



March 2024 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more

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Bipartisan Legislation Makes Patient Safety a National Priority

U.S. Representatives Nanette Barragán (D-CA) and Michael Burgess (R-TX) have [announced](#) the reintroduction of the National Patient Safety Board Act, legislation to establish a public-private research and development team within the Department of Health and Human Services that is solely dedicated to preventing and reducing healthcare-related harms. This landmark bipartisan legislation, announced during Patient Safety Awareness Week, is a critical step to improve safety for patients and healthcare providers by adopting patient safety solutions.



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, medical error was the third leading cause of death in the United States, with estimates of more than 250,000 patients dying annually from preventable medical harm and [costs of more than \\$17 billion to the U.S. healthcare system](#). Two [recent studies](#) indicate a quarter of patients experience harm while receiving health care. Studies also indicate that [patient safety worsened during the pandemic](#), as have [the strains on the healthcare workforce](#).

The National Patient Safety Board Act would create a National Patient Safety Board (NPSB), a data-driven, nonpunitive, collaborative, independent research and development team housed within the Department of Health and Human Services to address safety in health care. Taking lessons from aviation, which has dramatically increased safety within the industry, the NPSB would identify and anticipate significant harm in health care; provide expertise to understand the causes and precursors to harm; and create solutions to prevent injury/harm in health care.

The NPSB is designed to work with existing federal agencies and long-standing patient safety organizations without displacing them—and without requiring additional burdensome data collection. A key component of the NPSB is a public–private partnership *Healthcare Safety Team* drawing on a range of expertise and designed to gain consensus on solutions.

The NPSB's solutions would focus on problems like medication errors, wrong-site surgeries, hospital-acquired infections, errors in pathology labs, and issues with transitions from acute to long-term care. By leveraging interdisciplinary teams of researchers and new technologies, including automated systems with AI algorithms, the NPSB's solutions would help relieve the burden of data collection at the frontline, while also detecting precursors to harm. Using human factors engineering principles, the NPSB would help create a better work environment and better equipment for providers to achieve safe, optimal care.

A coalition of leaders in health care, technology, business, academia, patient advocacy, and other industries has united to call for the establishment of an NPSB. A list of NPSB Advocacy Coalition members can be found at npsb.org.

"We have seen many valiant efforts to reduce the problem of preventable medical error, but most of these have relied on the frontline workforce to do the work or take extraordinary precautions," said Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative

and spokesperson for the NPSB Advocacy Coalition. "New attention is being paid to longstanding patient safety challenges, but substantial progress requires the creation of a national home for patient safety to promote substantive solutions, including those that deploy modern technologies to make safety as autonomous as possible."

"Patient safety is our number one priority for every decision we make as a health system. As a High-Reliability Organization, we strive for a culture of safety that results in the best possible patient outcomes, every time," said Dr. Stephen Evans, executive vice president and chief medical officer for MedStar Health. "This legislation is welcome news both for patients everywhere and healthcare leaders like us who are committed to continually improving the quality of clinical care."

"My family experienced two separate medical errors that resulted in brain damage to my newborn son and the death of my husband. The realization that no-one was in charge of collecting data about my family's harms, learning from those harms and developing solutions to prevent future harms was chilling," said Sue Sheridan, founding member of Patients for Patient Safety US. "We can no longer look the other way. A National Patient Safety Board will collect such data, learn from that data, and expedite the development of solutions so that everyone engaged in health care are as safe as possible as soon as possible."

The text of this bill can be found [here](#).

New Documentary “The Pitch” Reveals Unprecedented Healthcare Safety Innovation Using AI and VR Technology

To celebrate Patient Safety Awareness Week (March 10–16), [the trailer](#) to the Jewish Healthcare Foundation’s (JHF) forthcoming documentary *The Pitch: Patient Safety’s Next Generation* was released online, and a private preview of the film was held at The Manor Theatre in Squirrel Hill with friends of the Foundation.

The Pitch explores technological advances to protect patients and detect risks of unintended harm in health settings. From [Mike Eisenberg](#), the director of *To Err Is Human: A Patient Safety Documentary* (2018), the film showcases the importance of collaboration among those inside and outside of the medical space and creative ways innovators can bring technology to health care. Through expert interviews, recent technology breakthroughs, and one young innovator's journey into the frontiers of medicine, *The Pitch* offers optimism for the future of patient safety.

Immediately following the viewing, attendees enjoyed a conversation with Artur Dubrawski, a featured expert in the film and professor at Carnegie Mellon University; Dr. Paul Phrampus,



Invited guests watch *The Pitch* at The Manor Theater.



medical director of patient safety at UPMC; Lee Harrison, MD, a featured expert in the film and University of Pittsburgh professor in the Infectious Disease Division and Director of the Center for Genomic Epidemiology; Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, the film’s executive producer; and Eisenberg.

