring innovative safety solutions to health care.

The future of patient safety will be shaped by those who can creatively use new and existing technologies to better promote safer care. This summer's 29 fellows — representing 12 different universities and 18 different disciplines — come from diverse backgrounds and are excited to delve into patient safety solutions.



Since June 1, the Fellowship has been exploring the problem of patient safety through a variety of lenses. The curriculum has been designed using the Up Next for Patient Safety podcast as a jumping point to delve into critical issues and novel solutions. The initial sessions provided overviews of the history of efforts to improve patient safety, and outline some of the current challenges and stakes for addressing systemic patient safety issues. Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, Jewish Healthcare Foundation CEO and president, kicked off the program introducing fellows to the decades-long work of the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, and the recent efforts to establish a National Patient Safety Board. Martin Hartlie, JD, president and CEO of Project Patient Care and Director of MedStar Institute for Quality and Safety, provided additional context



to fellows about the current state of patient safety and the work to integrate patient-advocates into ongoing efforts.



Week three featured a panel on tech-enabled Lean for quality improvement in health care. Tina Hahn, MSW, vice president of CIN Development and Value-Based Integration at Allegheny Health Network; Tania Lyon, PhD, director of Organizational Performance Improvement; and Ken Segel, MBA, CEO & managing director of Value Capture, shared examples from their work in applying quality improvement strategies. In week four, Jonathan Gleason, MD, executive vice

president and chief medical officer at Prisma Health, and Raj Ratwani, PhD, director of MedStar Health National Center for Human Factors in Healthcare and vice president of Scientific Affairs at MedStar Health Research Institute, shared their experience using human factors engineering in health care. Week five explored opportunities for the present and future of big data analytics and technology with Michael McShea, MBA, group chief scientist at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab.

Participants have valued the opportunity to engage with leading experts and to learn from each other. 2022 Fellow Anna Solomon, a third-year student in the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program at Duquesne University, shared, “The fellowship has been an invaluable experience thus far. Between their seasoned leadership and the resolve and creativity of the fellows, I am certain significant progress will be made in this initiative. As a future clinician, I am excited to use what I have learned to be a force for change within my own practice.”

## Perinatal Health Equity Champions Program Kicks Off

A kickoff session was held June 14 for the new Perinatal Health Equity Champions Program, a year-long engagement model designed to build capacity in the birthing workforce to help address racial disparities and improve maternal health care in the Pittsburgh region. The cohort includes 14 Champions from 10 different organizations including doulas, a midwife, a Smart Start coordinator, a finance coach and wellness advocate, a mentor, and four UPMC Magee OB/GYN residents. Seven hospital partners representing three hospital systems – the Women’s Institute at Allegheny Health Network, St. Clair Health, and UPMC Women’s Service Line at Magee’s Women’s Hospital – also participated in the initial session.



The Champions Program, facilitated by WHAMglobal and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF), aims to address silos between birth workers in the community setting and the hospital setting to drive solutions to holistic care, strengthen continuity of care, and bridge resources across the maternal care continuum. Program participants are being asked to collaborate on how both community and hospital birthworker environments can come together to better understand each other's roles and develop interventions toward improving Black maternal care.

The program is part of the *Pittsburgh: A Safer Childbirth City* initiative aimed at transforming the city into a safer, more equitable, and more accessible place to give birth, and is administered through seven virtual content sessions running through October, and then it will be followed by a six-month pilot of aligned quality improvement initiatives.

The goal is for Champions to complete and present their work to regional and state healthcare teams and employ lessons learned in their current work environment. For mothers and birthing people to receive a comprehensive and just continuum of care that results in a safe pregnancy and birth, there must be intentional collaboration and support among perinatal health workers across hospital and community levels. At the first session, champions were welcomed, introduced to one another and the program, and created a shared space for discussion using the Pittsburgh Gender Equity Report's guidelines. The topics of systemic racism, Black birth trauma, and how to better understand the current condition and its roots to address issues in care were all discussed.

