



July 2023 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more

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NPSB Advocacy Coalition Hosts Congressional Briefing on Patient Safety and the Need for a National Patient Safety Board

The work of the National Patient Safety Board Advocacy Coalition was highlighted at the July 13th Congressional briefing at the Rayburn House Office in Washington, DC with a discussion on the alarming downturn in patient safety measures nationally and why a [National Patient Safety Board](#) (NPSB) is the solution.

During the briefing, Jewish Healthcare Foundation and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH shared that 1 in 4 people in the United States experience harm while receiving health care and medical error is the third leading cause of death. The current healthcare workforce shortage has created a further deterioration in patient safety and a need for breakthrough solutions, including a National Patient Safety Board.



Robert Ferguson, MPH presents during the NPSB Advocacy Coalition Congressional briefing.

The briefing featured a panel discussion with Coalition members Sue Sheridan, MIM, MBA, DHL, founding member of Patients for Patient Safety; José Rivera, Chief Administrative Quality Officer at MD Anderson Cancer Center; and Raj Ratwani, PhD, Vice President of Scientific Affairs at MedStar Health Research Institute, Director of MedStar Health National Center for Human Factors in Healthcare, and Associate Professor at Georgetown University School of Medicine.

The proposed independent federal board, the NPSB, would model the efforts of the National Transportation Safety Board and Commercial Aviation Safety Team and would complement existing agencies in monitoring and anticipating patient safety events with artificial intelligence, provide expertise to study the causes of errors, create recommendations and solutions to prevent future harms, and leverage existing systems to bring key learnings into practice. The NPSB would guarantee a data-driven, scalable approach to preventing and reducing patient safety events in healthcare settings—and will save lives.

The NPSB is modeled after CAST and the NTSB as a nonpunitive, collaborative, multi-disciplinary R&D team at Health & Human Services which would be tasked to identify and anticipate significant harm, understand the causes and pre-cursors to harm, and create solutions with the goal of preventing harm before it occurs and reducing the burden on health systems and frontline teams. On December 1, 2022, U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán (D-CA) introduced [H.R.9377 – the National Patient Safety Board Act](#). The legislation will be reintroduced in the next session.

The NPSB would be the most significant advancement in healthcare safety since the Patient Safety Act of 2005 and explained a broad-based coalition has come together to support the NPSB to create solutions to prevent harm and reduce the burden on healthcare workers, complementing

the existing roles of other agencies. Started in early 2021, the NPSB Coalition has grown to 84 members representing leading healthcare organizations.

Senior Care and Workforce Challenges Take Center Stage as Pittsburgh Hosts Elder Care Conference

“Ready to Impact,” the 2023 Pioneer Network/Green House Project Center for Innovation Conference, held July 23–26 at the Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh Downtown Hotel and Conference Center, provided several opportunities to showcase the Jewish Healthcare Foundation’s (JHF’s) commitment to improving care for nursing home residents and strengthening the long-term care workforce. JHF served as a sponsor of the conference, which also provided an opportunity for partners in the Teaching Nursing Home initiative to engage in-person with JHF Aging Team staff.

On July 24, JHF COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts, MBA, participated in a panel discussion titled “Moving Forward to Change Eldercare.” Along with other members of the Moving Forward Nursing Home Quality Coalition, Zionts shared about the group’s efforts to operationalize the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s seven primary recommendations for nursing home reform, as explored in a [landmark 2022 report](#).



Nancy Zionts, MBA and panelists discuss forward movement and change in elder care.



Revising the Teaching Nursing Home partners gather for a luncheon at JHF.

Participants discussed areas of focus and invited attendees to join the movement to transform the recommendations into policy change. Then on July 25, Zionts and National and Statewide Advisory Group Member JoAnne Reifsnnyder, PhD, MSN, MBA, RN, FAAN, professor of Nursing Leadership and Management in the Department of Organizational Systems and Adult Health at the University of Maryland School of Nursing, presented on the learnings from the two-year Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home pilot project and provided a look ahead to [the second phase of the initiative](#), which will set out to engage with all nursing homes and schools of nursing in the Commonwealth over the next three years. They shared about the pivotal role nursing homes play in

resident care and education of the future nursing workforce and discussed the opportunity for other states to replicate the initiative.

Capitalizing on the opportunity to engage in person after two years of virtual project meetings, JHF hosted Revisiting Teaching Nursing Home initiative Pittsburgh-based and visiting partners for a

luncheon gathering on July 25. Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN, president of The John A. Hartford Foundation, the lead funder of the Teaching Nursing Home initiative, to reflect with the project team on the successes of the pilot and the exciting work ahead for the new Teaching Nursing Home Collaborative.

