



VIEW*S* & VISIONS

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Fostering Innovative Solutions to Improve Population Health

Kim Barber Tieman, MSW, Health and Human Service Program Director
Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

Kim Barber Tieman, MSW, is the Health and Human Service Program Director for the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. Tieman has worked in the field of philanthropy for almost 20 years. She is the past Executive Director of Volunteer WV, which administers the state's AmeriCorps program. She served as an adjunct faculty member for the West Virginia University School of Social Work's Master of Social Work (MSW) program for 18 years.

An active community volunteer, Tieman serves on the boards of the West Virginia Oral Health Coalition, the Appalachian Regional Commission's Health Council, The Appalachian Funders Network Health Working Group, Philanthropy West Virginia Mission Advancement, The Kanawha Council on Philanthropy and Workforce West Virginia. She is the Past-President of the National Association of Social Workers - West Virginia Chapter.

“We know not where seed may sprout. In the poorest and most unregarded child who seems to be abandoned to ignorance and evil, there may slumber virtue, intellect and genius. It is our duty to sow and to nurture, leaving it to others to harvest the fruits of our efforts.”

This excerpt from the codicil to Michael Benedum's will exemplifies the values of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

The Foundation's guiding principles include the belief that our role is to cultivate the creativity of people. We foster collaboration across sectors to leverage resources to address community needs. Benedum makes grants in education and economic development in West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania, and grants in community development and health and human services in West Virginia.

We hear a lot these days about achieving the “Triple Aim of Healthcare Reform” to improve the patient experience of care (including quality and satisfaction), improve the health of populations and reduce the per capita cost of health care. Achieving all that, however, is much easier said than done and requires identifying the impediments, thinking creatively and working together in meaningful and often cross-sector partnerships.

The Foundation is fortunate to be working with partners that understand the positive impact the Triple Aim will have on our communities. The projects spotlighted below illustrate that,

CLAUDE WORTHINGTON BENEDUM FOUNDATION

together, we are making inroads toward reaching the high bar set by the Triple Aim.

Community Health Workers (CHWs)

The Williamson Health and Wellness Center and Marshall University have developed a model of care coordination using CHWs that has demonstrated remarkable clinical success in managing high-risk diabetes patients. These patients often have multiple chronic conditions, frequent emergency room visits and/or hospitalizations and, not surprisingly, they utilize a disproportionate amount of health care resources. Typically, clinical or pharmaceutical interventions resulting in a one percentage point reduction in A1C are considered clinically significant, but this model successfully demonstrated an average A1C reduction for 149 patients of 2.5 percentage points within six months.

This model initially was funded by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Innovation, and then received funding through a public-private partnership with the Health Services Resource Administration and several local funders in West Virginia, including Benedum. Additionally, this CHW model has expanded to include partner sites such as the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Alliance, and is expanding further into Appalachia through an Appalachia Regional Commission POWER (Partnerships



From Left: Grace Anne Dorney Koppel, Brandi Bell, RRT and Ted Koppel attend the ribbon cutting for the Grace Ann Dorney Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center at the Lincoln Primary Care Center, Inc. in Hamlin, West Virginia

for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) grant.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, is the third leading cause of mortality in the United States, with nearly 150,000 deaths every year. According to Johns Hopkins University, COPD impacts rural areas at a higher rate (11.9 percent) compared to urban areas (7.2 percent). While there is no cure for the disease, there are ways to treat and manage it so people can experience an improved quality of life.

Perhaps the best way to provide hope for people with COPD is to provide quality, affordable and accessible Pulmonary Rehabilitation (PR) programs. Grace Anne Dorney Koppel (who has been living with COPD since 2001) and her husband, Ted Koppel, the well-known broadcast journalist and anchorman, were inspired by the meaningful impact of PR in her life and created a foundation to expand access to a proven PR model. They are working

with communities where the COPD rates are among the highest to expand PR programs. Benedum has partnered with their foundation to develop PR programs at Cabin Creek Health Systems, New River Health Association, Boone Memorial Hospital, Lincoln Primary Care, Jackson General Hospital and Roane General Hospital.

In addition to operating the core PR programming, the West Virginia PR sites have added an ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) program. ECHO is a collaborative model of medical education and care management that empowers clinicians to provide better care to more people where they live. This “hub and spoke” model was created by the University of New Mexico and is a knowledge-sharing network that connects rural health care providers seeking advice on cases with experts in a specific disease. ECHO uses videoconferencing and provides rural health care providers an opportunity to

present cases and participate in didactics covering a variety of topics. The model increases access to specialty treatment in rural and underserved areas by providing front-line clinicians with the information and support they need to manage patients with complex conditions, such as COPD.

These two projects exemplify how local communities and providers were able to identify issues in the provision of patient care and successfully design responsive improvements. By blending evidenced-based practices and creative local solutions, they are addressing needs in their communities and solidifying models that can be built out across the state’s health care system to improve the lives of more West Virginians. They are shining examples of the impact that can be realized through public-private ventures. ❧