From left to right: Karen Feinstein, Artur Dubrawski, Lee Harrison, Mike Eisenberg, and Paul Phrampus discuss patient safety innovation.

The discussion focused on ways to reward and build a the importance of safety incidents,

market for patient safety innovations, producing actionable data on patient and how Tall Tale Productions chose Reetam Ganguli as the star of the film.

The Pitch: Patient Safety's Next Generation is an Official Selection of Cleveland International Film Festival and will have its world premiere at the festival on April 12, 2024. *The Pitch* has also been accepted to the JFilm Festival and will be available as part of their virtual programming from May 2-12.

Watch the trailer below and learn more about the film at thepitchdocumentary.com, and get a sneak peek into the film through an interview between Dr. Feinstein and the film's star innovator, Ganguli, on the latest episode of the podcast [Up Next for Patient Safety](#).

Read JHF’s 2023 Year in Review

In 2023, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation cultivated diverse partnerships spanning local, statewide, national, and international arenas, fostering a dynamic environment for driving change. Progress was made within each of JHF’s focus areas, including patient safety, senior care, women's health, teen mental health, HIV/AIDS, and workforce development.

[Read more about our year of impact in the JHF 2023 Year in Review.](#)



JHF Sponsors the Better Healthcare Policy Group Meeting in DC

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) sponsored the “Better Healthcare Policy Group” meeting held on March 12 at the office of The American College of Surgeons in Washington, DC. JHF Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH was present to represent JHF.



The meeting was designed to elicit input from a broader group of stakeholders to inform and advance a plan to address flaws in the current healthcare system. This plan, “[Better Care Plan: A Blueprint for Improving America’s Healthcare System](#),” was published in 2023 by Stephen Shortell, PhD, MPH, MBA, Blue Cross of California Distinguished Professor of Health Policy, Management Emeritus and Dean Emeritus, and Professor of Organizational Behavior Emeritus, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkley; John Toussaint, MD, internist, former healthcare CEO, and executive chairman of the board of Catalysis; George Halvorson, chairman and chief executive officer, Kaiser Permanente; Jon Kingsdale, PhD; Richard Scheffler, PhD, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Health Economics and Public Policy in the School of Public Health and Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley and director of the Nicholas C. Petris Center on Health Care Markets and Consumer Welfare; Allyson Schwartz, senior advisor of FTI Consulting; Peter Wadsworth, MBA, a former healthcare investment banker involved with managed care; and Gail Wilensky, PhD, economist and senior fellow at Project HOPE.

During the meeting, the 40 participants broke into a series of breakout discussions to provide feedback on the elements of the Blueprint, including provider certification for quality and team-based care, transitioning payers and purchasers to risk-adjusted prospective payment models, and a National Patient Safety System. The [National Patient Safety Board Act](#), introduced in the U.S. House in March was referenced throughout the day. The meeting also included updates from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Committee for Quality Assurance, National Quality Forum, The Leapfrog Group, and the Purchaser Business Group on Health. The participants expressed interest in joining follow-up discussions to identify next steps.

Teen Mental Health Advocacy Series Finale Focuses on Youth Perspective

The [PA Youth Advocacy Network](#), a Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) program, [launched](#) the 2024 Advocacy Series on January 31. Over the following eight weeks, teens learned advocacy skills, which they applied to their final presentations with school and community leaders on March 20. There were 27 series participants in grades 9-12 from 8 counties across the commonwealth, including Allegheny, York, Philadelphia,



Montgomery, Berks, Lancaster, Dauphin, and Washington Counties.

The Advocacy Series brings together high school students from a variety of backgrounds and skill sets to create a network of youth advocates empowered to share experiences and become advocates for mental health systems change both back in their communities and across Pennsylvania.

This year's projects focused on student organizing around different areas of the [PA Youth Advocacy Platform](#), leveraging different advocacy strategies, including:

- Using social media as a tool for mental health advocacy through creating communities, teaching skills, leveraging the platform to collect data, and using the platform to educate and share information to call others to action.
- Utilizing policy as a lever through conversations with elected and school officials to change school policy, practice, and curriculum.
- Conducting surveys to gain additional perspective to show the impact of mental health and the scope of issues impacting teen mental health and support for changes.
- Leveraging storytelling, testimonials, podcasts, and YouTube to raise awareness about an issue and start a dialogue around advocacy issues and mental health topics.