Participants were also encouraged to reflect on key takeaways from the session and engage virtually on Tomorrow's HealthCare<sup>SM</sup>, a web-based platform for collaboration, discussion, program content and resources.

Over the years, JHF has demonstrated the important role that leaders or champions play in conceiving, testing, and sustaining quality improvement in health care. Past Champions programs have included Physician Champions, Nurse Navigator, Pharmacy Agents for Change, EMS Champions, Medical Assistant/Licensed Practical Nurse Champions, and Community Health Worker Champions. JHF's Champions Programs have brought process engineering principles, systems thinking, and other quality improvement tools into the hands of the region's healthcare professionals.



## *Birthing a Movement* Celebrates Birth Workers at Three Rivers Arts Festival

WHAMglobal's *Birthing a Movement* multi-day event and exhibit at the Three Rivers Arts Festival received a great reception over the first weekend of June. *Birthing a Movement* included commissioned artwork, interactive artwork, local birthworkers discussing their work, and *Anthropology of Motherhood's* "Culture of Care Exhibit," a combination showcasing the power and emotion that goes into birthwork and celebrating the various frontline workers within maternal care. An estimated 7,000 attendees visited the *Birthing a Movement* exhibit during its opening

weekend. The event was hosted in partnership with *Anthropology of Motherhood (AoM)*, an ongoing curation of artwork and design that engages in the complex visual, material, and emotional experiences of motherhood, caregiving, and maternal labor.



The commissioned artwork created for *Birthing a Movement* included portraits of local birthworkers in Pittsburgh, action photos of maternity care, and testimonies of maternal healthcare workers. This artwork is now a permanent part of AoM's exhibit and will be shown at future galleries and festivals. *Birthing a Movement* could not have succeeded without Fran Flaherty, the curator of AoM, as well as Lena Chen, the artist responsible for the interactive Full Circle wreath exhibit.

"When I first conceived the idea of Anthropology of Motherhood, I did not have detailed goals in mind other than wanting to provide a space for caregivers to feel valued through my art practice. Working with WHAMglobal was such a compatible and heartfelt partnership that we were able to reach a unified goal," said Fran Flaherty, founder of *Anthropology of Motherhood*. "Remarkable things happen when artists partner with public health organizations. We are able to reach a broad audience that can make significant cultural changes to improve the quality of our lives."

Local birthworkers from across Pittsburgh were the event's biggest stars, as they also participated throughout the three-day opening weekend by speaking with guests, joining in Chen's wreath exhibit, and serving as subjects for the artwork.



“It was an honor to take part in such a beautiful experience,” said Kieashia Edwell, founder and birth doula at Elephant Song Doula Services. “The *Birthing a Movement* event was an opportunity for my fellow birthworkers and me to feel supported and loved, and to share both the beauty and the hurt of this very important calling.”

The organizations that were represented by the birthworker participants included AHN Midwives at Jefferson Hospital, Elephant Song Doula Services, Hello Neighbor, the PA Doula Commission, Serene Birthing, St. Clair Hospital, and The Midwife Center.

[\*Birthing a Movement\*](#) is an annual community event hosted by WHAMglobal to raise awareness and activate local moms, families, maternal health providers, experts, and the greater community around maternal health issues.

## Health Careers Futures and WHAMglobal Boards Examine Maternal & Child Health Initiatives During Joint Meeting

On June 22, the Health Careers Futures (HCF) and WHAMglobal boards convened in a joint meeting to discuss the evolution, impact, and future of the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PA PQC) and related maternal health efforts.

Debra L. Caplan, MPA, chair of WHAMglobal and Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) boards, and Patricia L.

Siger, HCF Board co-chair, provided opening remarks on JHF’s history around women’s health, noting that the PA PQC provides an example of what progress looks like when there is alignment of committed partners, thoughtful plans, and the right team in place.