As an added benefit to conference participants, the award-winning musical “A Box of Memories,” made its North American debut in Pittsburgh, and attendees were invited to a Sunday evening show. The story presents perspectives on what it means to live with dementia, from diagnosis to the end of life, through a series of vignettes. Zionts assisted the conference planning team with securing the O’Reilly Theatre as the performance venue, and JHF promoted the musical among its aging networks and Dementia Friends/Dementia Friendly partners.



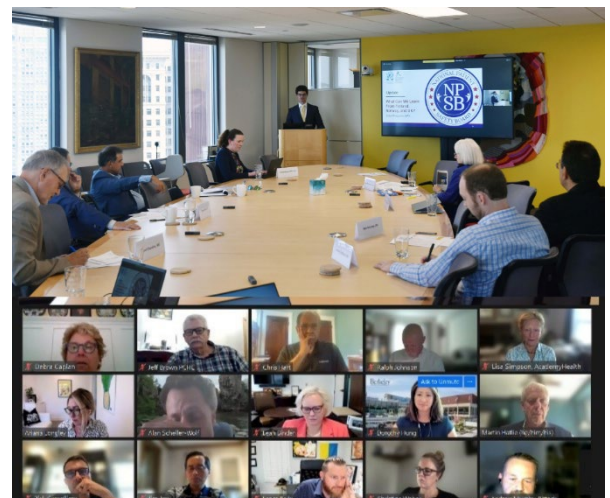
JHF staff attend “A Box of Memories” including: Nancy Zionts, MBA, Stacie Bonenberger, Anneliese Perry (back row) and Lisa George and Maureen Saxon-Gioia (front row).

PRHI Board Members Discuss the Patient Safety Tech Challenge and the National Patient Safety Boards in Norway, Finland, and the UK.

On July 27, the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) Board convened to discuss the progress and next steps of the Patient Safety Technology Challenge and share how lessons learned on a study tour to Norway and Finland can inform the creation of the National Patient Safety Board in the United States.

During the meeting, Ariana Longley, MPH, patient safety consultant to PRHI, provided an update on the Patient Safety Technology Challenge, which has included 20 events in the past 10 months and 31 winning teams. Over 170 patient safety teams in total have participated in the PSTC with 6,420 people participating and in attendance and 20 judges and mentors sharing their expertise.

The Patient Safety Technology Challenge fuels the engagement of students and faculty from a variety of disciplines to become innovators in healthcare system safety, applying autonomous technologies. The Challenge integrates patient safety tech awards in existing hackathons, ideathons and local, regional, national, and international competitions with two different categories, the Big Idea Award for technological solutions to safety problems and the Futurist Award for the best overall redesign of a radically safer healthcare system. The initiative has made a total investment of \$325,000 to date.



Robert Ferguson, MPH updates the Board on the National Patient Safety Board Act.

In discussion, Board members lauded the success of the competition and suggested ideas for maximizing its impact on patient safety. Ideas included partnering with health systems to test winning ideas, working to connect winners with seed investors and to serve as an employment pipeline for companies in the region.

JHF Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson updated the Board on the progress of the National Patient Safety Board, including the upcoming report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (Working Group on Patient Safety) and a meeting in Washington with Congressional staffers. In addition, Karen Feinstein, JHF President and CEO and Marty Hartlie, co-founder of Patients for Patient Safety US, presented observations from a recent JHF and PRHI study tour to Finland and Norway to learn more about their patient safety organizations and agendas.

In Norway, the Norwegian Healthcare Investigation Board (NHIB/UKOM) is focused on creating research studies and using interdisciplinary reflection panels to establish consensus action options for various injuries/harm in healthcare settings. A staff of 18 multidisciplinary experts sit on its healthcare investigation board with a mandate to investigate serious incidents and unsafe system design in the Norwegian healthcare services. Lessons learned from Norway include the importance of building a broad base of support at the outset, being true to the commitment to focus on the harms that create the worst consequences for the largest numbers of people, and to ensure that an implementation plan is inherent in the process.

In Finland, the delegation learned about Finland's aspirations to eliminate all avoidable healthcare harms by 2026 and to become the international leader in patient safety. To accomplish this, the government has established a Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety, a National Safety Plan based on the World Health Organization's comprehensive action grid, and a separate Healthcare Investigation Authority that serves under the Ministry of Justice and is part of a larger Authority. The SIAF is an independent and impartial agency with over 130 interdisciplinary experts to issue recommendations on safety improvements in multiple high-risk industries. Their reports on serious safety incidents can take up to 220 days and have a requirement that progress on recommendations be reported annually for ten years. Consequently, 70% of their recommendations are implemented. This was an important takeaway.

Finland is also establishing extensive requirements for the education of health professionals in patient safety—at the student and practitioner level. For this, the study tour participants are very envious. Also, distinctive is the focus on extensive communications planning and execution with personalized messages crafted and delivered at all stages of the research, findings, dissemination & implementation processes.