The series was further enhanced by the leadership of the youth facilitators who helped guide group projects, facilitate discussions, and teach content in the series: Tyler Nolt, Ja'Nya Coleman, Rikki Shukla, Ishani Bansal, Anna Chong, Abby Chong, and Saanvi Vereddigari. It was also enhanced by guest speakers who provided content and shared their insights, including Dr. Dana Milakovic, Mental Wellness and Trauma Specialist – Office for Safe Schools, PA Department of Education; Connor Dalgaard, Network Alum and Student Mental Health Advocate at Vassar College; and Zoe Masters from Pennsylvania Education Law Center.

As the series concludes, the students will take the advocacy skills they learned back to their communities, where they will be empowered changemakers. Through the PA Youth Advocacy Network, youth can find a community of organizations of youth and youth organizations willing to support their work, a platform to share their projects, and opportunities for statewide advocacy around mental health as they continue in their advocacy journeys.

PA Youth Advocacy Network and Partners Convene Teens at Allegheny Youth Voting Huddle

On March 15, 53 students from 11 area high schools came together at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh to discuss issues they care about and learn about the difference their vote can make in elections from the local to the national level. Key issues students identified as areas of concern included education access, reproductive choice, violence prevention, voter engagement, and mental health.



Not only is mental health an issue that teens want to see their elected officials committed to, but involvement in the electoral process can help with some of the anxiety and frustration caused during elections. A *Society for Research in Child Development* study found that volunteering and voting has been associated with positive mental health outcomes and getting involved with peers and organizations working to impact change creates a sense of social connectedness.

The Allegheny Youth Voting Huddle was organized by a consortium of partners, including the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's PA Youth Advocacy Network, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, National Council of Jewish Women, PA Youth Vote, New Pennsylvania Project, The Civics Center, and Alliance for Police Accountability.



Jessica Segal, LCSW, behavioral health program associate at JHF speaks with youth at the event.

After students shared their concerns and perspectives on key issues, Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey and Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Wayne Walters highlighted the importance of young people engaging in the democratic process in keynote addresses. Participants then learned the nuts and bolts of how to register their friends and how to conduct a school-based, youth-led, adult-supported voter registration drive. High school student leaders Orli Trumbull, Esmé Lagrosa, Michael Piasecki, and Nora Zangana led presentations and discussions on youth voting and on running a school-based voter registration drive.

In the lead-up to the event, student leaders participated in a 3-part series of workshops in democracy, civic education, and voting. They then worked with mentors from local organizations to plan the Huddle, and plan to continue, along with new leaders from the Huddle, to register and turn out young voters.

Death & Dying Fellows Put Learnings into Practice

Since 2015, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's (JHF's) Death & Dying Fellowship has endeavored to educate and inform the next generation of healthcare professionals on the nuances of communicating with patients and families experiencing serious illness and the end of life. On March 25, the fellowship concluded its 10th iteration with an opportunity to apply the learnings from the program in a role-play activity depicting serious illness conversations. Twenty-five fellows from a diverse range of backgrounds engaged with a multidisciplinary faculty of experts from the field throughout the nine-week experience.



Death and Dying fellows prepare to tour Family Hospice of UPMC and UPMC Canterbury Place.

This year’s fellowship incorporated a mix of in-person sessions, site visits, and fully virtual sessions. Led by JHF staff Nancy Zions, MBA, COO and chief program officer, Lisa George, MPH, CHES, program manager, and Maureen Saxon Gioia, MSHSA, BSN, RN, nurse project manager, the program included a visit to UPMC Children’s Hospital, where they heard about the opportunities to support children and families dealing with serious illness, and a visit to Family Hospice of UPMC and UPMC Canterbury Place, where they heard from staff about caring for residents and patients at the end of life and the support they provide to families during serious illness and death. Virtual sessions focused on advance care planning conversations in the primary care setting; the role of the hospital ethics team during serious illness; POLST; the role of EMS at the end of life; conversations with community-dwelling older adults; the meaning behind requests for physician aid in dying; the nuances of end-of-life conversations in patients with cancer or end-stage renal disease; and grief, loss, and spirituality.

As the fellowship concluded, fellows reflected on their experience and how the learnings will impact their future work.

“The Death and Dying Fellowship has been an incredible experience,” said fellow Molly Rosado, a master of science student in counseling psychology at Robert Morris University. “I now have amazing connections in the healthcare community, and I received an abundance of insight on how to effectively navigate conversations regarding end of life.”



“The Death and Dying Fellowship deepened my scholarly understandings while also providing practical knowledge in caring for patients with terminal illnesses,” commented Yuchen Zhang, a PhD student at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing.

David Hage, MSW, PhD, noted, “The JHF Death & Dying Fellowship has advanced my knowledge of palliative care, hospice, and

numerous beneficial supports for those facing severe illness and end-of-life. I highly recommend this fellowship to any healthcare professionals.”