Robert Ferguson, MPH, JHF chief policy officer, set the foundation for the combined boards’ discussion of the origins of and future direction for the PA PQC, which was created through efforts of stakeholders and providers in Pennsylvania who decided the time had come to work together to address the health challenges facing postpartum women. PA PQC Advisory Group co-chairs James A. Cook, MD, director of newborn services at Geisinger Health System, and Aasta Mehta, MD, MPP, chief medical officer of women’s health at the Philadelphia Department of Health, discussed the PA PQC’s evolution, emerging as a result of work done by the Philadelphia Maternal Mortality Review Committee and the PA Premie Network, which enabled stakeholders to begin to

measure and evaluate data on maternal deaths via surveillance to identify local solutions. The growing opioid crisis subsequently set the stage for a focus on neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) and opioid use disorder (OAD) as well as racial ethnic disparities in outcomes for mothers and babies.

The PA PQC was established to act on these focus areas across the commonwealth with an initial grant from Henry A. Hillman Foundation, which allowed PA PQC to then leverage additional funds. To date, PA PQC includes 52 birth hospitals and newborn intensive care units (NICUs) (81% of live births) and 14 health plans. It promotes best practices to reduce racial/ethnic disparities around the focus areas and supports teams to implement key interventions using continuous quality improvement strategies.

Following the adoption of PA PQC Quality Improvement Initiatives, the percentage of hospitals using a validated screening tool to identify maternal substance use increased to 53 percent in 2022. As a result of another PAPQC initiative, 11 of 14 participating hospitals are now routinely counseling and immediately providing postpartum long-acting reversible contraceptives.

PA PQC Teams have increased the number of NICU or well-baby nurses trained in validated NAS assessment by 20 points. Program statistics also show a 29 point increase in the use of standardized non-pharmacologic protocols for NAS and a significant decrease in the number of babies who require medical therapy. In a two-year period, PA PQC teams increased the number of referrals to outpatient community supportive services, from 54 percent to 98 percent. Shawndel Laughner, MHA, BSN, CNML, RNC-OB, director of Women & Children's Services at St. Clair Hospital, shared insights on the impact of PA PQC work on healthcare teams, particularly in regard to morale and satisfaction while working within the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented.

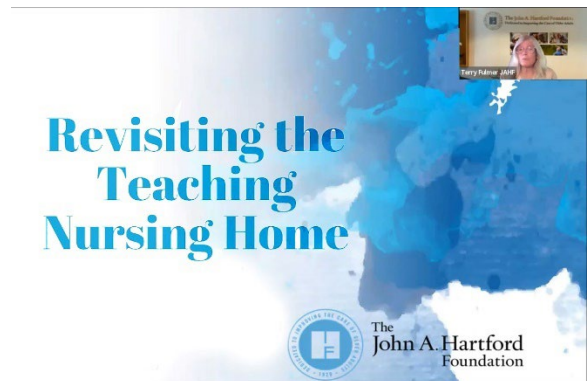
Looking toward the future of the PA PQC, Ferguson summarized the improvement opportunities based on the findings from the first-quarter surveys and comments on the restructured advisory group to help identify priorities. He then moderated a discussion centered on future areas of focus for the PA PQC.

Sally Zubairu-Cofield, MPH, WIC director at the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and Linda Kilby, PhD, RD, LDN, executive director at NORTH, Inc., manager of the Philadelphia WIC program, spoke about how the PA WIC program has been collaborating with statewide stakeholders on current and future goals, including how birth hospitals are increasing referrals to WIC and reducing barriers to access to benefits, such as having unmet social needs.

The meeting concluded with recorded remarks from Representative Lauren Underwood (IL-14) on the status of the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021.

## Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home Initiative Partners Reflect on Progress in Annual Grant Review

One June 21, Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) Aging Team staff and project partners for the [Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home Initiative](#) convened virtually to reflect on the past year's efforts as part of the annual grant review site visit with lead project funder The John A. Hartford Foundation. The site visit provided an opportunity to showcase progress on the grant during the first year and to look ahead at goals for ongoing collaboration between nursing homes and schools of nursing during year two of the grant.



