

Five Foundations Combine Forces to Improve Health and Reduce Costs for Chronically Ill Patients With Complex Care Needs

The Commonwealth Fund, The John A. Hartford Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Peterson Center on Healthcare, and The SCAN Foundation Co-Author Piece in the New England Journal of Medicine to Announce Innovative New Collaboration

JULY 27, 2016—Five national health care foundations today announced a new collaboration to transform care delivery for chronically ill patients who have the greatest need for health care services. These individuals, who are estimated to account for 5 percent of the U.S. population but 50 percent of health care spending, typically have multiple conditions that are exacerbated by challenging social needs and a limited ability to care for themselves.

Writing today in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#), leaders from The Commonwealth Fund, The John A. Hartford Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Peterson Center on Healthcare, and The SCAN Foundation said they will launch resources later this year that are intended to help meet three urgent goals:

1. Help health system leaders and other stakeholders develop a deep understanding of this diverse population and its needs;
2. Identify effective ways to deliver higher-quality, integrated care at a lower cost to this population; and
3. Accelerate the spread of these approaches across the nation.

Foundation leaders say this population merits heightened attention both because they have complex—and costly—health and social care needs, and also because they are disproportionately impacted by poor quality care. Moreover, the need for action is urgent because the number of these patients, many of whom are older adults, will increase as America's population ages.

Several promising programs and care models have demonstrated success in meeting the needs of these individuals, the philanthropists say, but few have spread beyond the demonstration stage to become standard across the country.

As part of this new collaboration, evidence-based tools and resources are now being curated and will be shared with health system leaders and other stakeholders later this year.

Comments from participating foundations

"Improving care for high-need, high-cost patients is a priority for the country, particularly with an aging population and the corresponding stress on the economy. Focusing on the needs of these patients is not only critical to their well-being, but is crucial to making their care affordable."

—David Blumenthal, MD, President, The Commonwealth Fund

"Achieving the promise of value-based health care demands transformational change instead of incremental improvements. Key to this transformation is a radical rethinking of care models to deliver coordinated medical and supportive services to high cost, high needs individuals. This requires understanding of their life and care goals as people, not just patients."

—Bruce Chernof, MD, President & CEO, The SCAN Foundation

"Providing better care for older adults and others with complex health and social needs—many of them our aging parents, grandparents, and neighbors—is both a moral imperative and our best opportunity to achieve a more financially sustainable health care system. This extraordinary collaboration to spread proven models of care has the potential to dramatically improve lives and create a better society for us all."

—Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, President, The John A. Hartford Foundation

"We need to do more to help people with complex health and social needs be as healthy as possible. Clinical encounters alone will not help people be healthier, unless we address the challenges where they live, work, play, and pray, and that will take a community-wide commitment to wellness by all sectors of society."

—John Lumpkin, MD, MPH, Senior Vice President, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

"Americans with the greatest health needs deserve high quality health care at an affordable cost. Not only are they more likely to receive poor care, but their number is growing as America ages. This exciting new partnership will help

us to better understand, identify, and spread innovations that will improve care and lower costs among this priority group of Americans.”

–Jeffrey Selberg, MHA, Executive Director, Peterson Center on Healthcare

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