The program would not have been possible without the support of numerous valued partners, including the following: Janet Arida, PhD, senior grief and clinical services specialist and outreach and education coordinator, Highmark Caring Place; Robert Arnold, MD, Distinguished Service Professor of Medicine, director, Institute for Doctor-Patient Communication, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and medical director, UPMC Palliative and Supportive Institute; Theresa Brown, PhD, BSN, RN, nurse and author; Theresa Erin Bernhardt, BSN, RN, senior manager of clinical operations, Family Hospice; Kalpana Char, MD, associate vice president for Medical Services, Special Needs Plan, UPMC Health Plan; Ariel Clatty, PhD, medical ethics manager, UPMC Shadyside Hospital; Kelly Covone-Henning, palliative care administrator, UPMC Canterbury Place; Kelley Dooley, RN, unit manager, UPMC Canterbury Place; Annette Dye, DNP, CRNP, ACHPN, palliative care nurse practitioner, Heritage Valley Health System; Vasella Fennick, LCSW, behavioral health clinical manager, Highmark ECCM; Emily Fearon-Jones, MS, account executive,

UPMC Home Healthcare & Family Hospice; Heather Fischetti, MSN, RN, IP-BC, staff development/infection control, UPMC Canterbury Place; Rev. Richard Freeman, Sr., MSPC, physician consultant, manager of Pastoral Care, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh; Janet Adu Frimpong, RN, unit manager, UPMC Canterbury Place; Niharika Ganta, MD, medical director, Palliative Care Programs, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania & Penn Presbyterian Medical Center; Lucy Gilliam, RN, director of nursing, UPMC Canterbury Place; Nicole Greer, MPH, MPA, RN, management analyst III - quality improvement and accreditation coordinator, Fairfax County Health Department; Ruth Ann Guilinger, MD, hospitalist, Allegheny Health Network, and physician, LIFE Pittsburgh; Eric Horwith, MSW, LSW, regional manager of business development, UPMC Home Healthcare & Family Hospice, and adjunct professor, University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work; Emily Jaffe, MD, MBA, VP and executive medical director, Enterprise Palliative Care Strategy and Implementation, Highmark Health; Matthew Koperwas, MD, geriatrician, Allegheny Health Network; Douglas F. Kupas, MD, FAEMS, EMS medical director, Geisinger EMS; Carol May, RN, MSN, MBA, CHPPN, director of Supportive Care, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh; Jennifer Gonzalez McComb, MD, MPH, FACP, clinical associate professor, Department of Medicine, section chief, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, UPMC Shadyside Hospital; Joan McConahy, program coordinator, Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition; Heather Mikes, DO, medical director, Inpatient Palliative and Supportive Care, UPMC East and McKeesport Hospitals, and clinical assistant professor, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine; Scott Miller, MD, MA, chief medical officer, Family Hospice, and associate professor, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine; Anthony Morgan, admissions coordinator, UPMC Canterbury Place; Alison J. O'Donnell, DO, MPH, geriatrician, VA Pittsburgh; Natalie O'Loughlin, MS, chaplain, Magee-Womens Hospital; Fredric Price, MD, FACOG, FACS, MMM, retired chief of gynecologic oncology, Allegheny Health Network, and instructor, Physician Assistant Program, Chatham University; Charles Rhoads, MD, MBA, NHA, administrator, UPMC Canterbury Place; Maylena Riccardi, BSN, RN; clinical manager of inpatient hospice unit, Family Hospice; Michelle Roney, administrative supervisor, UPMC Canterbury Place; Tamara Sacks, MD, physician; Jane Schell, MD, assistant professor, Nephrology and Palliative Care, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and UPMC Health System, and section chief, Palliative Care & Medical Ethics, University of Pittsburgh; Ethan Silverman, MD, palliative and hospice physician, UPMC Presbyterian-Shadyside, and assistant professor of medicine and fellowship program director for Hospice and Palliative Medicine, University of Pittsburgh

The Death and Dying Series for Healthcare Professionals will kick off its third year of programming this fall, with sessions geared toward those practicing in the field and seeking to improve their serious illness communication skills. Information and registration will be available in late summer.

Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative Welcomes Four New Board Members and Sets Course on Patient Safety Initiatives

The Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) welcomed four new members to its board during a meeting held on March 12 at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh.

In their remarks, Jewish Health Care Foundation (JHF) and PRHI President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, and PRHI co-chairs Mark DeRubeis, MBA, and Steven Irwin, JD celebrated the appointments of the following Pittsburgh business leaders:

- **Jim Jen**, MBA, Distinguished Service Professor of Entrepreneurship, at Carnegie Mellon School of Business. A co-founder of the nationally ranked accelerator program, AlphaLab, Jen plays an active role in the development of Pittsburgh's entrepreneurship community;
- **Paul Phrampus**, MD, director of the Winter Institute for Simulation, Education, and Research (WISER) and Professor in the Departments of Emergency Medicine and Anesthesiology, and Medical Director of Patient Safety for UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh;
- **Ken Segel**, MBA, CEO of Value Capture;
- **Mike Stancil**, MBA, CEO and President of the Pittsburgh Business Group on Health.



