

188g Jefferson
Center for
Population Health



Annual Report | 2021

Mission

Improving health and wellness by building resilient communities through collaboration, research, and education.

Vision

To serve as an innovative leader in a collaborative approach to improving the health of rural populations.

Values

We strive to build community partnerships aimed at meeting health goals. We welcome our residents to contribute and travel with us on the journey to build healthier communities.

Our Team



Jeannine McMillan
Executive Director



Leanna Bird
Project Manager



Kimberly Roberts
Quality Assurance
Analyst



Allison Byers
Communications
Coordinator

Dear Partners in Health,

Our team at the 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health (1889 JCPH) would like to welcome you to our 2021 Annual Report!

The past year has brought unprecedented challenges to our communities and underscored the urgent need to coordinate services, especially for vulnerable populations. Now, more than ever, a continued focus is needed for implementation of best practice programming, care coordination for at-risk individuals, and sharing of public health messages and resources. We are committed to these goals to improve the health of the residents of our region into the new year and beyond!

As you will read in this report, our major focus this past year was the launch of the Community Care HUB, which coordinates services to members of the community who face complex health and human service needs. The HUB is currently focused on coordinating care for at-risk pregnant women and youth at the Greater Johnstown School District; however, we look forward to expanding this model to additional populations during 2022 and the future.

In addition to the launch of the HUB, you will read about several other public health initiatives of the Center, including the launch of a COVID-19 Task Force, addressing social determinant of health needs including housing and food security, and legislative advocacy.

We know that this work is more important now than ever, and we are proud of the positive impact we have been able to make this year. We are grateful to our community partners, providers and agencies, and their continued spirit of collaboration in Cambria and Somerset counties.

A special thank you to our partners at Thomas Jefferson University and 1889 Foundation.

We hope that you and your loved ones stay well during these challenging times and we look forward to continuing to improve the health of our community.

Yours in health,

Jeannine McMillan
Jeannine McMillan, Executive Director



1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health, alongside community partners, officially launched the Community Care HUB (HUB) and began accepting referrals on September 1, 2020. The goal of the HUB is to improve the health outcomes of vulnerable populations in Cambria and Somerset counties. A HUB is an organized, outcome-focused, network of Care Coordination Agencies (CCAs) that hire and train Community Health Workers (CHWs) to reach out to those at greatest risk. The HUB helps to coordinate community resources to reduce the medical, behavioral, and social barriers to care.

Currently, there are two populations that are eligible for a HUB referral. Pregnant women residing in Cambria or Somerset County are eligible if they meet one or both of the following criteria: 1) receiving or eligible for Medical Assistance 2) diagnosed with gestational diabetes. Additionally, families of Greater Johnstown Elementary School students who face challenges related to school attendance or poor grades are eligible for a referral.

Those referred are connected to a CHW who meets with them face-to-face, then guides them through completion of one, or more, of 21 Pathways designed to address their needs. These Pathways include connections to housing, transportation, medical services, social services, and more!



*Community Health Workers
Christy Berzonski and Flor Hernandez*

The HUB is not just another program, but rather a care coordination delivery system developed by a partnership among local agencies and a community advisory board. It is not intended to replace agencies, but to connect and support them to ensure individual needs are identified and effectively coordinated in the community.

There are currently six CHWs employed at three CCAs. The Community Care HUB follows the nationally-recognized and evidence-based Pathways Community HUB model developed by the Pathways Community HUB Institute (PCHI).



"As a CHW, I am an advocate for the People. It means building trust with the communities and agencies with whom we collaborate. We listen to what our community members are in need of and if they are lacking information and resources. We advocate and brainstorm to create healthy communities by joining task forces and committees."

- Flor Hernandez, Beginnings Inc.

Care Coordination Agencies

The HUB currently partners with three Care Coordination Agencies in our community. The CCAs employ trained CHWs to help at-risk individuals navigate the vast health and social service resources in Cambria and Somerset counties.

Alleghenies United Cerebral Palsy (AUCP) is a nationally affiliated nonprofit organization that provides in-home service coordination and case management service to individuals with physical disabilities of all kinds, the elderly, and those with autism. AUCP began as a grassroots organization in 1955 and today provides services to more than 3,000 participants across 52 Pennsylvania counties. Its mission is to help individuals with disabilities meet basic needs, enhance their quality of life, gain independence, and participate actively in the decision-making and direction of their services. AUCP has been accredited by the National Committee for Quality Assurance since 2017.



