

Destination Justice: A Future Without Inequities

By Kimberlydawn Wisdom, M.D., M.S., Senior Vice President of Community Health & Equity and Chief Wellness & Diversity Officer at Henry Ford Health System



“The norms and notions of what ‘just is,’ isn’t always just-ice,” said Amanda Gorman, the brilliant National Youth Poet Laureate, on the steps of our Nation’s Capitol during the presidential inauguration earlier this year. As I heard her recite these words, I reflected on the work we do in healthcare delivery and community health. For years, we’ve worked to ingrain the tenets of diversity, equity and inclusion into the foundation of our health system, earning awards and acknowledgments for work that oftentimes feels cutting-edge. We’ve done this difficult work not only because those we serve demand health equity, but because they deserve it from their trusted partner in health. But if the past year has taught us anything, it is that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are simply not enough. Diversity, equity, and inclusion alone can only mitigate the damage of the past. To prevent the mistakes of the past from burdening our

communities in the future, our ultimate destination must be justice.

Justice requires altering the conditions that allow inequities to emerge and grow. The pursuit of justice cannot happen on the periphery, or in pockets throughout our system. It necessitates a thorough investigation into the structures and policies that exist in our work and a widespread effort to challenge what “just is.” Henry Ford’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) strategic plan, in development for final Board of Directors action by the end of 2021, aims to do just that. Guided by four pillars – Anti-Racism and Social Justice Advocacy; Diverse Workforce and Inclusive Culture; Community Empowerment; and Healthcare Equity – we will identify ways to dismantle and unplan inequities and pursue justice.

To truly move the needle on narrowing health disparities, we must understand the narrative – where are the disparities in our communities, and why are they occurring? To get the narrative right, we need the numbers. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our ability to gather data in real time and map hotspots where outbreaks are occurring has allowed us to direct resources where we can make the most impact. Improved collection of data on race, ethnicity, and language (REAL) and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) will allow our system to identify disparities in real time and not only assign assets accordingly but investigate and address the structural barriers and policies that contribute to them.

Henry Ford works hard to foster the health and healing of patients at their most vulnerable moments. But a community burdened by the interpersonal, institutional, and structural effects of racism and systemic injustices will only be as healthy and as healed as systems allow. Addressing unjust structures, policies, and barriers is at the heart of the shift from DEI to DEIJ and will amplify the impact each and every one of us has on our patients’ lives. *(continued on page 3)*

“The norms and notions of what ‘just is,’ isn’t always just-ice,” said Amanda Gorman

Henry Ford Donates Masks to Help Detroiters Stay Safe

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 isn’t just about squashing the virus; it’s about changing hearts and minds, and helping people feel comfortable with healthy choices. Departments across Henry Ford have found creative ways to encourage mask wearing to slow the spread.

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2020 Grants & Honors Round-Up

In 2020, HFHS's department of Community Health, Equity, Wellness and Diversity received over \$2.25 million in grant funds and contributions to address a range of topics related to improving health equity and eliminating disparities. Projects addressed a wide range of issues, including:

- Reducing infant mortality through an enhanced model of virtual group prenatal care, funded by the Hillman Foundation and DMC Foundation (page 9)
- Promoting better maternal outcomes with cross-sector partners from Metro Detroit through the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Better Maternal Outcomes Initiative, funded by Merck for Mothers (page 8)
- Tobacco dependence treatment support via the "Every Try Counts" initiative of the federal Food and Drug Administration, through which the Detroit Pistons basketball team donated \$10 to Henry Ford's Tobacco Treatment Service for every free throw attempted during their shortened season (page 10)
- COVID-19 relief through the "At Your Door: Food & More" project, providing contact-free deliveries of food, personal protective equipment (PPE), diapers, education, and equipment for virtual support, funded by the United Way of Southeast Michigan through the BET Foundation (page 4)
- Virtual group prenatal care program, funded by DMC Foundation (page 5)
- American Hospital Association Institute for Diversity and Health Equity's Equity of Care Award recognition (page 11)
- Community Outreach Pilot Project for Vaccination of Vulnerable Individuals Aged 60 Years and Over, funded by MDHHS to deliver 2,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses to improve vaccine equity (part of the GHI COVID Rapid Response Initiative, page 6)
- Nutrition education and physical activity for SNAP-Ed eligible and vulnerable populations, funded by the Michigan Fitness Foundation
- Fresh Prescription, supporting prescriptions of fresh produce to improve patients' health and well-being, funded by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund
- Increasing flu vaccine uptake among community members of color, funded by the State of Michigan's Coronavirus Task Force on Racial Disparities Rapid Response Initiative
- In 2020, all five HFHS hospitals scored 100% and earned the "LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Leader" designation from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). The HRC's Healthcare Equality Index is in its 13th year and is the national benchmarking tool to evaluate healthcare organizations' policies and practices supporting LGBTQ equity. It indicates achievement in providing equitable, knowledgeable, sensitive, and welcome healthcare for patients and families who are part of the LGBTQ community.