The PRHI Board met at the Jewish Community Center, following a private preview of *The Pitch* at The Manor Theater.

The PRHI Board discussed various aspects of PRHI's patient safety initiatives and programming, first hearing from Mike Eisenberg, the director of a JHF-funded documentary, [The Pitch: Patient Safety's Next Generation](#), which focuses on the prevalence of patient safety incidents in the United States and the solutions innovators are bringing to health care to reduce patient safety incidents nationwide. PRHI and Health Careers Futures Board members attended a private preview of the film just before the meeting. JHF produced the documentary, which builds on a past body of work by Eisenberg, who directed *To Err is Human*, and highlights the work of one of the winning innovators in PRHI's [Patient Safety Technology Challenge](#).

Scotland Huber, chief communications officer for JHF and one of the producers of the film, facilitated a discussion of the plans for distribution of the documentary, including the documentary's inclusion and world premiere at the Cleveland International Film Festival.

Dr. Feinstein talked about the potential outreach for the film, including its call to activism on the issue of patient safety and its inspirational message to entrepreneurs aiming to have an impact on patient health and safety. She added that the development of a strong culture of safety training programming and education, research, and product development could contribute to the region's economic development.

Robert Ferguson, MPH, chief policy officer at JHF and PRHI, updated the Board on the [re-introduction of the National Patient Safety Board Act](#). The proposed legislation would establish a public-private research and development team within the Department of Health and Human Services dedicated to preventing and reducing healthcare-related harm to patients. Sponsored in the House of Representatives by U.S Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA) and Michael Burgess (R-TX), the landmark bipartisan legislation offers a critical step forward in improving safety for patients and healthcare providers by adopting patient safety solutions.

PRHI's Board also heard more details from Dr. Feinstein about the February 29th [Safety Innovation Summit](#), which convened 130 Pittsburgh leaders to discuss approaches to safety that have proven successful in multiple industries, including healthcare, transportation, energy, manufacturing, medicine, and construction.

WHAMglobal Board Continues to Shape Agenda on “Inequities for Women As They Age”

A meeting of the WHAMglobal Board on March 26 continued a review of themes and priorities jointly identified by participants at [the Salzburg Seminar](#) convened by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and WHAMglobal in January. The meeting included global representation with members joining from Australia, Chile, and Israel.

During its discussion, Board members cited next steps, including identifying additional priorities, partners, and experts addressing women's health inequities as they age. From menopause to senior years, women face persistent gaps in care, whether from a lack of evidence, unfounded clinical assumptions, or a mismatch between both.

Board members also reflected on their experiences and what they learned from the Seminar's 45 participants from around the world.

Karen Feinstein, president and CEO of JHF and WHAMglobal, suggested a campaign centered around caregiving for aging women. The campaign would aim to raise awareness and support for both caregivers and aging women, focusing on the challenges they face and the need for better care and resources. The group aims to break the mold by challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes; emphasizing the importance of care for caregivers; aging with dignity; and unleashing the power of aging women through activism.

The group also discussed ways to reimagine health professional education and research; a curriculum for health professionals that specifically addresses women's aging issues; new systems



of data collection for issues impacting women over the age of 49; and ways to advance healthy and financially secure living conditions.

Up Next for Patient Safety Episode Discusses Tech’s Potential to Transform Patient Safety

How are the next generation of innovators looking to disrupt the status quo and bring new perspectives to improving safety in health care? In this episode, host Karen Wolk Feinstein and young entrepreneur Reetam Ganguli, star of the documentary [The Pitch: Patient Safety’s Next Generation](#), discuss the exciting potential for technology to transform patient safety. [Listen now.](#)



Allegheny County Medical Society Highlights PRHI’s Patient Safety Initiatives

The March issue of Allegheny County Medical Society's (ACMS's) *Bulletin* featured an op-ed by Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) CEO and President Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, highlighting the scope of patient safety work being done by the Foundation and the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative. Published during Patient Safety Awareness Week, “Patient Safety Efforts in Our Region and Beyond” shares the scope of the Foundation’s work to advance patient safety through policy change and promotion of tech solutions.