Beginnings, Inc. has been a leader in the community for more than 60 years, providing quality in-home services that include early intervention for families and children with special needs, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and training for parents as teachers.



Community Action Partnership of Cambria County (CAPCC) is a private, nonprofit agency that provides a variety of services including Early Childhood/Head Start, Medical Assistance transportation, housing and utility assistance, veterans' supportive services, drug and alcohol prevention, nutrition education for the Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) program, and breastfeeding support.



"Community health workers are bringing a fresh perspective – they're looking at things from a different viewpoint. I see them growing in their role, too, as they start working with their clients. They bring a fresh outlook to our program and our agency, and that's how they fulfill our mission."

-Tammy Rhoades, AUCP CEO

"They're (CHWs) the ones carrying out the mission, and they're the ones that matter. The Board and ED go behind the scenes to support what they do."

-Jeff Vaughn, CAPCC Executive Director

"The reason I felt so passionate about becoming part of the HUB is because everything the HUB stands for is the philosophy within our agency."

*-Paula Eppley-Newman, Beginnings, Inc.
Executive Director*



Cohort Collaborations

At-risk pregnant women, due to poor health outcomes for this population in our communities, were the first population chosen by the HUB. Pregnant women residing in Cambria or Somerset County are eligible if they are either receiving or eligible for Medical Assistance or diagnosed with gestational diabetes.

In 2018, data showed that 11.6% of babies were born at a low birth weight, with the City of Johnstown having the highest rate of low birth weight newborns in Pennsylvania. Having a low weight at birth can cause serious health problems for some babies, including trouble eating, gaining weight and fighting off infections. Some babies may have long-term health issues as well.

In addition, 11.2% of deliveries in our community were to mothers diagnosed with gestational diabetes. Having gestational diabetes can cause an increase in risk of high blood pressure during pregnancy and having a large baby that needs to be delivered by cesarean section (C-section). About 50% of women with gestational diabetes go on to develop type 2 diabetes.

By focusing on this population, helping them identify their risk factors and assuring that they connect to medical, social, and behavioral health services, the HUB aims to improve health outcomes of both the mother and baby for years to come.

The Greater Johnstown School District (GJSD) and 1889 JCPH partnered to bring the HUB services to the school district via a \$100,000 grant to 1889 Foundation from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The grant was obtained through the efforts of Senator Wayne Langerholc, Jr., (R-35).

The pilot program connects CHWs with students in grades K-4 who have higher health, behavioral, and social service needs. The CHW works with the student and their family in their homes to address the student's needs and improve the overall health of the entire family unit.

The HUB expansion piloted April 2021 at Johnstown Elementary School, with the hopes to expand to additional grade levels and school districts in the future.

The HUB is planning further expansion into additional populations in 2022.

"The HUB and CHWs have made a positive impact in our community. They play a major role in empowering at-risk individuals to enhance their personal self-care and wellness. This has resulted in improved birth outcomes and significant lifestyle changes to prevent diabetes."

*-Barb Duryea, MSN, RN, CPHQ, Conemaugh
Diabetes Institute*

"The results we have seen since the referrals began on April 1st have been so much more than we anticipated...The HUB model provides the necessary collaboration necessary to remove barriers that our families face, which have been magnified during the pandemic."

-Amy Arcurio, Superintendent of GJSD



CHW Training and Certification

In the fall of 2021, two staff members and two community members were trained as certified Community Health Worker Instructors by the Pathways Community HUB Institute. They are now certified to train current and future CHWs in Cambria and Somerset counties and across the U.S. Certified instructors specializing in care coordination topics include Kimberly Roberts, Quality Assurance Analyst and Leanna Bird, Project Manager. Community members in the process of becoming certified in clinical instruction include Carol Harding, RN, FCN and Dr. Deborah Gentile.

Instruction aligns with Pennsylvania Certification Board CHW Standards and with the Pathways Community HUB model. This training also fulfills the PA Certification Board standard of training that enables CHWs to become Certified CHWs through the PA Certification Board. As a result of this training, five HUB Community Health Workers have earned their PA certification in 2021.

CHW Instructor Training was made possible through funding from 1889 Foundation as part of the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge (HCCC), a program of the American Public Health Association, with funding from the Aetna Foundation.