Andrew Murphy-Pittock, Head of Investigation Education at the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch (HSIB) in the UK, joined the meeting to describe the progress in the UK related to their own Healthcare Safety Investigation Board. HSIB is a non-regulatory, collaborative and (soon to be) totally independent agency. Among the lessons and recommendations, he shared: The importance

of focusing efforts at a systems level, understanding what drives people, having public-political support, and maintaining independence to get the buy in and cooperation of the people.

Since these findings will inform the creation of the National Patient Safety Board (NPSB) in the U.S., members of PRHI's Full Court Press Team and the NPSB Policy and Advocacy Coalition joined the meeting for this special presentation.

JHF Launches First Episode of Global Health Wavelengths Videocast Focusing on Youth Mental Health Programs in Australia

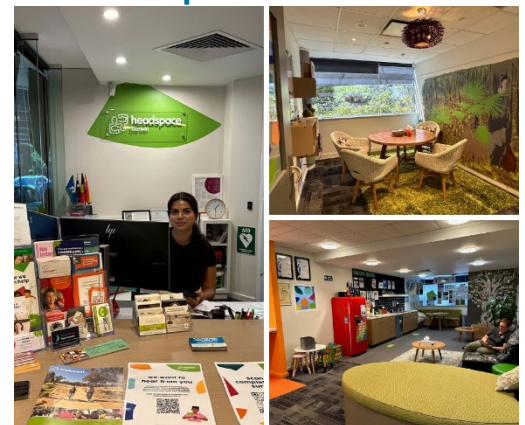
The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) explores the innovative models Australia is employing to address the current teen mental health crisis in its first episode of the Global Health Wavelengths videocast. The episode is hosted by Dr. Andrew Carlo, Vice President of Health System Integration, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, with guests Matthew Short, assistant secretary, Mental Health Services, Australia, and Dr. Ruth Vine, Interim CEO, National Mental Health Commission.



Global Health Wavelengths is an interview series produced by JHF dedicated to exploring innovations and best practice models from around the world to help inform and improve U.S. healthcare systems and policy around common challenges. Watch the episode [here](#).

Karen Wolk Feinstein Lauds Australia's Investment in Teen Mental Health and Calls for Similar Approach in the U.S. in *Pittsburgh Business Times* Op-Ed

The teen mental health crisis and its impact on youth and systems of care was recently highlighted in an op-ed published in the *Pittsburgh Business Times*. "It's Time to Invest in Our Youth," written by Jewish Healthcare Foundation President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, focuses on Australia's investment in teen drop-in centers and recognizes the work of JHF-supported Friendship Circle's The Beacon and Jewish Family and Community Services' UpStreet, and calls for permanent funding streams to be dedicated to this work. [Read the op-ed](#) in the Pittsburgh Business Times.

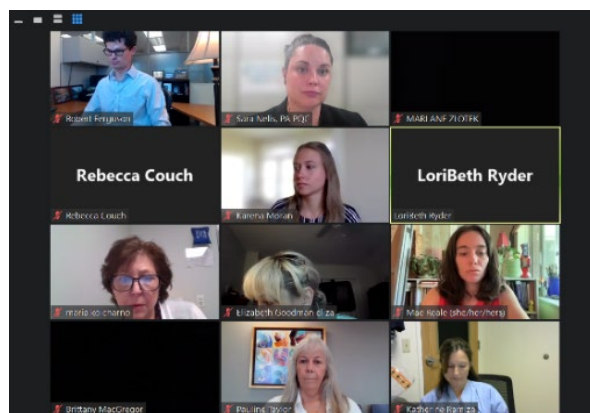


Pictures from Dr. Feinstein's recent visit to Headspace in Australia.

PA PQC Regional Meetings Convene Healthcare Teams and Community Organizations to Strengthen Network of Support for Birthing People

A new format of the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative this year is regional meetings, which are being held throughout the year to convene hospital-based healthcare teams with community-based organizations and agencies to share knowledge and strengthen care connections.

The PA PQC theme for this implementation period, from April 2023 through March 2024, is “connecting across the continuum of care,” with the regional meetings being facilitated to connect Healthcare Teams, which are primarily hospital-based and made up of mostly inpatient staff, with outside organizations and agencies in their regions and neighboring birthing sites.



Participants discuss regional needs during a recent regional meeting.

Two regional meetings have been held, in the southwest region on May 18 and the northwest region on June 22. The July 26 meeting was held for the Northeast region. A meeting is scheduled for the southeast region August 17 and in the Lehigh/Capital region for Sept. 21.

The two-hour sessions include a summary of regional needs related to neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) by Jewish Healthcare Foundation Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH followed by healthcare teams from birthing sites in the region sharing out briefly about their current quality improvement goals.