Hosted by The John A. Hartford Foundation President Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN; and Senior Program Officer Amy Berman, RN, LHD (hon), FAAN, the four-hour presentation was facilitated by JHF COO and Chief Program Officer and RTNH Primary Investigator Nancy Zionts, MBA. Thirty-one project participants joined in the virtual meeting, including representatives from participating schools of nursing and nursing facilities, as well as representatives from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, and Pennsylvania Health Funders Collaborative.

The site visit included highlights of work in year one from representatives of the participating schools of nursing and nursing facilities, including: UPMC Canterbury Place, The Willows Presbyterian SeniorCare, and the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing in the Western Region; Centre Care Rehabilitation and Wellness and the Ross and Carol Nece College of Nursing at the Pennsylvania State University in the Central Region; Wesley Enhanced Living Mainline and the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in the Eastern Region. They shared their experiences on establishing strong linkages; reaching residents; developing a team to achieve maximum impact; incorporating Age-Friendly Health Systems within nursing facilities; the impact of COVID-19 on nursing facilities, student placement from schools of nursing, and the RTNH project; policy opportunities within nursing education and nursing facilities; and goals for the second year.

Priorities for year two are to continue to increase student engagement, grow strategic partnerships, disseminate learnings from the project, and identify opportunities to address workforce challenges such as pay parity within nursing facilities, loan forgiveness for students pursuing careers in nursing facilities, and increased exposure for students to career opportunities within skilled nursing.

An external grant evaluator provided feedback on the progress to date. Initial reactions and recommendations from the evaluator and the team at The John A. Hartford Foundation were extremely positive and supportive. A final report on the site visit will incorporate input from Berman and the evaluator.



## Participants Share Best Practices in PA Long-Term Care Learning Network Quarterly Learning Collaborative

On June 22, the Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Learning Network presented its first Quarterly Learning Collaborative to highlight peer-to-peer education delivered to nursing facility staff and leadership over the past three months. This webinar, attended by 142 participants from across the commonwealth, followed the quarter's educational theme of reducing avoidable hospitalizations from nursing facilities. In keeping with the "all teach, all learn" philosophy at the core of the Learning Network, representatives from several participating nursing facilities from across the state shared best practices on key topics covered in the weekly webinars, providing an opportunity for a deeper dive into this quarter's theme.



Nancy Zions, MBA, chief operating officer and chief program officer at Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF); and Wilmarie González, director of the Bureau of Quality Assurance and Program Analytics in the Department of Human Services Office of Long-Term Living, welcomed attendees and provided an overview of the afternoon's activities. Sharing work from their nursing facilities were Taylor McMahon, RN, assistant director of Nursing at Willows Centre Care Inc. of Presbyterian SeniorCare Network, on "Deprescribing Medications to Meet What Matters to the Residents"; Karen Robson, DNP, RN, BC, RAC CT, RN, instructor at the Pennsylvania Department of Veterans Affairs, on "Non-Pharmacologic Interventions to Address Neuropsychiatric Symptoms"; Dawn Snyder, RN, BSN, LNHA, administrator of Health Care Services at Providence Point Baptist Senior Family, on "The Clinical Collaborative Team," and Jill Arroyo, RN, BSN, of Souderton Mennonite Homes, on "Deprescribing Medications: Working with Medical Directors." In addition, Brian Stever, RN, of Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators, presented on "Promoting Excellence in the Assessment Process." Zions also shared highlights of the recent National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine report *The National Imperative to Improve Nursing Home Quality*, which provides a roadmap for addressing the challenges that have plagued nursing homes well before COVID-19 exacted its devastating toll. Participants benefited from lively discussion among presenters and attendees both during and following the presentations, furthering the opportunity for information-sharing and collaboration that are the hallmarks of this initiative.