CHW supervisor Brianna Livingston and CHW Flor Hernandez

The Center established a Community Advisory Committee to provide input and advocacy for the HUB's mission. The committee identifies gaps, reviews data, and ensures that all community stakeholders are involved to help address whole-person care for HUB participants. Members include:

- Barb Duryea - MSN, RN, CPHQ, Conemaugh Diabetes Institute
- Bruce E. Duke, III, MD - 1889 Foundation Board Member
- Carol Harding - RN, FCN, Moxham Lutheran Church, Certified CHW Trainer
- Flor Hernandez - CCHW, Beginnings, Inc.
- Rich Lobb - MBA, Goodwill of the Southern Alleghenies
- Yvette Madison - MSW, Professor of Social Work, Pennsylvania Highlands Community College
- Gwen Msolomba - Adjunct Faculty, St. Francis University
- Paula Eppley-Newman - Executive Director, Beginnings, Inc.
- Tammy Rhoades - CEO, Alleghenies United Cerebral Palsy
- Jeff Vaughn - Executive Director, Community Action Partnership of Cambria County
- Carmella Walker - PhD
- Shealeigh Wallace - CCHW, Community Action Partnership of Cambria County
- David Mrozowski - Executive Director, Tableland Services, Inc.



HUB Participant Story

A participant and her family were referred to the HUB from the Greater Johnstown School District for having significant Social Determinant of Health needs. Community Health Worker Christy Berzonski began working with the family when, unfortunately, the head of the household was hospitalized after suffering four strokes. The strokes were a result of contributing factors: diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and the failure to take prescribed medications due to a lack of health insurance. The strokes caused the participant to be dependent on others and she wanted to go to therapy so she could become independent. The participant worried about how she was going to do tasks around the home and was concerned with how to manage on her own. Another concern of the participant was weight loss due to diet change. None of her clothing fit and it affected her self-image.

First, Christy went on the participant's behalf for a voucher from St. Vincent De Paul for free clothing. Christy also organized a clothing drive on Facebook.

After being discharged from the hospital, the participant had a home health agency come to her home to assist with her clinical needs. The participant had a lack of mobility and inability to perform daily tasks independently. Unfortunately, the participant only qualified for home health care two days a week for up to five weeks. Christy's question was, "What about care after the five weeks end?" To stay in her home independently, the participant would need assistance with a home health aide, home adaptations, home delivered meals, non-medical transportation, service coordination, and nonemergency response unit. Christy is currently working with the participant and her Primary Care Physician to apply for services through the Community Health Choice Waiver program. This will allow the participant to remain living in the community independently with daily assistance from a caregiver and other services.

While the Community Health Choice Waiver permits non-medical transportation, the participant also needs private medical transportation for doctor's appointments, which Christy was able to coordinate. Christy called the doctor to get the form completed, then followed up by personally picking it up from the office and hand delivering it to Community Action Partnership of Cambria County for approval.

The participant was also eligible for Medicare, but did not have the information she needed to apply for coverage or how it would affect her Medical Assistance through the state. The participant had no income and did not know if she needed to apply for Retirement, Survivors Disability Insurance (RSDI), SSI, or Cash Assistance. To assist her, Christy called Medicare. While the participant answered questions on the phone, Christy played Candyland with her granddaughter. With Christy's helping hand, the participant was approved for assistance.

With Christy giving the participant the tools she needs to advocate on her behalf, the participant has since been setting up her own doctor's appointments and her health is improving, every day! She is also able to live independently and take care of her family. We are so grateful to have CHWs like Christy working to advocate on behalf of individuals in our community!

"In our communities, CHWs walk with our clients and connect them to resources by listening to their needs," said Christy. "We put them in charge of their own goals and empower them to reach [those goals]"