The session in southwestern Pennsylvania on May 18 included two spotlights of birthing hospital and community partnerships: one focused on doula awareness and engagement with a panel discussion by Shawndel Laughner, MHA, BSN, Director, Women and Children's Services, St. Clair Hospital and Selena Eisenberg, Primary Midwife and Founder of Igi Osè, CLD, CAPPA Faculty, and CEO of The Pittsburgh Birth Project. The second Lisa Pareso, MSHSA, Manager, Rural Health Model, Washington Health System discussed the formation of their monthly multi-stakeholder meetings with community partners. The session in northwestern Pennsylvania on June 22 focused on the collaboration between Saint Vincent Hospital and Gaudenzia, a Center of Excellence, allowing Mom/Baby Dyad to stay together during treatment for substance use disorder. Lisa Herrmann Bradley, Program Director, Gaudenzia and Erika Pluta, MSW, Social Worker, Saint Vincent Hospital, AHN were presenters.

The most recent session held July 26 included speakers: Geri Buckwalter, BS, M.Ed., RN, Care Manager, Women's Health Center of Wayne Memorial Community Health Centers (WMCHC); Meagan Oliveras, LSW, Social Worker, Wayne Memorial Hospital; Cynthia Matthews, Director of Developmental Programs and Early Intervention, Wayne County Behavioral and Developmental Programs and Early Intervention; and Maria Kolcharno, MSW, LSW, Director of Addiction Services and leader of Healthy Maternal Opiate Medical Support (MOMS), The Wright Center.

Sessions hold space for open discussion to allow birth sites, organizations, and agencies to create meaningful connections and learn from one another.

“Our hope is that these regional sessions will serve as the foundation for future learning sessions so that we might offer regional breakouts in more specific topic areas and the healthcare team members, organizations, and stakeholders will already have a familiarity with one another and be more open to collaborating in the future,” said PA PQC and Pittsburgh: A Safer Childbirth City project manager Sara Nelis, RN.

Materials from the past sessions, including the recordings can be found [here](#).

Karen Wolk Feinstein Featured in RamaOnHealthcare Discussing Activist Philanthropy and Medical Error

On July 13, RamaOnHealthcare published an interview with Karen Feinstein on her perspectives to make health care safer, healthcare leadership, activist philanthropy, and needed innovations in health care. Read more [here](#).



PRHI Continues Work to Foster Understanding of Quality Improvement Strategies in Health Care

For the third year, Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative's (PRHI's) Jennifer Condel, manager of Lean Healthcare Strategy, and Bruce Block, MD, PRHI health care quality consultant, taught the course "Health Care Quality" which is a part of the Master of Medical Management for Physicians Program offered through Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy.

In the two four-week virtual cohorts, Dr. Block and Condel guided 27 physician leaders in developing techniques to lead quality improvement efforts, support staff involved in quality improvement efforts, and align quality improvement efforts with strategic goals and organizational development. The course teaches a Quality Improvement model and structure each week providing lean philosophy, content, activities, real-life examples, and weekly peer to peer Zoom sessions. During the Zoom sessions, physician peers shared their current challenges and discussed approaches to apply the teachings. For the completion of the course, students produce a final summary in written or video format



about how they will apply what they learned in the course to their physician leadership work, and role in their organization to champion quality improvement and patient safety.

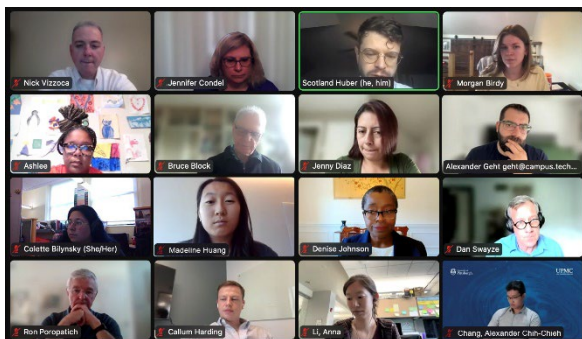
Patient Safety Challenge Fellowship Approaches Finale Expo on August 14

The 19th annual Patient Safety Fellowship hosted by the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and Health Careers Futures is looking toward the future in a different way this summer. The newly minted Patient Safety Challenge Fellowship brings a competition into the mix, challenging participants to focus on healthcare transformation and redesign a safer healthcare system.



This year's 31 fellows formed 13 teams consisting of fellows and non-fellows with the goal of crafting a novel vision of health care starting from the patient/family perspective and designing it to be vastly safer for patients and healthcare workers.

Fellows have had access to mentors – nationally recognized leaders in patient safety - to help shape their vision over the summer. A total of 13 mentors are focusing on the seven dimensions that the fellows have been asked to address– accountability, workforce, healthcare delivery, technology, equity, safety, and patient and family engagement.



Patient Safety Challenge Fellowship participants engage with mentors during a session.

