



January 2020 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more

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A Swerve in Patient Safety Strategy Kicks Off in Boston

Swerve is the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative's latest effort to reduce America's appalling medical error rate. A generation after the first studies documented the extensive deadly harm endemic in American medicine, medical errors now represent the third leading cause of death. And, 10 to 20 times that number are seriously and needlessly injured. After 20 years of effort to reduce this rate, PRHI can acknowledge the lack of progress. Our nation responds more aggressively to airline mishaps and viral epidemics—even though the risk level is probably much lower.



The first national meeting of healthcare leaders in Boston, MA on January 22.

Recognizing that the 2020 Presidential election offers a unique opportunity to put the issue before the public and galvanize action, with health care reform hitting record high popularity among voters, we found a partner to execute a “swerve”. A swerve is a break from tradition, a swift and meaningful change in direction from past solutions and conventional wisdom. Our objective is to put the issue of medical error into the platforms of candidates. With the Network for Excellence in Health Innovation (NEHI), our longtime partner (see our articles on [Community Health Workers](#) and [Maternity Payment](#)), we decided to launch three, day-long national conversations with select healthcare leaders who are knowledgeable about aspects of patient safety to refine a successful strategy.

Leading our first conversation in Boston was Ken Segel, co-founder and managing partner of [Value Capture](#), who moderated six hours of non-stop brainstorming. The 22 distinguished participants included state health policy leaders, Harvard health economists, health policy experts from Northeastern and Brandeis, a regional health improvement executive, a consumer representative, present and former health system leaders and national and regional patient safety advocates. We focused on two promising strategies:

1. What financial incentives could be built into the popular, but as yet ill defined, public option that would incentivize rigorous safety protections; and
2. How could a National Patient Safety Authority win popular support, protect the public, and serve as a formal accountability agency of the Federal government? When two Boeing 737 MAX 8s crashed, when the Coronavirus threatened a worldwide outbreak, our nation knew whom to hold accountable for minimizing damage and accelerating a rapid and informed response.

This iterative conversation continues in Washington, DC on February 24th and in San Francisco on April 2nd. New participants will build on Boston's areas of agreement, consider controversial issues, address important items not yet discussed and formulate a viable political strategy. In D.C., we will build on a deep bench of national policy experts, safety advocates, data holders, association and agency executives and academic thought leaders to create the next version of our national plan to swerve.

Liftoff PGH Lands in Vegas for CES 2020

The Consumer Electronics Show (CES) descended upon Las Vegas, and three Liftoff PGH stowaways spent a week inside the tech industry's magic eight ball. The team tested their balance, measured their vital signs through touchless remote sensing, met robots who befriend older adults, and tasted fresh salad greens grown by Amazon Alexa.

This year's voyage was as predictive as it was affirming. Not 2 years ago, Liftoff PGH was merely a spark between two healthcare wonks, an inkling that our industry needed a strong dose of whatever fuels the wider world of entrepreneurship. This September, we are launching Pittsburgh's first healthcare innovation summit, showcasing our region's intellectual assets and entrepreneurial potential.

So as we journeyed through gamified therapies, customized consumer wearables, and mountains of biometric data, the most striking observation was not actually tech dependent. More than any one invention, we left CES with the unwavering commitment to create a culture of open, seamless, and inclusive innovation.

We're turning our divining powers to health care and bring you 6 key forces shaping the future of our industry.

6 Key Forces Shaping the Future of Health Care

1. Invention knows no age

Some of the most disruptive technologies came from people who can't even vote. We were enchanted by the ingenuity of the '2020 teen' at the [CES Young Innovators to Watch Showcase](#). Alishba Imran developed [a blockchain platform](#) to track counterfeit medication through the supply chain, while Sage Khanuja and Nikolas Loannou designed [a \\$15 screening device for respiratory diseases](#). CES proved that game changing innovation can come from anywhere.



Mara Leff, MPH, Director of Innovation; Megan Butler, MS, Innovation Associate; and Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, President and CEO at CES in Las Vegas.



2. One innovation can upend an entire health delivery system

No protocol nor procedure defied reinvention, beginning with some of the most traditional models of care. Cynergi is rethinking [opioid recovery through VR](#), while Binah AI pioneered [contactless, video-based vitals monitoring](#). It's not necessarily new technology, but rather breaking into the healthcare industry that has tremendous implications for how we win the war against infection, addiction, and other harms.