Browse through the rest of this issue to read more about selected initiatives.

Hashtagging for Health

Henry Ford's #IGotTheShot initiative aims to build enthusiasm on Twitter and Instagram for the COVID-19 vaccine, much like "I Voted" stickers encourage people to cast election ballots. Patients who receive the vaccine at a Henry Ford location are encouraged to upload a photo of themselves with a free "I Got the Shot" reusable insulated shopping bag and use the hashtag #IGotTheShot. So far, 3,000 insulated bags have been distributed, and more than 28,000 people worldwide have used the hashtag on Instagram.



Henry Ford Donates Masks to Help Detroiters Stay Safe

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Since the start of the pandemic, Henry Ford has received thousands of masks from donors across the world. However, many of them were not medical grade and could not be used in patient care settings. Instead, the Henry Ford Health System (HFHS) Community Health, Equity, Wellness and Diversity (CHEWD) department worked with our colleagues, Dr. Glenn Croxton and Lillian Lowery in Supplier Diversity, to identify all the donated masks that would be appropriate for the community and provided them to the City of Detroit, where the office of Denise Fair, Chief Public Health Officer then distributed the masks to neighborhood groups. This partnership ensured that masks would be distributed quickly to those most in need.

“The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented demand for surgical masks, meaning mask prices were increasing every day as cases quickly rose in Detroit’s most vulnerable neighborhoods,” said Sharifa Alcendor, Senior Healthcare Consultant to the HFHS Office of System Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. “Our goal was to provide high-quality masks to ensure residents could go to the grocery store, ride public transportation, seek medical care, and work while protecting themselves and others.”

Henry Ford’s Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention also ordered 10,000 navy blue non-medical masks promoting our Community Health website, henryford.com/communityhealth. These were distributed at flu vaccination clinics in Fall 2020.

Amplifying Community Voices to Build Momentum for Vaccine Uptake

As the pandemic surged late last year, Henry Ford escalated its work to encourage annual flu vaccination. The Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, which runs flu vaccine clinics across the metro area, created several brief videos of prominent local faith leaders receiving the flu vaccine and sharing their testimony. Pastor Sterling Brewer (King David Missionary Baptist Church), Rev. Dr. John E. Duckworth (Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church), Bishop Edgar L. Vann (Second Ebenezer Church) and Bishop Andrew Merritt (Straight Gate International Church) lent their voices to boost confidence in taking the flu vaccine.

“We are our brother’s and sister’s keeper, and we owe it to each other to protect one another,” said Bishop Merritt in his video. “When more people get vaccinated, more people are protected.”

The pastors’ videos can be viewed on the Community Health web page listed above, at the “Protect Yourself from the Flu” link on the left sidebar, along with helpful information to reduce flu vaccine hesitancy.