Mentors include: Bruce Block, MD, healthcare quality consultant, PRHI; Robert Ferguson, MPH, chief policy officer, JHF; Stuart Fisk, CRNP, director of strategy, Allegheny Health Network, Center for Inclusion Health; Martin Hatlie, JD, co-director, MedStar Institute for Quality & Safety; Ken Ho, MD, MPH, medical director, Pitt Men's Study, University of Pittsburgh; Emily Jaffee, MD, senior clinical program strategist, Highmark Health; Denise Johnson, MD, FACOG, FACHE, acting Secretary of Health and Physician General, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew, MD, Med, MPPM, FACOG, chief clinical diversity, equity, and inclusion officer, Allegheny Health

Network and Highmark; Ronald Poropatich, MD, director of the Center for Military Medicine Research, University of Pittsburgh; Mary Beth Navarra-Sirio, MBA, RN, vice president of product management and market development, UPMC Enterprises; Daniel Swayze, PhD, vice president of community services, UPMC Health Plan; Todd Wolynn, MD, president, Kids Plus Pediatrics and executive director, the Breastfeeding Center of Pittsburgh; Nick Vizzoca, MBA, president, Center for Healthcare Solutions. Mentors are meeting with fellow teams between July 17 to August 12 to provide feedback, insight, and direction to the fellows' ideas.

“The JHF Patient Safety Fellowship has been an opportunity to consider real potential solutions with heavy mentorship. This is a fulfilling experience that inspires the youth of today to continue coming up with creative ideas under the guidance of leaders within the field. I personally appreciate this platform as it gives me the opportunity to explore an idea that was limited to the classroom in real life,” said Fellow Harshitha Ramanan, a Master of Health Administration student at Duquense University.

The Fellowship will conclude with the Health Care Redesign Expo & Award Ceremony on August 14 from 6-8 p.m. at the Energy Innovation Center in Pittsburgh. At the event, teams of fellows will showcase their ideas through interactive exhibits and a panel of judges will select the winner. The winning team will be announced at the event, receiving a \$5,000 cash prize, and attendees can also vote at the event to determine the \$500 People’s Choice Award winner.

A total of five judges will assess the projects and identify a winner at the Patient Safety Challenge Fellowship Finale that will be held August 14 at the Energy Innovation Center. The judges include: Rick Cancelliere, CEO, Treatspace; Tina Hahn, VP, CIN development and value-based integration, Allegheny Health Network and Physician Partners of Western PA; Jim Jen. MA, MBA, founding managing director, AlphaLab; Tamara E. Minnier, MSN, RN, FACHE, FAAN, chief quality officer, UPMC; and Paul E. Phrampus, MD, CPE, FSSH, FACEP, CPPS, vice chair of quality and patient safety, Department of Emergency Medicine, UPMC.

The public is invited to attend the Health Care Redesign Expo & Award Ceremony at no cost. Complimentary food & drinks will be available. [RSVP here.](#)

New Patient Safety Technology Challenge Winners Announced in July

The Patient Safety Technology Challenge announced new winners at the TeenTech Awards held in London, United Kingdom (UK) on June 30th.

To launch the new category, TeenTech ran a live [virtual event](#) in December 2022 to explain the challenge to teachers and students, and 250 students and teachers watched this session, raising visibility of patient safety technology possibilities.

Additionally, two in-person Innovation Hacks took place in Reading and Liverpool. The first Innovation Hack was hosted at Microsoft HQ and the second was hosted at Alder Hey Children’s Hospital. These events brought technical and clinical expertise to the students to help provide them with background on patient safety and tech.

Across the UK, over 50 projects were submitted in the first round in the Patient Safety Category which were judged at the end of March. Nine of those projects were selected to attend the showcase in London on June 30th.



Winning team at the TeenTech Awards, Pharma-Bot, receives their first-place prize.

The winner of the age group 11-16 was the Pharma-Bot, comprising of Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire students Kellie, Sal, and Ellie. Pharma-Bot is a pill checker that will harness AI to reduce medication errors.

The 17-19 age group winner was DemenSure. Sacred Heart Catholic Academy students Lois and Ruby conceptualized an implant for dementia patients with the ability to monitor and avoid under or over medication as well as adverse drug-to-drug interactions.

Read about past competitions involved in the Patient Safety Technology Challenge at the [Patient Safety Technology Challenge website](#).

Patient Safety Technology Challenge Announces Three New Competitions

Three new competitions joined the [Patient Safety Technology Challenge](#) this month. Funded by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and administered by the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, the Patient Safety Technology Challenge is designed to fuel the engagement of students and innovators in creating solutions and envisioning transformational approaches to reduce preventable harm from medical errors and reimagine a vastly safer healthcare system.