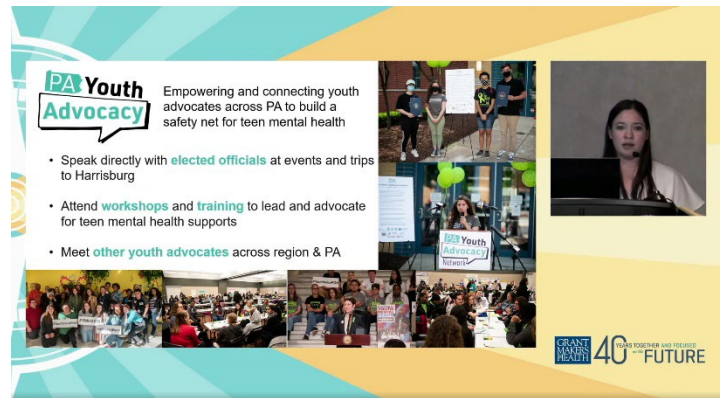
JHF launched the [Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Learning Network for Nursing Facilities](#) in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) and three managed care organizations of the Pennsylvania Community HealthChoices Program: UPMC Health Plan, PA Health and Wellness, and Amerihealth Caritas/Keystone. This work will advance and support the DHS strategic quality incentive program for nursing facilities.

The second quarter of educational webinars begins on July 7 on the topic of enhancing skills to assess key conditions. It will conclude on September 15 with the next Learning Collaborative, featuring best practices presentations from nursing facility partners across the Commonwealth.

## PA Youth Advocacy Network Successes Highlighted at Recent Conferences

The PA Youth Advocacy Network's efforts to increase awareness of teen mental health issues and inspire young people across Pennsylvania to action were highlighted at two national conferences this month.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness held its annual [NAMICon](#) virtually June 14–16. The theme for the conference was “Together for Mental Health.” PA Youth Advocacy Network members Connor Dalgaard and Luna Plaza were featured in one of the conference’s Express Talks, a series of short, pre-recorded, on-demand presentations offering a quick take on a story, case study, idea, or technique. Their talk, “Youth Take the Whole Table,” provided information about the [Youth-Led Advocacy Platform](#). They discussed creating meaningful youth-adult partnerships in advocacy and the importance of taking care of yourself as a youth advocate to prevent burnout. They provided inspiration for youth to lead mental health efforts in their own communities.



On June 29 at the Grantmakers in Health Annual Conference on Health Philanthropy in Miami, Florida, Sarah Pesl, MSPPM, policy associate at Jewish Healthcare Foundation, presented in person and was joined by mental health advocate Connor Dalgaard virtually to deliver a Quick Take session titled “Amplifying Youth Voice to Promote Teen Mental Health.” The presentation focused on JHF’s unique approach to amplifying teen voice for system change. She highlighted the importance having teens involved in policy design and how various strategies can be used to engage with teens in a meaningful way. Connor shared his experiences as an advocate as part of the PA Advocacy Network.

## The Health Summit at Sundance Discusses Patient Safety, Workforce, & Long-Term Care Challenges

Many of the nation's leading thinkers and pioneers in health care gathered once again in Salt Lake City for The Health Summit at Sundance. This closed-door gathering provides an opportunity for off-the-record dialogue and novel thinking to develop solutions for emerging and long-standing systemic healthcare issues in the United States. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD participated as a moderator and a participant in two panels over the course of the four-day Summit, helping to advance insight into problems facing the long-term care, patient safety, and workforce sectors.



During the third day of the Summit, Dr. Feinstein participated in a panel on “Designing for healthy aging and long-term care.” The panel was moderated by Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN, president of The John A. Hartford Foundation, and included John Eu-Li Wong, MD, Isabel Chan Professor in Medical Sciences and Senior Vice President of Health Innovation & Translation at the National University of Singapore. Dr. Feinstein highlighted the unique challenges faced by aging women, including dramatic inequities and the insurance inadequacies of Medicaid and Medicare.