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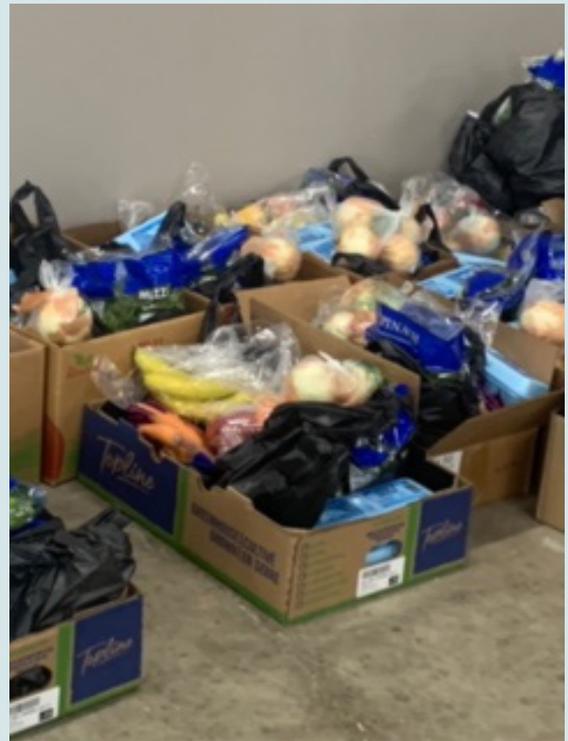
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The work that lies ahead can feel daunting. We’ve accomplished so much, but we cannot yet be satisfied. I recall the Martin Luther King Jr. quote, “We are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” We must continue to raise the bar, delaying the satisfaction of achievement. I know our journey towards a more equitable future can be achieved, as long as our roadmap, and our destination, is justice.

A Closer Look - “At Your Door: Food & More”

Through a multi-pronged approach, Henry Ford’s Office of Community Health, Equity, Wellness and Diversity executed a rapid-response model of community outreach to address African American health disparities exacerbated by COVID-19. Funded by the United Way of Southeast Michigan through the BET Foundation, At Your Door: Food & More (AYD) is an innovative project aimed at promoting health and well-being, mitigating chronic disease, enhancing trust, and building community engagement among those with the worst COVID-19-related outcomes. To minimize the amount of possible exposure and time out of the house for vulnerable populations, AYD provided contact-free deliveries of food boxes, PPE, diapers, culturally informed education, and equipment for virtual support.

Fresh produce boxes were popular, especially among the program’s Youth Wellness Ambassadors. “When me and my family received the food box, we were really grateful,” said Mariam, a 12th-grader and Youth Wellness Ambassador at Hamtramck High School. “The box had so many fruits and vegetables that we liked – strawberries, blueberries, bananas, corn, brown rice, and many more. My mom was excited because most of the things that were in the food box, she used to make our cultural dishes.”



Boxes of fresh produce ready for delivery.



AYD built on three of Henry Ford’s most successful community programs: 1) Fresh Prescription; 2) Women-Inspired Neighborhood (WIN) Network: Detroit; and 3) Knock & Check. Through Fresh Prescription, AYD provided nutritional fresh food boxes and health education to over 2,000 Metro Detroit residents. In addition to their food, participants received culturally relevant nutrition information and recipes, and could participate in three chef-led virtual education sessions demonstrating healthy recipes with the foods included in the boxes. AYD also provided the infrastructure to supply pregnant patients in WIN Network’s virtual group prenatal care program (see next article) with blood pressure cuffs and doppler machines to monitor their health at home, supported by certified nurse midwives. The program hosted 3 group prenatal care cohorts with 36 women in total participating. Community health workers (CHWs) addressed senior citizens’ social isolation through phone visits, connecting more than 60 additional residents with healthcare providers and supports.

Virtual Group Prenatal Care Keeps Pregnant Patients Connected with Providers and Peers

Since 2016, an innovative model of group prenatal care (GPC), funded by the Detroit Medical Center Foundation and led in partnership by the Women-Inspired Neighborhood (WIN) Network: Detroit and Henry Ford Women's Health Services, has offered pregnant patients more time with a provider and extra support throughout pregnancy and beyond. Typically, GPC brings together pregnant patients with similar due dates for in-person sessions and social support. Sessions include extra question-and-answer time with a Certified Nurse Midwife, one-on-one support from a Community Health Worker (CHW), education about what to expect during and after pregnancy, and connections to local resources for non-clinical needs. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, WIN Network knew this vital service had to be translated to a virtual format.

"We wanted to continue to provide resources and COVID-19 education to our moms, which we did through monthly Virtual Mommy Meetups, and we invited social service agencies to provide resources," said Nada Dickinson, Community Health Worker Team Leader for WIN Network. "Through these virtual sessions, our patients were able to continue the benefits of GPC even going through a pandemic. It did not change our role as CHWs - we are dedicated and show up for our community through any obstacle or adversity." WIN Network used these Virtual Mommy Meetups to stay connected to moms while planning a fully virtual model of the group prenatal care program, which was launched in Fall of 2020.