3. Patients are consumers

Companies at CES are busy figuring out how to give people control of their health decisions. Monitoring and diagnostic capabilities were embedded into anything from [pajamas](#) to [smart band aids](#). Options for where and how to get medical care continue to diversify, like in [5,200 Walmart Health Hubs](#) across the US, or in the offices of [Rally Health](#).

4. Data predicts outcomes

As devices measure anything from heart rate to temperature, movement, balance, posture, and sleep products are beginning to predict possible challenges, and the best treatment. There are bands to [retrain children prone to bedwetting](#), one of the leading predictors of teen suicide, and [a line of underwear, tshirts and maternity clothes](#) that provide real-time tracking and AI-assisted interpretation of vital biometric measures.

5. Visionaries command health care's future

Any institution can deliver innovative solutions, from the Federal Drug Administration to [Facebook](#) to universities and local clinics. A visionary leader can completely disrupt employee mindset, and equally, shake up an industry that is not their own. Some of the most surprising answers came from unusual partnerships, between the [Mayo Clinic and a lighting company](#) or [Microsoft and the American Printing House for the Blind](#).

6. Creativity reigns

At CES this year, it was not a question of the specific limits of technology. Products like Amazon's Alexa were incorporated into [mini lettuce terrariums](#), while Strictly Robots unveiled [an emotional support robopuppy](#). Not all innovations are equally marketable, but pushing what is possible clears the path for someone who might create the next [impossible pork](#), which might spur new nutrition protocols for droughts or famines. And you never know when you might need an [AI assisted digital nose](#). CES delivered creativity unbound.

New Era for Community Health Workers Begins in PA

Community health workers (CHW) have been among the most effective members of the health workforce in both the developed and developing world. As trusted members of the communities they serve, CHWs improve health outcomes by helping families

understand the need for essential health services, while overcoming barriers to accessing medicine, food, clothing and housing.

For a number of years, JHF has worked to elevate these essential but under-recognized members of the health workforce to certified professionals with the appropriate respect for their contributions. While CHWs may be known as outreach workers, patient navigators, or personal care assistants, full integration requires a common set of skills and job experiences, in addition to defined career ladders.

Back in October 2014, NEHI (Network for Excellence in Health Innovation) convened a national CHW Summit with support from the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, the Rose Community Foundation, and the Association of American Medical Colleges to explore the role CHWs can play in improving quality and reducing costs. Following this conference, NEHI and JHF developed an issue brief in 2015 entitled “[Community Health Workers: Getting the Job Done in Healthcare Delivery](#).” Bringing these best practices to Pennsylvania, JHF organized a CHW Statewide Summit in Harrisburg focused on policies to support the CHW workforce, which led to the creation and ongoing work of the PA CHW Steering Group and Task Forces on Policy, Training, and Employment.



Elizabeth Evans (center) shares about her experience as a CHW Apprentice during the final session.

The statewide CHW Steering Group and Task Force has been working to develop common standards for certifying CHWs. Concurrently, JHF piloted the first Certified CHW Apprenticeship Program in Pennsylvania aimed at developing the next career step for CHWs. We are excited to share that both of these initiatives have completed their initial scope of work.

Beginning January 10th, the Pennsylvania Certification Board invites CHWs to [apply](#) for certification in 2020 through a grandparenting process. For CHWs currently working without credentials, employers can help them become *Certified* CHWs (CCHW) through on-the-job career development and support. Starting in 2021, the required training must be received from an approved CHW training program. This process will be determined by the Pennsylvania Certification Board CHW Advisory Council in 2020.

After becoming a CCHW, professionals can now also look to become a CCHW Apprentice. Certified by the Pennsylvania Apprenticeship and Training Council, JHF/Health Careers Futures was the first in the State to pilot a CHW Apprenticeship Program. Beginning in July 2019, the program worked with selected staff at LIFE (Living Independence for the Elderly) Pittsburgh, an all-inclusive program for frail seniors living in the community.



The 14 graduating CHW Apprentices at LIFE Pittsburgh.

On January 22nd, the first cohort of Apprentices celebrated their final session of a 25-week training program. Funded in part by The Pittsburgh Foundation, the CHW Apprenticeship Program provided 144 hours of technical instruction and 2,000 hours of on-the-job training, enabling the CHWs to more effectively partner with their clients. All apprentices received a salary increase in recognition of their program completion. In the final session, Traci Nelson, M.Ed, Director of Workforce Development at Community College of Allegheny County, led the apprentices through a discussion of potential new career opportunities matching the knowledge and skills they gained over the last 7 months.