The Society of Critical Care Medicine's [\(SSCM\) Discovery Datathon](#) will be a collaborative event held on August 5-6 connecting clinicians with data scientists to develop pragmatic data-driven models applicable to the care of critically ill patients using de-identified critical care electronic health record datasets. Patient safety has been woven into the goals of the Datathon. The goals are to: Identify the factors that contribute to patient safety problems in critical care; develop data-driven solutions to address these problems; and raise awareness of the issue of patient safety and the need for action. The winning team will be invited to travel to SCCM's conference in Arizona in January 2024 to present their idea and receive their award.

Hack the Nest is the DC, Maryland, Virginia (DMV) area's largest high school hackathon hosted by The Hack Foundation. With the support of experienced professors, mentors, and judges, the winning patient safety project will earn \$500 and guidance to further develop their idea. This year's event will be held in Sterling, Virginia, September 23-24. Applications close September 14th, [apply here](#).

DivHacks is Columbia University's premier student-led annual diversity hackathon open to university students. The Patient Safety Tech Track will challenge participants to devise innovative solutions that enhance the quality of care, reduce medical errors, and ensure the well-being of patients. By exploring system improvements and effective protocols, we aim to foster a healthcare environment that values patient safety. The hackathon will be held at Columbia University on September 23-24 and applications close September 1, [apply here](#).

Karen Wolk Feinstein Featured on the Pre-Accident Investigation Podcast

Karen Wolk Feinstein was featured on The Pre-Accident Podcast hosted by safety culture expert Todd Conklin. The podcast hosts discussions on human performance, systems safety, and safety culture, and Dr. Feinstein shared insights into her journey working on patient safety. [Listen to the conversation here.](#)



Dementia Friendly Pennsylvania Contributes to Dementia Cookbook

The Dementia Friends Pennsylvania staff collaborated with Dementia Action Alliance and their team of authors living with dementia on their newest publication *Cooking Our Way: A Cookbook By and For People Living with Dementia* released this month in print and as [a free downloadable PDF](#).

The unique cookbook includes information about healthy diet, protective kitchen aides, and recipes that are simple and designed by and for people living with dementia and their care partners.

Dementia Friendly Pennsylvania statewide coordinators Stacie Bonenberger, MOT, OTR/L and Anneliese Perry, MS, NHA, CECM worked closely with authors on the chapter “Making Your Kitchen and Cooking Dementia Friendly,” which includes suggested adaptive and protective kitchen aids, safety tips, and organization suggestions to make items easier to find.



PRHI Continues Learning Sessions on Social Determinants Screening

The HealthChoices Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Northeastern Pennsylvania Learning Collaborative session was held Wednesday, July 12 at the Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel in Scranton focusing on the social determinants of health (SDOH).

The PCMH Learning Network aims to support the PCMH providers and



Physical Health MCOs in identifying and acting on improvement strategies towards the common PCMH aims and measures, and developing an internal capacity to continuously learn, adapt, and improve.

Allison Knepp, LPN, PCMH Educator/Nurse Manager, Family Practice Center, gave a presentation on “Family Practice Center’s SDOH Screening and Follow-Up Process,” and Dr. John Bulger, DO, MBA, chief medical officer, Geisinger Health Plan, presented on “Increasing Access to Community Services in Response to SDOH Needs.” Mae Reale, MA, health education specialist, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Robert Ferguson, MPH, JHF’s Chief Policy Officer, and Jennifer Condel, SCT(ASCP)MT, manager of Lean Healthcare Strategy and Implementation at JHF facilitated the workshop “Patient-Centered Language for SDOH Screening,” exploring how to use key message, use motivational interviewing principles to craft key messages, and how to ask patients for feedback on the messaging and use the “go and see” quality improvement tact to continuously improve.

Condel, Ferguson, and JHF Program Specialist Pauline Taylor, CQIA also facilitated a discussion about “Dental Health to Inform Future Regional Sessions” to determine what preventative dental services are currently provided, billing for these services, referrals, collaboration with dental providers, barrier to implementing topical fluoride treatment, and more.

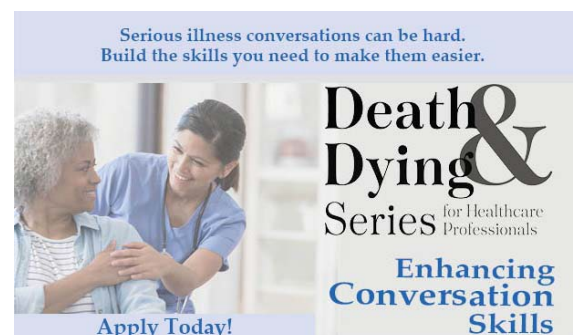
The Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS) was led by Debra Youngfelt, BS, MCHES, CTTS, executive director, Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center. The two-hour immersive experience designed to create awareness among participants of the struggles and challenges people at the bottom rung of the economic ladder face on a daily basis. Participants were assigned to “families” who do their best to survive week-to-week over a simulated one-month period.