A number of participants have now completed the fully virtual program and delivered healthy babies. The virtual GPC program provides participants with a scale, blood pressure cuff, and fetal Doppler monitors to track their health during pregnancy at home. For services that must be conducted in person, such as labs, ultrasounds, and physical exams, participants visit one-on-one with their provider. In tandem with this, group prenatal care sessions are held via Webex.

"I appreciate GPC for the support and priceless advice throughout my whole pregnancy," said Zahara, a participant and new mom of daughter Syvin, born in April of 2021. "You helped to get my family started much more prepared than doing it alone."



Residents in Action and Henry Ford Allegiance Health Bring Resources to the Jackson Community

During the final quarter of 2020, Henry Ford Allegiance Health supported Residents in Action (RiA), a community-based group formed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in a multi-strategy, cross-sector approach to address racial inequities that were exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic. RiA distributed SMART thermometers and other supplies for basic needs, connected with hard-to-reach populations to provide accurate information on COVID-19, linked Jackson residents to resources and a support system needed to stay home and stay safe, and offered community-based interventions (e.g., distributed food, masks, disinfectant, etc.).

The collaborative effort provided 5,320 thermometers to households in the community, along with over 6,500 educational flyers, and reached 889 people through social media. The group also conducted a community COVID-Safe Survey after

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Residents in Action and Henry Ford Allegiance Health Bring Resources to the Jackson Community

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distributing these resources, which indicated that 87% of respondents were “likely” or “very likely” to wear masks properly; 86% found the educational pieces “extremely” or “very helpful” in understanding how to isolate and quarantine correctly, and 71% were very likely to isolate and quarantine if needed.

“By mobilizing a community-based workforce, Residents in Action was able to reach those most in need of resources and support as a result of the pandemic,” said Laurie Gustafson, Manager of Community Health at Allegiance. “This trusted group of individuals, with lived experience and close connections in the community, was an important complement to the medical COVID-19 response.”

This effort illustrated the effectiveness of resident-led change, showing that those with lived experience need access to resources so that they can lead change efforts based on their deep community relationships, know-how, and ability to get results. This project was successful because professionals provided resources and stepped out of the way so that residents could lead the change effort, leveraging their trusted relationships and strong connections, and implementing strategies that advanced equity and racial justice for populations that have historically been marginalized. The initiative contributed to better outcomes, encouraged a positive working relationship between the community-based workforce and HFAH, and built community-wide capacity for system change. Resident-led assessments conducted during the initiative improved the community assessment process by lifting up the collective voice of people of color for meaningful, real-time, actionable data.

GHI Leverages COVID Rapid Response Experience into Vaccine Trials and Community Engagement

In March 2020, Henry Ford’s Global Health Initiative (GHI) began a COVID-19 Rapid Response program to establish one of the first rapid testing centers in the country and deploy Mobile Health Clinics to provide testing, education, and outreach throughout the community. This project uniquely positioned GHI to participate in COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials. In August 2020, Henry Ford was selected as a site for the Moderna Coronavirus Efficacy and Safety (COVE) Study, which includes over 30,000 participants nationwide. GHI collaborated with the Division of Infectious Diseases to implement this trial as well as the Johnson & Johnson ENSEMBLE study. With its mission-driven focus on marginalized and vulnerable populations, GHI succeeded in making Henry Ford a leading site nationally in recruiting minority participants for both



Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, MI.

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GHI Leverages COVID-19 Rapid Response Experience into Vaccine Trials and Community Engagement

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trials. Alongside the clinical trials, GHI also conducted socio-behavioral research to assess participation at various stages of vaccine trials and perceptions about introduction of new vaccines.

Since the emergency authorization for use of COVID-19 vaccines was granted in-mid December 2020, GHI has been closely involved in the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations to our local communities. The team has partnered with trusted community centers and places of worship to set up mobile vaccination clinics throughout Southeast Michigan. Through these community sites, which include the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, Oak Park Community Center, the Martin Luther King Jr. Center in Jackson, and Second Ebenezer Baptist Church in Detroit (an event that attained national news coverage by MSNBC), GHI has administered more than 30,000 vaccine doses.

“Through these sites, GHI has been able to reduce barriers and increase vaccine equity,” said John Zervos, Director of GHI. “It is imperative that vaccination sites are brought to the community to build trust in areas hit hard by the pandemic and ensure high-risk community members are protected.”

