



For Immediate Release

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Jewish Healthcare Foundation Approves \$830,000 in New Grants to Create Higher-Quality Healthcare Delivery and Payment Models, Reduce Maternal Mortality

(Pittsburgh, PA)—The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) approved \$830,000 in new grants to create healthcare delivery and payment demonstration projects that aim to improve patient care and eliminate avoidable costs, and to enhance maternal health among the Pittsburgh region’s immigrant and refugee population by demonstrating the value of doula community health workers (CHWs). Additionally, JHF renewed a \$900,000 block grant to the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh to address the health needs of the region’s Jewish community.

Building a Waste-Free Health System from the Bottom Up

JHF approved a three-year, \$600,000 grant to identify healthcare cost drivers in partnership with providers, insurers, and employers, and then develop local provider-payer demonstration projects for targeted health conditions to address those cost drivers. The goals of the demonstration projects are to uncover innovative strategies to improve care, eliminate healthcare spending that does not improve patient outcomes, and create sustainable payment models that support higher-quality patient care.

“Rising healthcare costs are straining the U.S. economy, while we’re also getting a poor return on our big investments,” says JHF and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD. “Healthcare spending consumes nearly a fifth of our country’s GDP, yet we have the worst population health among industrialized nations. A major reason is that an estimated 30% to 40% of all U.S. health spending covers overtreatment, poor care delivery and care coordination, and medical errors. With these demonstration projects, we want to eliminate wasteful spending and free up additional resources for services that actually improve health outcomes.”

The Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (a supporting organization of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation) was founded in 1997 as one of the country's first regional collaboratives of medical, business, and civic leaders organized to eliminate waste and elevate quality and safety within the healthcare system. Recently, PRHI has played an important role in three successful Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI)-funded demonstration projects related to integrating physical and behavioral health care in primary care settings (COMPASS), reducing preventable hospital readmissions among long-stay nursing home residents (RAVEN), and reducing preventable readmissions among patients with chronic health conditions while smoothing the transition between hospital and community settings (Primary Care Resource Center).

"The CMS Innovation Center has shown interest in supporting projects that champion local innovation, reduce the administrative burden on physicians, and increase opportunities to participate in alternative payment models," says JHF and PRHI Director of Government Grants and Policy Robert Ferguson, MPH. "Our demonstration projects align with those goals by creating a bottom-up approach to payment reform that offers providers greater autonomy in designing and delivering high-value care."

Empowering Community Health Workers to Improve Maternal Health

Since its establishment in 1990, JHF has played an advocacy and community convening role to advance women's health on many fronts, including by leading campaigns to detect and prevent breast cancer (*The Breast Test*), improve women's heart health (Working Hearts®), and prevent cancer through HPV vaccination.

Building on this legacy, JHF launched the [Women's Health Activist Movement Global](#) (WHAMglobal) in late 2016. WHAMglobal forms networks of advocates and experts in women's health and wellness to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes, equity, and leadership. WHAMglobal aims to inspire regional, national, and international advocacy and action to advance women's health, healthcare quality and safety, health professions workforce development, and pay equity. WHAMglobal is supported by JHF and the Heinz Family Foundation, and was founded by Karen Feinstein.

WHAMglobal is committed to uncovering and advancing creative ideas that tackle urgent women's health issues and hold the promise of being expanded to other communities. During its first year, WHAMglobal identified an initial focus on addressing maternal mortality in the U.S. The maternal mortality rate in the U.S. is nearly three times higher than in any other developed nation (around 26 deaths per 100,000 live births, according to a 2015 study in *The Lancet*), and that rate is climbing while other countries are reducing maternal mortality. CHWs will play an integral role in WHAMglobal's efforts to address maternal mortality, by educating and empowering mothers and helping them to navigate complex medical and social service systems.

To support this work, JHF approved a two-year, \$230,000 grant to improve maternal health among Pittsburgh's Latino, Bhutanese, and Somali communities by implementing a doula CHW demonstration

program. Through the program, Allegheny Health Network's Center for Inclusion Health (CIH) and WHAMglobal plan to demonstrate the important role of doula CHWs in improving maternal health and provide the opportunity for credentialing and ongoing training using a new curriculum for CHWs.

"This new initiative furthers JHF's longstanding mission to advance CHW policy, training, and career paths, and to support our region's most vulnerable populations" says Debra L. Caplan, MPA, chair of JHF's Distribution Committee, a WHAMglobal leader, and interim CEO of workforce development organization Partner4Work. "We want to strengthen medical and social supports for mothers in Pittsburgh's growing immigrant and refugee communities."

In August of 2017, JHF provided a three-year, \$500,000 grant to WHAMglobal to hire a project director/women's health specialist; develop interagency CHW curriculum, training programs, and career tracks; and hold speakers' series and networking events with women's health leaders. WHAMglobal is forming advisory committees with clinical, cultural, and policy skills related to women's health and CHW development. The organization is partnering with women's health leaders from around the U.S. and globe, including the Women of Impact and the International Women's Forum, to address the issue of maternal mortality.

Supporting the Health Needs of the Jewish Community

Since 1990, JHF has provided an annual block grant to the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, which is distributed to beneficiary agencies to address the health needs of the Jewish community, including those of the elderly, families that have children with special needs, and the poor. JHF's \$900,000 grant benefits the Jewish Association on Aging, the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family & Children's Service, Riverview Towers, and Jewish Residential Services. The grant represents 60% of the \$1.5 million distributed annually by the Federation to the local community for human service needs.

The block grant is part of JHF's \$2.2 million in total funding support provided to the local Jewish community in 2017.

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Available for Interviews: Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, President and CEO, Jewish Healthcare Foundation

About the Jewish Healthcare Foundation

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) is a public charity that offers a unique blend of research, education, grantmaking, and program management to improve population health and the outcomes of care. JHF and its two operating arms, the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) and Health Careers Futures (HCF) are located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and serve a national and global audience. JHF is also a founding member of the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement (NRHI). For more information, visit www.jhf.org.