In the concluding panel of the Summit, Dr. Feinstein moderated “Designing better systems for health care” with panelists Pamela Peele, PhD, Vice President of Health Economics at UPMC and Associate Professor of Health Economics, Health Policy and Management at the University of Pittsburgh; LaQuandra Nesbitt, MD, MPH, Director of the District of Columbia Department of Health in Washington, DC; and Clay Johnston, MD, PhD, former dean of the Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Feinstein opened the conversation highlighting the current crisis within patient safety and the work to establish a National Patient Safety Board. The conversation focused on solutions and the transformation that is required to design a health system that is more equitable and effective at providing safer care for all.

## Karen Wolk Feinstein Presents at Lean Healthcare Research Symposium

On June 7, Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, president and CEO of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, provided the opening keynote address at the Center for Lean Engagement & Research in Healthcare (CLEAR) 6<sup>th</sup> annual Lean in Healthcare Research Symposium. Dr. Feinstein outlined the limitations and potential for Lean within health care, including the promising future made possible by new digital technologies, in her talk entitled, “Autonomous Technologies: Driving Digital Lean in Health Care.”





The Symposium reached an international audience of over 110 participants, including over 30 attendees together in Salt Lake City.

Dr. Feinstein detailed a vision for the future of lean, where digital technologies will relieve clinicians of environmental disruptions, distractions, and threats of harm. As has been seen in other industries, advanced operational systems paired with real-time information systems open new opportunities, and healthcare settings need to see a renewed partnership between new technology and the healthcare workforce in order to enable rapid corrective action and create sustainable solutions. Dr. Feinstein highlighted specific applications of technology-enabled Lean supports that could help doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other clinicians to make more informed decisions that support better care.

CLEAR is based out of the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley with the mission to conduct timely, relevant, and actionable research on Lean whole system transformation initiatives in health care.

## JHF Internship Program Resumes After One-Year Hiatus

The internship program has returned to the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) this summer with eight interns serving across all the Foundation's focus areas. This year's program has some notable differences from previous years, with a more customized schedule and program for each individual, including hybrid participation and skill-building grounded within the various program areas. The eight interns bring a diverse range of academic backgrounds and interests.



Gabriella Agostaro is a doctoral student at Duquesne University pursuing a degree in healthcare ethics. She will be supporting the JHF Aging Team with work on end-of-life initiatives and the Death and Dying Fellowship. Her areas of interest include end-of-life care and the equitable treatment of patients with psychiatric conditions.

Chelsea Dickson is pursuing her MPH in health policy and management at the University of Pittsburgh. She also is supporting the JHF Aging Team with a focus on dementia from a public health perspective as well as the Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home initiative. Previously, Dickson was a communications manager at the learning disability nonprofit Understood in New York.

Maria Mervine is a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh, pursuing Master of Social Work and Master of Business Administration degrees. She joined JHF as an intern for the HIV/AIDS program in 2021 and is continuing throughout the summer. Mervine received her bachelor's



degree from Allegheny College in 2018 and has spent the last four years working as a therapist at UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital.

Mikaela Moore is a second-year master's student at the University of Pittsburgh, pursuing an MPH in epidemiology with a certificate in health equity. She is working on JHF's women's health initiatives as part of WHAMglobal this summer. In the past, Moore has worked with nonprofit collaboratives and conducted research regarding systemic racism and health equity.

Rachel Niyonzigira is a registered nurse and licensed nursing home administrator who is pursuing her doctorate in health systems executive leadership at the University of Pittsburgh. She is working this summer specifically on the Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home project. Niyonzigira has been an intern with JHF since September 2021.

Lauren Paine, a West Virginia native, is passionate about promoting policies that improve equity, and she has joined JHF this summer to support patient safety initiatives. She is in an accelerated program at the University of Pittsburgh pursuing a bachelor's degree in the history and philosophy of science and an MPH in health policy and management. Paine is also participating in the JHF Patient Safety Fellowship this summer.

Luna Plaza graduated this year from Pittsburgh CAPA. She has been active as a leader with the PA Youth Advocacy Group since 2021, and she will be supporting teen mental health initiatives this summer.