-CHW Christy Berzonski



Community Care HUB Data

3,432

Contacts made
to Participants

661

Pathways
Successfully
Complete

1,253

Pathways
Opened

320

Individuals
Referred

Top 10 Pathways opened

1

Social Service Referral

6

Housing

2

Learning Module

7

Transportation

3

Medical Referral

8

Medical Home

4

Pregnancy

9

Employment

5

Oral Health

10

Post-Partum

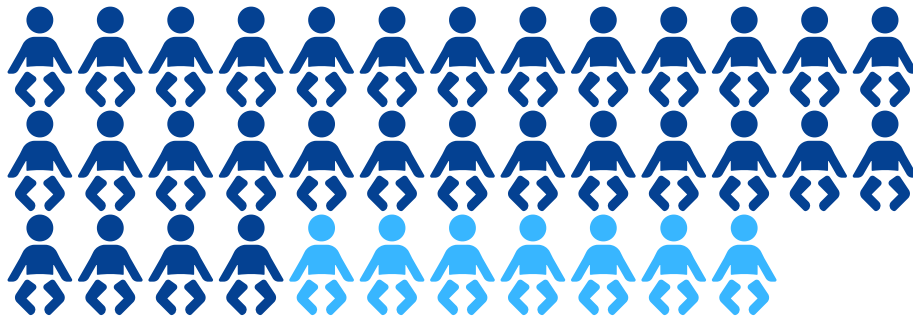
216

Individuals agreed
to enrollment



650

Visits from
Community Health Workers



37 Babies Born
81% Healthy Birth Weight (> 5.8 lbs)

5

Community Health
Worker Trainers

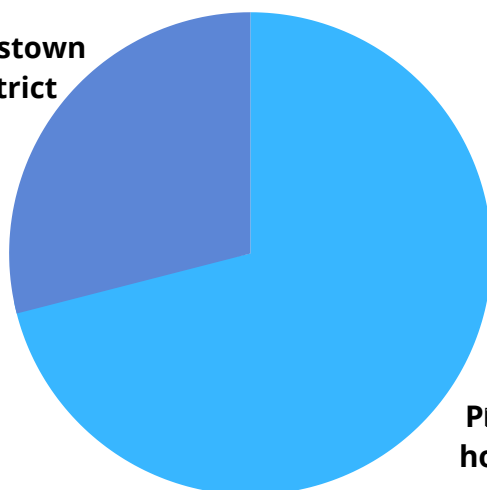


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Community Health Workers



Greater Johnstown
School District
29%



Referrals by Program Type

Pregnant women &
household members
71%



Cambria-Somerset Covid Task Force

1889 JCPH coordinated the formation of the Cambria-Somerset Covid Task Force in February 2021. Attendees include healthcare providers, county representatives, community members, housing authority representatives, and community-based organizations. The task force remains open to any individuals or entities involved with COVID-19 endeavors across Cambria and Somerset counties.

The task force addresses a wide variety of topics, including vaccine scheduling, mass vaccination site logistics, public communications, vaccine education, and more.

Goals and Accomplishments

- Improving communication across various community sectors during the pandemic
- Communicating vaccine availability to the region
- Preventing duplication of efforts through collaboration
- Compiling and distributing vaccine education materials
- Distributing 300 Steelers mask yard signs throughout the region
- Coordinating vaccine clinics

Covid vaccine clinics coordinated by the Task Force

- Connor Towers
- Coopersdale Community
- Forest Hills vs Westmont Hilltop Friday Night Football Game
- Garden Terrace Apartments
- Greater Johnstown School District
- Martha & Mary House
- Meyersdale School District
- Oakhurst Community
- Somerset Area School District
- Town House Tower
- Vine Street Tower
- Westmont Hilltop School District



In This Together Cambria, 1889 JCPH, and the Tribune Democrat partnered to present Lights of Remembrance: A Memorial for Cambria County COVID Victims.



WalkWorks Johnstown



1889 JCPH, in partnership with the Recreation Economy Committee (REC) of the Cambria Regional Chamber, created a WalkWorks route in downtown Johnstown in 2020.

The route takes walkers on a 1.8 mile stretch that includes many scenic and historic highlights, including the Stone Bridge, the Johnstown Flood Museum and the Iron to Arts Corridor. There is also a shorter 1 mile option.

"WalkWorks Wednesdays" began on Wednesday, June 16, 2021. Those living and working downtown met for 10 Wednesdays at the Cambria County Library and walked the route. It provided a great opportunity for participants to get exercise, meet new people, and share ideas. It is expected that the next WalkWorks series will start up again in the spring of 2022.

Johnstown's route is part of the statewide WalkWorks program, a collaboration between the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. Funding is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant and the State Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, both from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



1889 Foundation, in partnership with 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health and other local organizations, was awarded the two-year Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge (HCCC) grant in 2020. HCCC is funded by the Aetna Foundation, together with the American Public Health Association (APHA) and the National Association of Counties (NACo), who collectively support communities that are changing the way they work together across sectors to reduce disparities in chronic disease outcomes.