“It’s important for trusted community voices and places to be involved,” added Bishop Edgar Vann of Second Ebenezer Church. Indeed, GHI was recognized for its commitment to community partnerships and vaccine equity as an awardee in the MDHHS Community Outreach Pilot Project for Vaccination of Vulnerable Individuals Aged 60 Years and Over.

With the vaccine recently becoming available for youth age 12 years and older, GHI has added schools to its community vaccination program. In collaboration with the HFHS School-Based Health Initiative, GHI will be visiting up to 20 schools to administer vaccines.

GHI also continues to be involved in qualitative research and community engagement activities focused on increasing vaccine uptake. To that end, GHI has established a Stakeholders Advisory Board that includes both Henry Ford staff and community representatives, who provide input on the vaccine roll-out from a community perspective. GHI’s goal is to inform the community about the safety and importance of the COVID-19 vaccines, and ensure fair and equitable access to vaccination for those populations most strongly impacted by the pandemic.



Henry Ford Trains Healthcare Providers to Address Patient Concerns about COVID-19 Vaccines

Many groups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 also have reasons to feel hesitant about entrusting their health to newly-developed vaccines, even if this is the likeliest path out of the pandemic. Hoping to prepare healthcare providers to have productive conversations about COVID-19 vaccinations with hesitant patients, the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (CHPDP) has created Continuing Medical Education (CME) a presentation on vaccine hesitancy and health equity issues. Originally developed by Dr. Samantha Korycinski, a University of Michigan Preventive Medicine resident, CHPDP's presentation draws on resources from the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and De Beaumont Foundation, and incorporates Motivational Interviewing, Appreciative Inquiry, and the PEARLS humanistic communication model (Partnership, Empathy, Appreciation, Respect, Legitimation, Support).

"We want to equip providers with effective tools and techniques for communicating with patients and community members on this topic," said Dr. Marla Rowe Gorosh, a Henry Ford family medicine practitioner who consulted on the



The spectrum of vaccine acceptance, hesitancy and refusal (World Health Organization, 2017).

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Henry Ford Collaborates, Innovates for Better Maternal Outcomes

In 2019, Henry Ford was awarded funding from Merck for Mothers through the Institute for Healthcare Improvement – Better Maternal Outcomes Initiative to support collaboration between health systems, community organizations, and mothers with lived experience to test solutions to Black maternal mortality. Detroit was one of 4 inaugural sites for this funding, with Henry Ford acting as the local convener and fiduciary for the project. An initial “Equity Action Lab” was held in June 2019 to bring together cross-sector partners from Metro Detroit to brainstorm solutions and plan to take action.

Three design teams were formed to test solutions specific to 3 perinatal periods.

- The Pregnancy Design Team, led by the Black Mothers Breastfeeding Association, strengthened the foundation for the workforce of Community-Based Doulas and worked to encourage their role as a complementary member of the maternity care team. The team hosted a Doula Meet & Greet at Hutzel Hospital, where 95% of attendees supported welcoming Community-Based Doulas into the care team and 100% said they better understood their role following the meeting. Two organizations committed to participate in incumbent worker doula training, and Henry Ford Hospital amended its policy during COVID-19 to allow a doula in addition to the laboring person's guest. The Pregnancy Design Team surveyed community members to help develop a “frequently asked questions” document about Community-Based Doulas and raised awareness through a social media campaign that received over 6,000 views on Facebook and 3,000 on Instagram.

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Henry Ford Collaborates, Innovates for Better Maternal Outcomes

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- The Birth Design Team, led by Henry Ford, developed and implemented an Unconscious Bias & Respectful Care training with all Women's Health Services team members at Henry Ford Hospital and contributing ambulatory sites. In total, 348 team members completed the training, representing over 90% of the department and including all affiliated Obstetricians/Gynecologists, OBGYN residents, Neonatologists, and Certified Nurse Midwives. Work in this area is continuing to address policy, protocol and systems change to reduce bias and ensure respectful care.
- The Postpartum Design Team, led by Greater Detroit Area Health Council, aimed to increase knowledge of postpartum warning signs and connect mothers and support partners to appropriate resources after birth. The team conducted focus group interviews with Detroit mothers who recently delivered at Detroit hospitals to gather information about their experiences and views on respectful care and tested a menu of postpartum resources with pregnant women and their partners.