Arin Ruhl is a recent graduate of Chatham University with a Bachelor of Science in mathematics and a women's leadership certificate. Ruhl is supporting communications at JHF this summer and looking forward to gaining experience working in the nonprofit sector.

## Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative Leads Physicians in Understanding Quality Improvement Strategies

For the second straight year, [Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative's](#) (PRHI's) Jennifer Condel, manager of Lean Healthcare Strategy; and Bruce Block, MD, shared their expertise in quality improvement techniques with two cohorts of physicians seeking to develop executive leadership skills. Health Care Quality, part of the Master of Medical Management for Physicians Program offered through Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, challenges practitioners to think about their work within health care in a more structured, systems-focused way.



Twenty-seven physicians from across the United States were introduced to the concept of A3 thinking, drawn from PRHI's lauded Perfecting Patient Care<sup>SM</sup> curriculum, concentrating on the physician's role in implementing and sustaining a Lean quality improvement culture through

alignment of strategic goals and application of collaborative approaches to systematic problem solving.

The four-week online course is structured with a flipped-classroom model, combining asynchronous virtual learning experience with weekly Zoom sessions and online discussions. Condel and Dr. Block guide experienced clinicians in developing techniques to both lead quality improvement efforts and support staff within their organizations currently involved in quality improvement efforts. Those new to QI culture and those with some familiarity with it find new ways to apply Lean approaches in the real-world setting while developing skills in observation of work, data analysis, and process mapping. The course culminates in students submitting a final essay or video describing how they intend to incorporate the learned concepts into their work as physician leaders.

## JHF Welcomes Three New Staff Members

Ashlee Carter has joined the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) as a program associate in June after over ten years working in the corporate, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors. In her role, she will be focusing on the Feinstein Fellowships, program training, communications, and other initiatives. Prior to joining JHF, she served as the development director at North Side Christian Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center focused on serving all,



regardless of their ability to pay. During her time at the health center, she was instrumental in securing 100% of funding from private and corporate sources to expand the dental clinic to serve more patients, increase employment opportunities, and increase the footprint of the health center. Ms. Carter's prior experience includes working with PNC Charitable Trusts and Eden Hall Foundation, assisting donors with identifying grantees that would assist funders with creating a sustainable impact in the community. Ms. Carter earned a bachelor's in Health Service Administration from Slippery Rock University and a master's in Professional Leadership with a focus in Nonprofit Management from Carlow University.

Colleen Rua recently joined JHF as accountant for the HIV/AIDS Program as part of the team managing the state grant funding for the service providers. Ms. Rua has a combined 20 years of grants administration experience at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University. She was also a grant specialist for a consulting firm, providing grant management expertise to various institutions. Ms. Rua's career took a different turn over the past eight years, as she moved from the academic setting to providing accounting and financial management for a specialty

construction firm. Ms. Rua earned her BS and MBA degrees from California University of Pennsylvania.

Katie Weidenboerner joined the Jewish Healthcare Foundation staff in June as a communications specialist. In her role, Ms. Weidenboerner translates project data and real-world outcomes of JHF's initiatives into stories of impact and calls to action across the organization's communication platforms. She most recently was Director of Communications at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. Prior to moving to Pittsburgh with her husband and daughter, she spent a decade in the newspaper industry serving in the roles of writer, columnist, photographer, social media manager, and assistant editor at the *Courier Express* in DuBois, Pa. She has also worked as a freelance contributor for the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and the Pennsylvania Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship. Weidenboerner is a past president of the St. Marys Youth Center and past secretary and board member of the Elk County Council on the Arts. She currently serves as the Majority Inspector of Elections in Ward 19 District 4 in Mount Washington. She is a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College and is currently pursuing a Master of Public Policy and Management degree at the University of Pittsburgh.