1889 Foundation and 1889 JCPH are leading one of 20 communities selected across the U.S. to participate in the Challenge. The \$100,000 award, over two years, is supporting projects related to healthcare and healthy foods access, and the work of the Community Care HUB. Communities participate in one-on-one technical assistance provided by APHA, NACo, and a supportive peer learning network led by Healthy Places by Design.

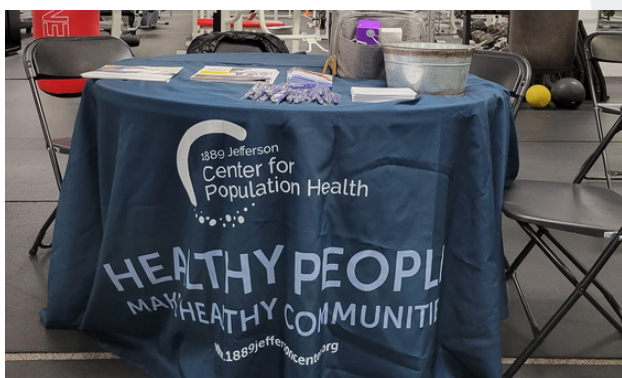
As a part of this opportunity, 1889 JCPH's Leanna Bird was able to present about the Community Care HUB at the Annual Public Health Association's 2021 Annual Meeting. Her session was entitled "Redesigning care coordination in rural communities through the mobilization of community health workers."

Local Foods Local Places (LFLP) is a group of over 40 community members and community-based organizations who joined forces October 1-2, 2020 to create a LFLP Community Action Plan. LFLP is a federal technical assistance program sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. LFLP supports locally led, community-driven efforts identified by workshop participants. The LFLP team continues to work toward:

- Improving coordination between community partners to advance food system initiatives
- Increasing access to local foods that promote improved health outcomes
- Introducing place-making best practices to enhance Johnstown as a destination for living, working, and visiting
- Helping connect food entrepreneurs to resources to establish and grow their businesses in Johnstown



The FWA Community Health Fair took place November 6, 2021 at FWA Gym located on Lincoln Street. The Center assisted the Conemaugh Diabetes Institute and health fair sponsors Oscar Cashaw and Karen Carter Brandon in setting up the event. About 50 community members attended the health fair. Covid booster vaccines and first doses were administered. Attendees could also have their blood pressure taken and discuss their risk for diabetes.



The Housing Symposium for Cambria and Somerset Counties

took place virtually on November 18, 2021. 1889 JCPH project manager Leanna Bird and United Way of the Laurel Highlands community impact manager Paula Gojmerac, along with a robust planning committee, came together and organized the first-ever Housing Symposium for Cambria and Somerset Counties. Thirteen panelists presented on housing assistance resources their organizations offer. Following each presentation, a Q&A session was held.

With 140 people in attendance, the symposium highlighted a need for more information on housing assistance resources in the region. The webinar was open to the public and attendees included social workers, school staff, case managers, and many more. Presenting agencies included Community Action Partnership of Cambria County, Tableland Services, Inc., Johnstown Housing Authority, Peer Empowerment Network, Martha and Mary House/Catholic Charities, Victim Services, Breaking the Barriers, Community Action Partnership of Blair County, Veterans' Leadership Program of Western PA, Women's Help Center, Next Step Center, Inc., Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, and Self-Determination Housing of Pennsylvania.





Representatives from the Community Care HUB attended a roundtable discussion with U.S. Senator Bob Casey to discuss the positive impact CHWs have had on our region and the need for sustainable funding to grow this workforce.

Advocacy

National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW)

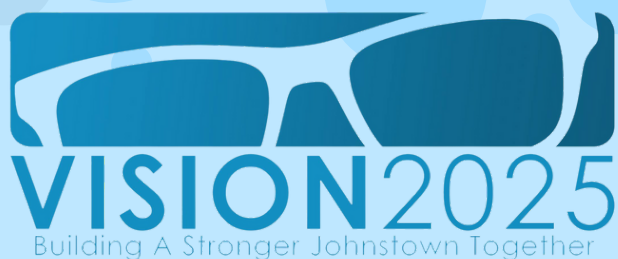
As a CHW ally, Leanna Bird serves as a member of the National Association of Community Health Workers policy committee, which advocates for fair CHW policies and practices nationwide. The committee provides federal and state policy review and support for entities outside of the association and develops internal NACHW policies related to the CHW workforce.