[Read more on the ACMS website.](#)

JHF Visits Adult Day Care to Explore Care Models

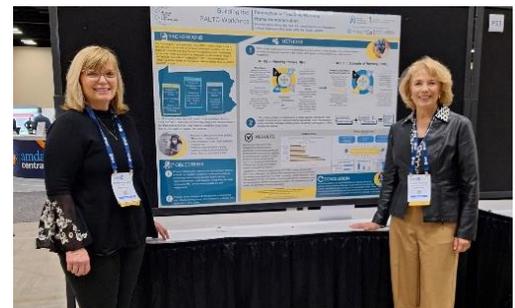
In early March, Jewish Healthcare Foundation staff visited the [Prime Time Adult Day Care](#) in Bethel Park, PA, to learn more about successful care models to support community-dwelling older adults who some level of assistance. Prime Time’s executive director, Jason Dolby, LPN, PCHA, led the team a tour of the center, which is housed in the Christ United Methodist Church. Prime Time features two levels of services to address older



adults with varying assistance needs and levels of cognitive decline. The programming allows older adults to engage in music, art, education, and exercise activities, special events to celebrate holidays and birthdays, memory stimulation, a daily hot lunch, and nursing services as needed. Prime Time’s goal is to allow older adults to continue living at home in their communities for as long as possible, while also providing respite for their care partners during the week. The visit will inform JHF’s work in exploring alternate models of care for older adults at risk for or experiencing early signs of cognitive impairment.

JHF Showcases Teaching Nursing Home Collaborative at National Conference

JHF Nurse Project Manager Maureen Saxon-Gioia, MS HSA, BSN, RN, shared about the exciting progress being made by the Teaching Nursing Home Collaborative initiative at the annual AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine conference held March 9–11 in San Antonio, TX. Saxon-Gioia presented a poster titled “Building the PALTC (PA Long-Term Care) Workforce: Pennsylvania Teaching Nursing Home Demonstration,” along with Teaching Nursing Home Collaborative partner JoAnne Reifsnnyder, PhD, MSN, MBA, RN, FAAN, professor, Nursing Leadership and Management Department of Organizational Systems and Adult Health at the University of Maryland School of Nursing.



Maureen Saxon-Gioia, left, and Dr. JoAnne Reifsnnyder with their presentation poster on current long-term care initiatives to grow the workforce.

The poster showcased the collaborative efforts between nursing homes and schools of nursing to address workforce challenges and improve care quality. Featuring data gleaned from the Phase I pilot, it highlighted the initiative's success in integrating Age-Friendly Health Systems and fostering academic–practice partnerships and demonstrates a promising approach to enhancing nursing education and advancing geriatric expertise. Innovative programs such as TNHC are needed to effectively address workforce challenges, enhance nursing home care, and support nursing education in NHs. Phase I demonstrated a promising path and immediately actionable approaches to improved care quality. Phase II aims to demonstrate that the model is scalable across PA and replicable in other states.

Nancy Zionts, MBA, the Foundation’s COO & Chief Program Officer, also recently authored an article about the Collaborative for the March 2024 edition of AMDA’s ‘Caring for the Ages’ publication. In her piece, Zionts lays out ways that leaders in nursing homes can engage with the Collaborative to address workforce and quality of care issues. [The full story can be read here.](#)

AMDA represents more than 50,000 medical directors, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other practitioners working in post-acute and long-term care settings, such as skilled nursing facilities, long-term care and assisted living communities, CCRCs, home care, hospice, and PACE programs.

JCC's Big Night Honors the Visionary Leadership of JCC's Former President and CEO Brian Schreiber

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh's (JCC) 18th Annual Big Night celebration, held Saturday, March 9 at the JCC, honored its former President and CEO Brian Schreiber.

Schreiber joined the JCC in 1999 as President and CEO, overseeing the \$9.5 million organization serving 15,000 people for 24 years until 2023 when he stepped down. It now serves 30,000 with an operating budget of over \$26 million.

Schreiber said the success of the Greater Pittsburgh JCC has come with the mindset of leading the legacy institution with the drive and the passion of a startup. This foundational commitment to drive impact and performance has ultimately led to the JCC being recognized as a model for JCC's nationwide.

"When I started here a little over 25 years ago, I did key informant interviews. Needless to say, Karen (Feinstein) and Nancy (Zionts) were both in those 60 interviews. Karen said something to me that really stuck with me my entire time here. She always loved the JCC, she always believed in the JCC, but her words were 'The agency is indifferent to excellence.'"

Reflecting on those words led Schreiber to evaluate the building blocks and framework of the organization which created meaning to/for the community and were keys to the organization's impact on the community at large. This contemplation also led to a deep dive to identify its shortcomings and gaps in service.

"I didn't rise up through the system, so I was able to look at it with a fresh lens," Schreiber said.

Early on in his tenure, the roadblocks to the organization's success were largely financial. Schreiber said it took a significant period of time to work toward financial stability, but it was important to him to get there without sacrificing program excellence.