PCMH Southeast Learning Collaborative was held virtually July 20. In addition to the standard PCMH report outs that occur at all the PCMH regional learning sessions, southeast will have 2 presenters (Julian Xie, MD, MPP, Senior Healthcare Innovation and Evaluation Manager, Benefits Data Trust and Rebecca Boova-Turner, MS, RD, LDN, Healthcare Partnership Manager, MANNA) talk about Opportunities to Utilize Community-Based Organizations Services and have a discussion about preventative dental practices.

Michael Baer, MD, CPC, plan medical director, AmeriHealth Caritas, a physician who role played the physician in the poverty simulation, said he was unhappy that no one visited the physician during the simulation because the families were so busy trying to live their lives and survive that their health was not even on their radar.

Apply Today for the Death & Dying Series for Healthcare Professionals

Death and serious illness are a part of life, but they’re still often hard to talk about—even for experienced healthcare professionals. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is again



offering the Death and Dying Series for Healthcare Professionals, a virtual education series designed to provide those working in healthcare-related disciplines with an opportunity to learn about and practice having conversations around serious illness, death, and dying within a multidisciplinary group in a low-pressure environment.

[Learn more and apply for this fall's series](#), which runs on Mondays from 3:30-5 p.m. for six sessions starting on October 9. Continuing education credits are available for physicians, nurses, and social workers. Applications close **September 7**, and spaces are limited, so apply today!

Salk Health Activist Fellowship Now Accepting Applications for Fall Program

The 2023 Salk Health Activist Fellowship will focus emerging activists on effective strategies and tactics to achieve policy change to address the current mental health challenges. The 9-week Fellowship will be on Tuesdays from 4:30-7:00pm beginning on September 19. Creative graduate students and professionals from diverse healthcare related disciplines are encouraged to **apply by August 31**. Learn more and [apply here](#).



Michael Becich and the Department of Biomedical Informatics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Spearhead the Expanded Use of Data Sharing and Artificial Intelligence to Improve Patient Care

As a child, Mike Becich had an inquisitive mind and a passion for electron microscopes. That passion led him to become a first-generation college student and a renowned pathologist.

"When I arrived (at Northwestern University), the first thing I did was look for where the microscopes were. They tended to be in two places: research laboratories and in the hospital setting with pathologists. So very early on in my collegiate career I knew that my love of imaging, or microscopy, would best be served in medical research," Dr. Becich said.



He would go on to receive his BA in biology in 1977 and his MD and PhD degrees in 1984, all from Northwestern University. He completed a fellowship in urologic pathology from the University of Nebraska and both a fellowship and residency in anatomic pathology at Washington University in St. Louis. "My training profoundly shaped my career. My early interests led me to pathology, and I found that as a pathologist, I could combine the use of microscopes, both in research and practice," Dr. Becich said.

Beyond the lure of microscopes, Dr. Becich was drawn to cancer and pathology data sharing needs which made it conducive to informatics research. In 1991, he was hired by the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where he helped create its division of pathology informatics – only the second of its kind in the country. He founded and served as the inaugural president of the [Association for Pathology Informatics](#), which was established in 2000, as well as supported the [Journal of Pathology Informatics](#) in 2010.

“All of that activity in pathology informatics led to the job that I have now, that I love,” Dr. Becich said. He is currently the associate vice chancellor for informatics in the health sciences. As chair and distinguished professor of the [Department of Biomedical Informatics](#), he leads the department’s efforts to use technologies to advance biomedical research and clinical care. The scope of the department’s research ranges from genomic and proteomic data mining to machine learning and AI applications in biomedicine. Additionally, he serves as the associate director for cancer informatics at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center and the former associate director of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute.

Dr. Becich’s research focuses on the interface between clinical informatics and bioinformatics. He has studied clinical phenotyping of patients for personalized medicine, tissue banking and pathology informatics, and data sharing’s role in clinical informatics and bioinformatics. He is a current fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics.

“What’s at the core of my curiosity is that I’ve always been interested in human disease, and problem solving. That is what pathology and informatics is all about – understanding how data and imaging can contribute to our understanding of the cellular mechanisms that cause a disease,” Dr. Becich said.

When he became a pathologist, he came to the realization that there is a gold mine of information produced that we needed to share back to clinicians, however that exchange wasn’t as robust with researchers. “[I found very early](#) that tissue banking and biomedical informatics, were instrumental to unlocking the data in human disease for precision medicine, and these innovations were really my calling. When I became a pathologist, I realized that informatics and tissue banking would be the keys to unlocking further both patient and research-related data and that would become my major contributions to medicine. Data sharing and fueling open science continues to be key to my success,” Becich said.