Reflecting on the program, LIFE Pittsburgh CEO Joann Gago spoke of how the organization ensures that “all people are better off in some way after joining the organization.” Many apprentices discussed how the apprenticeship program helped build confidence in their ability to care for their participants, communicate with others, and advocate for themselves. The graduating apprentices are the first of this advanced level of CHW Apprentices in Pennsylvania, and their experience will model a new career path and skillset for frontline healthcare workers.

Sixth Annual Death and Dying Fellowship Begins

Everyone has preferences for how they'd like to be cared for in their final days, but too often those preferences are not taken into account because they are not discussed – not by patients, family or providers. According to a [2016 Kaiser Family Foundation poll](#), patients agree that having end-of-life conversations with their providers is important to them, and 92% feel comfortable doing so. However, only 11% actually report speaking with their provider.

This gap underscores the reality that most traditional education still does not train healthcare professionals to engage patients in tough conversations. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation and Health Careers Futures' Death and Dying Fellowship seeks to bridge this divide and allow participants to learn, confront, and discuss the legal, medical, social, cultural, familial, and spiritual aspects of death and dying.

This year's cohort of 33 fellows kicked off the eight-week program on January 27th at the QI²T Center. Participants include graduate students and healthcare professionals from six universities spanning a range of backgrounds, including medicine, nursing, public health, social work, pharmacy, counseling psychology, sociology, law, and healthcare ethics. The Fellowship is led by a core faculty of Judith Black, MD, MHA; Nicole Greer,



The new Death and Dying Fellowship kicked off in the QIT Center.

RN, MPH, MPA, and Nancy Zions, MBA, and it is supplemented by experts and partners from around the community. At the first session, fellows were introduced to the history of the program, which launched in 2015, and the long-running work of Closure, JHF's outreach, education, and advocacy initiative around end-of-life care.

Over the next several weeks, the Fellows will make site visits to JHF community partners to discuss important topics such as end-of-life decisions in the hospital and ICU setting, facing chronic disease with families and children, real conversations about loss and grief, the hospice perspective on end-of-life, and end-of-life in the long-term care setting. The final session will see the fellows return to the QI²T Center where they will put their newfound skills into practice and demonstrate their ability to conduct end-of-life conversations.

The new Senior Civic Academy will Equip Senior Activists

Critical services for frail seniors are under threat in Pennsylvania. We're going to see the closure of some of our better nursing homes and long-term care providers if something isn't done to address the decrease in funding for Medicaid.

In a timely response, the GRAN Activist Network: Senior Civic Academy will launch in March. Funded by the Heinz Endowments, the Senior Civic Academy is for community members 55 years and older who want to learn how to become effective activists. The free six-session program will be led by senior activists and policymakers who will provide the skills and tools necessary to create an advocacy campaign specifically targeted to increase Medicaid funding for seniors needing skilled care.



Currently, 60% of frail senior nursing home residents rely on Medicaid funding to cover their cost of care. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has not kept up with increasing financial demand for Medicaid coverage through reimbursements to long-term care facilities or home and community services. In fact, with flat reimbursements and no cost of living increases, skilled nursing facilities are facing deficits and an increasing need to raise benevolent funds to continue to serve seniors. Without action by the Commonwealth to close this funding gap, providers are at increasing risk having to shut their facilities and ceasing to meet the needs of seniors. Families are forced to shoulder an ever increasing financial and caregiving burden. Pennsylvania is in need of more activists who can effectively speak up for these changes.

Karen Wolk Feinstein, Jewish Healthcare Foundation's President and CEO, recently called for legislative action to increase Medicaid funding for vulnerable seniors in the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) and [Patriot News](#). It's time for action.

The Senior Civic Academy is actively recruiting participants for the weekly program launching in March. If you are interested in participating, please email Nancy Zionts at zionts@jhf.org.

PA Perinatal Quality Collaborative Recommends Standards and Quality Measures for Maternity Payment

In response to the rising rates of maternal mortality, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and its operating arms, WHAMglobal and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), have been exploring how maternity value-based payment models can help providers remove unnecessary services and complications, and reinvest in services that matter to the mom and baby dyad. In late 2018, JHF partnered with Network for Excellence in Health Innovation (NEHI) to organize [national policy summits on maternity care](#). One of the recommendations was to convene stakeholders to first identify best practices and quality measures for maternity value-based payment models, which tie a portion of payment to outcomes.



In response, JHF and WHAMglobal leveraged the Policy Group of the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PA PQC) to gain consensus on standards of care and meaningful quality measures in response to improvement opportunities. The PA PQC Policy Group convened providers, health plans, regional business groups on health, state agencies, and other stakeholders to develop these recommendations. These recommendations are now available [here](#) under “Policy.”