"We are both a tremendous resource to the Jewish community, but we're also a tremendous community resource. It took time getting a culture comfortable with it not being a binary choice. We have deep roots and commitment to the Jewish community, but we're a community asset at the same time," Schreiber said.

Schreiber said the organization ran profitably for 18 years in a row before being tested by a rapid-fire progression of crises.



From left to right: Debra Caplan, Karen Feinstein, and Brian Schreiber pose together at the JCC's Big Night. JHF was a partner sponsor of the event.

During his time as president and CEO, the synagogue shooting at the Tree of Life facility was a defining moment for the Jewish community and the JCC. Due to its geographic proximity to the synagogue, the JCC played a critical role in the first moments after the incident and after as the community processed, rebuilt, and began the healing process.

“This had never happened in the Jewish community, and we put a unique lens on that work and what it meant to support a community in all its various concentric circles – from the most immediate victims, all the way to the community that was traumatized by the event,” Schreiber said. “It is an incredible privilege to house the 10.27 Healing Partnership and being a space of healing and resilience after a mass casualty event.”

On March 1, 2020, the JCC paid off its last debt payment, and on March 14 it shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Schreiber recalls that overnight, and with no time to prepare, 80 percent of the JCC’s earned revenue disappeared. He noted [JHF’s \\$2.5 million grant](#) helped bolster the organization to maintain financial stability it had worked 20 years to build.

“We had to really pivot, but also we never stopped serving the community. Again, our most difficult moment became our defining moment,” said Schreiber, listing that the JCC offered grab and go lunches for seniors, assisted with setting up COVID testing and vaccines, getting licensed to become a family campground per West Virginia rules so families could come to the JCC’s Emma Kaufmann Overnight Camp for respite.

Brian Schreiber stepped down from the position and the JCC’s new President and CEO Jason Kunzman taking the helm September 1, 2023. Schreiber continues to remain full-time at the JCC of Greater Pittsburgh at its Chief External Affairs Officer, that includes a portion of his time serving as Special Adviser to the JCC Association of North America’s CEO, a position he began in 2018.

At the national level, Schreiber works to assess the impact and future of the 170 JCCs, bringing with him the lessons he’s learned from Pittsburgh.

“Our aggregate impact looks very different from our local impact, and we can start to think about that in terms of building a movement that’s working toward collective outcomes. That’s what I think the next chapter is in our field,” Schreiber said. “And that excites me, as you can tell.”

Summer Patient Safety Fellowship Applications Now Open

Are you interested in exploring artificial intelligence and cutting-edge technology to revolutionize safety in health care? We invite you to apply for the summer, 9-week Patient Safety Fellowship hosted by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation. Applications are due by May 6. [Learn more here.](#)



Save the Date: Too Hot for July on May 30

AIDS Free Pittsburgh has announced the 6th year of their signature event, Too Hot for July, an HIV Awareness and Testing event in collaboration with True T Pgh. Save the date for Thursday, May 30 from 4:00-10:00pm. More will be coming soon about a new location, free giveaways, and more.



JHF Welcomes Elizabeth Klusman as a Program Epidemiologist Associate

In April, Elizabeth Klusman will join the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) as a program epidemiologist associate, supporting its Ryan White Part B services, Minority AIDS Initiative, and AIDS Free Pittsburgh work. In this role, she will assist with the development, implementation, and maintenance of provider quality management programs, linkage, and retention to care data and quality review, and data analysis, community outreach, and community assessment development and implementation.



Klusman has experience in other realms of public health through data analysis on pre-eclampsia and post-traumatic stress disorder studies at the University of Southern California and as a contact tracer through the University of Pittsburgh during the COVID-19 pandemic. After earning her degree in Health Services and certificate in Global Health at the University of Pittsburgh, Klusman entered an accelerated program at Pitt and will receive her master's degree in public health in epidemiology this May.

Klusman started at JHF as an intern on the HIV team working on the 2023 Southwestern Pennsylvania Needs Assessment and consumer development survey. She assisted with the AIDS Free Pittsburgh initiative, participating in community outreach, community events such as Too Hot for July, and organizing outreach materials. After completing her internship, Klusman stayed on the team to help with data entry and analysis of the 2023 Ryan White Consumer Survey results. Having learned valuable information and skills on the HIV team, she sought full-time employment upon completion of her MPH degree in April, expressing that she has thoroughly enjoyed working at JHF and is excited to complete her degree and begin work full time.

Fellowship Alumni Spotlight: India Renae Hunter

India Renae Hunter is a doula and maternal and child health public health professional. She attended the University of Pittsburgh, where she completed dual master's degrees in public health and social work. Hunter is originally from Dayton, Ohio and received a Bachelor of Science in exercise science at the University of Pittsburgh in 2016. During her gap year, she served with Pittsburgh Public Allies, where she worked for New Voices for Reproductive Justice. While completing her master's degrees, she was involved in community organizing around youth empowerment, community education, incarceration, public health policy, and maternal and child health.



