



PRESS RELEASE
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MultiCare one of 10 health care organizations nationwide selected for national program to improve community health

TACOMA, Wa. – Studies reveal that ZIP code—even more than genetic code—is a strong predictor of health, well-being and lifespan. In short, where you live may influence how long and how well you live. For many communities, a small distance can add up to large health disparities.

Hospitals and health systems are in a unique position to close this health divide. In response, the American Hospital Association (AHA) and its affiliate the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity, with support from the Aetna Foundation, are launching the Hospital Community Cooperative (HC²), a national program dedicated to closing gaps in health equity.

MultiCare is one of 10 health care organizations in the country selected to participate in HC² program and learning lab, part of this national call to action to eliminate health and health care disparities and tackle population health issues.

The MultiCare Center for Health Equity will use the \$10,000 program award to support a community partnership project that will expand breast health education to local African-American women and teenage girls over the next 12 months, utilizing a community health worker model.

“We believe that it’s our responsibility to partner with our community to treat and prevent illness,” says Dr. Jamilia Sherls, Director of the MultiCare Center for Health Equity. “African American women have the highest breast cancer mortality rate in Pierce County. Through our partnerships with Leaders in Women’s Health and the Carol Milgard Breast Center, in addition to the support and guidance of the AHA’s Hospital Community Cooperative, we know that we can advance health equity by addressing breast cancer disparities.”

Each team selected for the 2018–19 program is comprised of members from an AHA hospital and the community. The yearlong inaugural program kicked off in Chicago with an intensive three-day learning lab featuring nationally-recognized population health and community care experts to provide customized technical assistance to the teams.

A National Advisory Committee consisting of multisector health improvement subject matter experts will contribute high-level guidance and decision-making support throughout the life of the program. The AHA and partners will complete an evaluation and report the findings in late 2019.

“The 2018–19 program is a pilot to help us strengthen our understanding of how to build a meaningful national community of practice for health care organizations that supports the cultivation of strong, sustainable partnerships through local health equity interventions,” says Jay Bhatt, AHA senior vice president and chief medical officer. “HC² aims to help shape the narrative around diversity and health equity by generating a new class of AHA Equity of Care champions, providing models of success for other hospitals and health systems, and opening the door for bolder approaches that move resources, policies and practices upstream.”

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About MultiCare

MultiCare is a not-for-profit health care organization with more than 16,000 employees and a comprehensive system of health including numerous primary care, urgent care and specialty services — including Immediate Clinic, MultiCare Indigo Urgent Care and Pulse Heart Institute — MultiCare Medical Associates, Navos Mental Health Solutions, affiliated physicians and a wide range of community outreach programs. Eight hospitals complete our organization: Allenmore Hospital, Auburn Medical Center, Covington Medical Center, Good Samaritan Hospital, Deaconess Hospital, Valley Hospital, Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital — the region’s only children’s hospital and state-designated Level II Pediatric Trauma Center for Western

Washington — and Tacoma General Hospital, which is home to the region's only Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

About the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity

The Institute for Diversity and Health Equity, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, works closely with health services organizations to advance health equity for all and to expand leadership opportunities for ethnic minorities in health management. For more information, visit www.diversityconnection.org.

About the American Hospital Association

The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the health improvement of their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which include nearly 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks, other providers of care and 43,000 individual members. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides insight and education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information, visit the AHA website at www.aha.org.