Dr. Becich continues to work to create pipelines for biomedical big data and to realize the value of sequencing and imaging for cancers. He also said he never thought he would become an entrepreneur and create new industries. “It is critical in medicine that we reuse all of the data that we gather both in critical care and for research – to combat diseases, to create new therapeutics, and to understand how to prevent disease,” Dr. Becich said. “I talk about Big “T” Translation in my work because you do things in your laboratory, you publish a paper, you write a grant and that’s cool. But what’s important is what you do with your research and that it translates into millions of people benefiting (true Big “T” Translation).” This involves entrepreneurship and the creation of new companies and new industries.

Early in his career with tissue analysis he realized the need for automation and AI methods. Dr. Becich was a forerunner in whole slide imagining innovation, which led to his first three startup companies related to whole slide imaging. Now his fourth company, [PredxBio](#), focuses on spatial biology which allows for probes at the single-cell level to integrate protein expression, genomics and imaging to understand the networks of communicating signals between cells. PredxBio provides insight into what is driving disease and what drug will be the best treatment for that individual patient.

Dr. Becich's interests in pathology imaging and microscopy were realized in his first three startup companies in creating digital imaging innovation for the practicing pathologist called whole slide imaging. "Whole slide imaging is now a multi-billion-dollar industry. You go to pathology labs today and one of the most important new innovations there is automating anatomical pathology slides into digital information for analysis," Dr. Becich explained. "I feel very fortunate that my path has been able to carve new turf as an entrepreneur. I believe very strongly that AI and machine learning can transform patient care by making a safer environment for patients but also so that we understand what drug is going to benefit a cancer patient and how we can understand this disease and its host immune response."

The Regional Autonomous Patient Safety (RAPS) Initiative provided an opportunity for Dr. Becich and the Department of Biomedical Informatics to reignite their long-time partnership with the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative. Dr. Becich said serving as co-chair of the [RAPS](#) is truly a full-circle moment. The RAPS initiative recognizes Pittsburgh's regional assets and investors as a global hub for developing autonomous patient safety solutions. Becich heads JHF-funded patient safety research at the University of Pittsburgh and will collaborate with JHF-funded patient safety research at Carnegie Mellon University.

"Dr. Feinstein and JHF helped to develop my focus in the automation of patient safety efforts for the pathology laboratory. With the advent of AI and machine learning in medicine, and more importantly the unlocking of electronic health record data and medication safety data, the way RAPS is focused, safety will become a real set of tools in the hands of clinicians and patients," Dr. Becich said.

"Both of us (Pitt and CMU) have considerable machine learning and AI expertise. These tools will ensure our success in RAPS. Since our department was last funded by JHF, we have developed a research data warehouse which has allowed us to use their medical health records for research," Dr. Becich said. "Making patient data more easily accessible in an ultra-secure fashion is what is central to our data sharing passion and now through the RAPS initiative we can collaborate with CMU to develop and test a novel approach to evaluate informatics-supported intervention to reduce adverse drug events."

Planting the flag in Pittsburgh as a regional hub for autonomous patient safety is ideal, Dr. Becich said adding that its academic health system and two research universities, coupled with the data from the health system and JHF's investment of \$1.3 in academic research at Pitt and CMU and [in seed grant funding](#) through the RAPS initiative has created an ecosystem for innovation and catalytic progress in patient safety.

“It is really a living laboratory for the patient experience in health care that we can put to use for patient safety initiatives and beyond,” said Dr. Becich, adding that JHF’s pilot funding provides the potential and momentum for larger federal funding opportunities through ARPA-H, NIH, and more.

Dr. Becich added the Pittsburgh-based work also opens the opportunity for broader discussion about and action on streamlining the electronic medical record system to increase its efficacy and reduce clinician burnout.

“I’m excited for the opportunities to bring more federal funding to bear on these issues, to scale what the Jewish Healthcare Foundation is doing, and then establishing an entrepreneurial ecosystem for companies to bring patient safety to light,” Dr. Becich.

A long-time friend of the Foundation, Dr. Becich said he admires JHF and Dr. Feinstein’s commitment to creating a culture of putting the patient first in health care. “I love JHF’s focus on real problems affecting patients and their families. A key regional (and national) asset is having the multidisciplinary team of academics, entrepreneurs, industry partners, and community leaders involved in RAPS, that Dr. Feinstein, the Foundation, and the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative have created. Having all of that built into RAPS is critical for our success,” Dr. Becich said.

Staff Hike and Paddle at North Park for JHF Annual Staff Outing

Staff recently enjoyed the day at beautiful North Park paddling the picturesque lake and taking a scenic hike guided by park rangers and accompanied by Allegheny Parks Foundation president and CEO Joey-Linn Ulrich for JHF’s annual staff outing.