Professionally, Hunter has worked as the public health project manager at Healthy Start, Inc. in Pittsburgh and currently serves as a public health analyst for the Human Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) in the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. She is also a trained doula and founder of Changemaker Services, where she consults and focuses on birthwork from before conception to postpartum. Her professional interests include youth empowerment, maternal and child health, health equity, COVID-19, and preventative medicine through exercise. [Watch now.](#)

Deborah Brodine Confronts the Crisis of Care for Seniors and Teen Mental Health

Deborah Brodine, MHA, MBA, stands at the apex of two critical fronts in health care: senior care and mental health care.

Appointed as president of UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital in 2019, she brings over three decades of experience back to where her career began. Brodine's journey within UPMC has seen her in progressive leadership roles, crafting integrated delivery networks for post-acute and rehabilitation services across southwest Pennsylvania and presiding over UPMC Senior Communities.



As president of UPMC Senior Services, she oversees extensive skilled nursing and senior living programs, alongside home health and hospice services. Her expertise intersects with population health, evident in her partnerships with organizations like the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF), focusing on care model redesign to prevent hospitalizations.

In March 2023, *Pittsburgh Quarterly* [reported on the population problem](#) in the region. Currently 19.7% of Allegheny County's population is at least 65 years old. Only the retirement destination of Palm Beach, Fla. has a greater population of older adults among the largest 40 counties.

Of the aging population, Brodine said without hesitation, "It is a crisis. Not only is the aging population increasing, but the population workforce is decreasing. Older adults are leaving the

workforce and need caregivers, and there's not as many people in the younger generation to care for them. It's a double whammy, and it will continue to be a major challenge.

When it comes to mental health, Brodine said the incidence of mental health illness is also increasing, particularly among children and adolescents. And our ability to diagnose and recognize conditions that need care or education about mental health has increased as well.

"One in five people will have a mental health concern in their lifetime, and while that statistic is growing, it continues to be an educational conversation we need to have as a society: how important this work is, and how it's not 'those people over there, it's really all of us,'" Brodine said.

Brodine's passion for community-based care extends to her role in mental health, emphasizing preventative services, and the need to consider the full continuum of care. Despite workforce challenges and the stigma associated with both senior and mental health care, she remains optimistic, citing collaborative efforts and increased public awareness as reasons for hope.

"Very often the workforce shortage is caused by stigma or because of previous public policy. There isn't enough money in the till to pay people what, perhaps we'd like to pay them in order to do this important work. It is unique work, which requires a lot of empathy and compassion, and those characteristics are not easy to recruit for, or to train for" Brodine said.

She emphasizes the importance of addressing stigma, funding shortages, and policy gaps that hinder effective care delivery. With services being funded by either state- or federal-funded health care, conversations with legislators and the community-at-large about the importance of and need for this work are crucial.

"I think we are quickly barreling down the path where everyone has the mutual goal of providing more services in home and community spaces rather than institutional spaces. For anyone who has ever advocated for a loved one, trying to find affordable, quality home-based services can quickly become an unmanageable proposition. There are not a lot of workforce available to provide these services," Brodine said. "We have a need for better advocacy and education about these very real issues that we're all facing."

This is where Brodine's commitment to partnership shines, as seen in [her recent appointment](#) to the Board of Trustees at JHF. Through her leadership and advocacy, Brodine continues to drive change in addressing the pressing needs of seniors and those battling mental illness, shaping a more compassionate and inclusive healthcare landscape.

Additionally, growing regional partnerships such as that between Western Psychiatric Hospital, the Department of Human Services, and JHF through the [BH Fellow program](#), as well as partnerships during the pandemic between UPMC, Allegheny Health Network, and other stakeholders to address the impact of COVID-19 on residential facilities for the elderly, demonstrate the potential when the community can come together.

"We've seen success in very deliberate opportunities to work together across different stakeholder groups to come up with cross disciplinary efforts to make things better for our community. That's the reason for optimism." Brodine said. "No one of us can address this individually. We need to be able to partner with one another. And I think that's, that's where I get my hope."

Having a long-standing relationship with JHF, Brodine said she holds it, President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts, MBA in high esteem. She noted Dr. Feinstein called her personally to ask her to serve on the Board.

"I had never thought to ask or inquire (about the Board) so when I was invited by Karen, I was so very honored by that invitation," Brodine said. "I see the beauty and optimism in the Foundation's work and their ability to link arms with other organizations to influence policy and to recognize the needs of society, the workforce, and the community."

JHF Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