"The Better Maternal Outcomes Initiative has helped us strengthen partnerships and accelerate the work that has been so crucial for our system and our community," said Dr. Kimberlydawn Wisdom, HFHS Senior Vice President of Community Health & Equity and Chief Wellness and Diversity Officer. "At Henry Ford, we expect to build on the Unconscious Bias & Respectful Care training curriculum developed in the birth design team and determine ways to spread and scale these efforts across the enterprise and beyond."

Funding for the project ended in 2021, but aspects of its work continue through the Merck for Mothers Safer Childbirth Cities grant, awarded to the Greater Detroit Area Health Council (now Michigan Public Health Institute), with a portion of the funds going to Henry Ford for further spread and scale of the unconscious bias work.



The Detroit Better Maternal Outcomes partners during the March 2020 Momentum Lab.

Detroit Pistons Donate to Tobacco Treatment Service to Help Patients Make Every Try Count

More and more, public health experts recognize that it often takes several tries and lots of practice for a person to quit tobacco permanently. This understanding is the driving force behind the Food and Drug Administration's "Every Try Counts" initiative, which brought together NBA teams in support of tobacco treatment. In Detroit, the Pistons organization donated \$10 to Henry Ford's Tobacco Treatment Service (TTS) for every free throw the team attempted during the shortened 2019-2020 basketball season. In turn, TTS used these dollars to seed a charitable fund that accepts donations during the annual Employee Giving campaign. The fund now helps cover costs for patients' medication needs, as well as education and professional development for both TTS staff and Henry Ford clinicians.

"For a person who smokes, quitting is the number one thing they can do to improve their health and lower their risk of life-threatening chronic diseases," says Amanda Holm, Project Manager of TTS. "And we know that the more attempts a person makes to quit, the closer they get to quitting for good."

The fund serves both patients and providers by subsidizing tobacco treatment medications for patients who cannot afford them (in collaboration with HFHS pharmacy locations); offering continuing education to Henry Ford providers on how to assist patients in quitting most effectively; and supporting continuing education and professional development for its coaches. TTS staff are also developing five Continuing Medical Education (CME) modules related to tobacco treatment, lung cancer screening and implicit bias to be rolled out later this year.



Henry Ford Trains Healthcare Providers to Address Patient Concerns about COVID-19 Vaccines

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program. “Taking a collaborative approach gives us the best chance of fostering trust and encouraging uptake of the vaccines.”

The presentation explores the spectrum of vaccine hesitancy while emphasizing the unique nature of each patient’s motivation, and encourages providers to build trust by responding respectfully and empathetically to their concerns. It also includes a discussion of effective messaging about vaccines, highlighting words and phrases that are likelier to resonate with community members who are deciding whether to vaccinate.

Thus far, the presentation has been delivered to over 160 participants, including Henry Ford Community Health Workers, Family Medicine residents, nurses and clinical staff at two locations, the HFHS Ethics Committee, and groups of providers affiliated with Health Alliance Plan.. Response has been strongly positive, with 94% of participants expressing confidence in their ability to have conversations with patients who are hesitant about the vaccine. CHPDP has also recorded the presentation as a one-hour webinar that offers (CME) credit to encourage more providers to view it. To access the CME content, visit <https://hfhs.cloud-cme.com/> to create a login account, then click on “Online Courses,” and select “Vaccine Hesitancy: Having the Conversation.”

HONORS AND GRANTS

Henry Ford recognized as an Honoree in 2021 Equity of Care Awards

On May 19, the American Hospital Association’s (AHA) Institute for Diversity and Health Equity announced that Henry Ford Health System would be recognized as an Honoree in the 2021 Carolyn Boone Lewis Equity of Care (EOC) Award. Atrium Health, Charlotte, N.C., will receive the award, and ChristianaCare, Newark, Del., will be recognized as an additional honoree. The award press release cites Henry Ford’s “We Ask Because We Care” campaign to improve collection of patients’ race, ethnicity and language preference information and make use of the data to improve care outcomes. In addition, the Institute lauded the system’s rapid COVID testing partnership with the Detroit Health Department that administered over 20,000 tests to first responders and essential workers in Detroit, as well as our participation in the Moderna vaccine trial. HFHS was the Equity of Care Award winner in 2015 and an honoree in 2020 and 2014.

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