## AJ Harper Propels Action and Collaboration to Improve Quality of Care

AJ Harper, MBA, a longtime friend of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), has built a career rooted in the belief that a focus on patient safety, reducing clinical variation, and refining processes of care improves quality of care and can save lives. Harper spent 16 years as the president of the Healthcare Council of Western Pennsylvania, helping to transform it into one of the premiere healthcare regional trade associations in the country. He recently entered retirement and stepped down from his longtime position as a member of the PRHI board of directors, where he influenced the success of numerous patient safety initiatives across the region.



Born and raised in Beaver County, outside of Pittsburgh, Harper's interest in health care was sparked in high school during a shadowing program at Aliquippa Hospital. Although his uncle was a doctor, he quickly realized he didn't want to provide bedside care; rather, his passion was working to support those in direct patient care.

He attended The Ohio State University to pursue healthcare administration, and he started his first job in Cleveland, Ohio, spending almost 30 years there before returning to the Pittsburgh area. Whatever his role in an organization, Harper has emphasized employee relations principles of respect, honesty, transparency, and fair compensation. Those principles were shaped by watching

his mother, an Italian immigrant, be the victim of *ethnic* slurs and being inspired by faith-based traditions of care in action.

In Cleveland, Harper quickly earned his success by helping physicians understand that through reducing variation in care they were able to reduce costs and improve outcomes. Harper says the key to success is “finding a gap where one can work meaningfully.” In the wake of hospital consolidations across the nation and growth of competition, Harper said there will always be an opportunity for associations to help the community collectively and neutrally.

Harper made his way back to Pittsburgh in 2006 to serve as president of the Healthcare Council of Western Pennsylvania. He immediately set out with the goal of making the council more pragmatic and supportive of the C-suite in the face of growing regulations. One of his greatest achievements was a project focused on inequity in Medicaid reimbursement policies and funding distribution to hospitals. Working closely with the health systems they were able to identify the specific problems and revise the existing reimbursement methodology.

One of Harper’s first calls after relocating was to JHF’s president and CEO Karen Feinstein, as they shared a common passion for patient safety and improved outcomes. As Dr. Feinstein and PRHI co-founder Paul O’Neill established their work in Pittsburgh, Harper was an integral part of the Cleveland Health Quality Choice Program, the first non-governmental public report card on quality of care in the country. The Program analyzed patient satisfaction surveys, length of stay, and mortality/morbidity rates to direct patients to the facilities with the best outcomes. When he moved to Pittsburgh, Harper would become a trusted partner with PRHI, serving on its Board and helping to promote PRHI’s initiatives. In collaborating with PRHI over the decades, Harper appreciated that, at the core, its work was always about quality and admired PRHI’s commitment to improve patient safety and quality of care while also reducing clinical variation.

One example of Harper’s close partnership with PRHI goes back to the moment when the Affordable Care Act was passed. New funding became available for innovation and PRHI took on several big initiatives. Patient resource centers were created to improve outcomes for those who were being readmitted to the hospital for heart or lung disease. Dr. Feinstein turned to Harper to play a key role in the effort. Harper recruited six hospitals to share their performance metrics and improvement measures to find a pathway to better outcomes for patients. PRHI’s work and Harper’s work at the Healthcare Council have remained steadfast in growing, adapting, often overlapping, and consistently returning to the mission of making care safer and better.

Reflecting on progress and existing opportunities for advancements within patient safety, Harper pointed to four key areas to focus on to improve outcomes: 1. reducing variation with data and clinical registries; 2. addressing healthcare workforce shortages with artificial intelligence; 3. employing advanced electronic health records and systems to avoid medication errors; and 4. creating a national patient safety board to develop and share best practices. He remains an optimist that with these strategies and coordination, like the kind he was able to foster at the Healthcare Council, real progress can continue to be made to make care safer.

The scientific method says any organism that is not dynamic becomes static and dies. The same is true for any organization, community, or individual. As Harper enters retirement, he is excited



about the next generation of leaders stepping forward, especially those at the Healthcare Council. While they do, Harper plans to enjoy retirement with his family, but with his eyes to the future, he hopes to one day again join back in the work when the right timing and opportunity presents itself.