Pennsylvania Community Health Worker Collaborative (PCHWC)

1889 JCPH is a member of the PCHWC, which consists of CHW employers and CHWs across the region. The group shares best practices, exchanges resources, and strategizes about sustainable funding for the workforce.

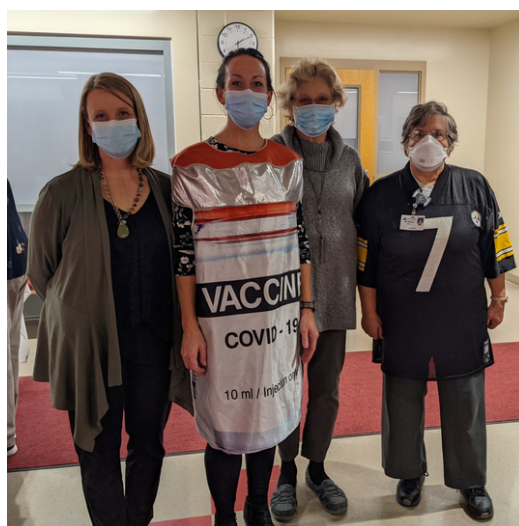
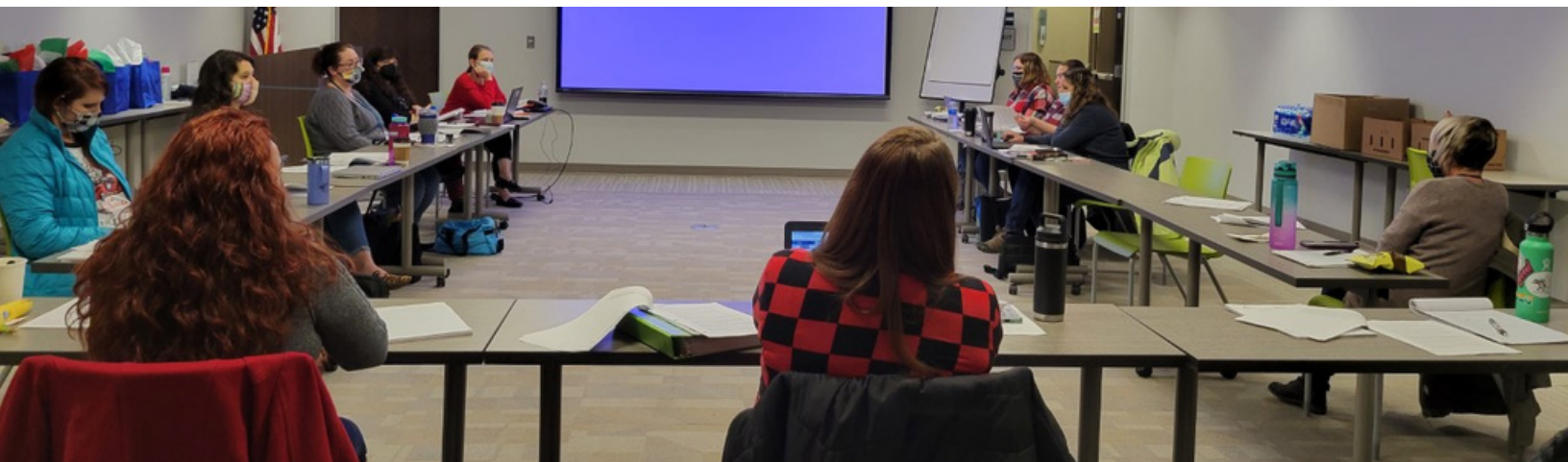
Regional Accountable Health Council (RAHC)

The 1889 JCPH is a member of the Pennsylvania Regional Accountable Health Council (RAHC), which are committees for strategic health planning located in various regions across Pennsylvania. RAHC provides a community-led approach to implement the planning and coordination of activities that address regional social determinants of health needs, reduce health disparities, and promote health equity and value in health care. Jeannine McMillan serves as the Secretary of the Southwest RAHC Zone.



1889 JCPH supports the Vision Together 2025 Collaborative efforts as a member of the Health and Wellness Committee. The focus areas for this committee include physical health, mental health, behavioral health, substance use, and social determinants of health. You can learn more about Vision Together at www.johnstownvision.com.

A look back at 2021



To learn more about our organization and potential collaboration, email CPHinfo@jefferson.edu



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