The recommendations focus on standards of care and quality measures for improvement opportunities, such as disparities, social determinants of health, substance misuse, mental health, cardiovascular conditions, prenatal care screening, expanded post-partum care, early elective deliveries, and C-sections.

PRHI Coordinates Learning Sessions on Social Determinants Screening

In partnership with the Physical HealthChoices Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) continues to oversee and coordinate the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Learning Network to facilitate quarterly, regional in-person and virtual learning collaborative sessions across the Commonwealth.

The PCMH Learning Network is designed for the HealthChoices PCMH Program, which is part of the Physical HealthChoices' Value-Based Purchasing program. The Learning Network helps the participating primary care practices learn how to adopt best practices to achieve the expectations of the program. PRHI facilitates the sessions for western and northeastern Pennsylvania and contracts with the Health Federation of Philadelphia to facilitate the sessions for Lehigh/Capital and southeastern Pennsylvania.



David Kelley, MD, Chief Medical Officer for the Pennsylvania Department of Human Service's Office of Medical Assistance Programs, addresses the Learning Network Session on January 23.

In January, PCMH practices—The Wright Center, Esperanza Health Center, and Community Health and Dental Care—presented how they have modified their EHRs and workflows to conduct Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) assessments. The regional sessions in Lehigh/Capital, western PA, and southeastern PA also focused on SDOH screening and response and featured examples of how to include patient advocates and family members on healthcare teams to advise the practices. The practices also learned about opportunities to improve contraceptive care and counseling.

Local Practice Recognized Nationally for Preventing HPV Cancers

Cancers associated with the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) continue to rise. Unlike other cancers, however, true prevention is available in the form of a safe and effective vaccine. A JHF [public health campaign](#) launched in 2014 in partnership with the [Eye & Ear Foundation of Pittsburgh](#), galvanized local efforts to get boys and girls vaccinated. In addition to conducting outreach and education session in healthcare practices, community organizations and schools, the campaign created toolkits and provided communications materials for parents and teens.

After the official campaign wound down, the UPMC St. Margaret Bloomfield Garfield Family Health Center and its medical director, Dr. Ann McGaffey, continued to be devoted and effective



Dr. Ann McGaffey, Medical Director of UPMC St. Margaret Bloomfield Garfield Family Health Center, and Dr. Patricia Klatt, Director of Pharmacy Residency Programs, help lead the HPV efforts at the health center.

champions for getting kids vaccinated. Staff have engaged local students in making posters with facts about HPV, set up raffles and text message reminders, and implemented standing orders for the vaccine throughout the clinic, among other creative and essential strategies.

Their creative and high-impact work has now been recognized nationally by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for achieving a phenomenal 77% vaccination completion rate for both its male and female patients. UPMC St. Margaret Bloomfield Garfield FHC is the recipient of the CDC's 2019 HPV Vaccine is Cancer Prevention Champion for Pennsylvania [award](#).

In addition, healthcare providers across the country can now learn more about how they did it. McGaffey and her colleagues detailed the impact of their work to increase HPV vaccination rates in the article, "[A 'Sense'-ational HPV Vaccination Quality Improvement Project in a Family Medicine Residency Practice](#)," published last month in the Journal of the National Medical Association.

Announcements

Karen Feinstein Named to Pittsburgh's Power 100

The Pittsburgh Business Times announced their inaugural list of Pittsburgh's most influential business leaders. Karen's accomplishments with PRHI and WHAMglobal highlight her profile. [Read more here.](#)

Summer Internship Applications Open

JHF is now hiring passionate changemakers to join our paid Summer Internship Program. Graduate students from a variety of backgrounds are invited to apply, with a special Liftoff PGH internship also happening this summer. Deadline to apply is February 14, 2020. [More information here.](#)

Reviving Ophelia Lecture with Sara Pipher Gilliam on February 20

Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures presents a New & Noted lecture with Sara Pipher Gilliam, the co-author of the newly revised and updated *Reviving Ophelia*, the iconic book that helped frame issues facing adolescent girls. Join us for this important conversation on mental health and issues for today's teens. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

Join us at the [Disability & Mental Health Summit](#) on March 3

At the Pittsburgh Convention Center for the first time, the Summit hosted by Representative Dan Miller is the largest collection of disability and mental health resources in western Pennsylvania. This year our Youth Advocacy Network is also hosting a new track for teen mental health advocates. Learn more about [Building a Youth Mental Health Advocacy Movement here.](#)