



Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers

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CONTACT

David Scholnick
856-365-9510, ext. 2013
dscholnick@camdenhealth.org

CAMDEN COALITION PROVIDES A VOICE FOR COMPLEX CARE ON GOVERNOR-ELECT PHIL MURPHY'S TRANSITION TEAM

Coalition's Natassia Rozario served on the healthcare committee and Shabnam Salih staffed the housing committee

When Governor-Elect Phil Murphy takes office in Trenton Tuesday, he will do so armed with knowledge of complex health and social needs and advice from the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers. For the first time in its 15-year history, the Camden Coalition took a seat at the table on the governor-elect's [transition team](#). Senior Director for External Affairs Natassia Rozario served on the team's healthcare committee and Associate Director for Policy & Engagement Shabnam Salih staffed the housing committee.

"To be selected for the incoming governor's transition team is not only a great honor for the Camden Coalition, but also a coming of age for the field of complex care," Ms. Rozario said. "As the Coalition serves more individuals than ever here in Camden, our movement's scope has become national. We're incredibly optimistic about working with the new administration to bring data-driven, whole-person care to more people with complex health and social needs in New Jersey."

Complex care focuses on individuals with multiple chronic illnesses, many of whom have behavioral health needs, and links health care with social services such as housing and transportation with a goal of providing better care at lower cost. The Camden Coalition works with local health care providers throughout New Jersey and across the country to further evidence-based models that target complex needs rather than any one condition. Launched over a year ago, the Camden Coalition's National Center for Complex Health and Social Needs hosted its second annual national conference in Los Angeles in November. The Coalition also facilitates the statewide Good Care Collaborative, which has recommended six strategies for the new administration to capitalize on the opportunity to set a national example for Medicaid.

The Good Care Collaborative's [six recommendations](#) are:

1. Advance a community-based, data-driven model to improve population health.
2. Support community-based care management services for individuals facing health and social challenges.
3. Develop a coordinated statewide approach to providing sustainable, low barrier, supportive housing for homeless individuals experiencing high utilization of the health care system.



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4. Fully implement and actively engage with the Integrated Population Health Data Project, an integrated data project being operationalized by the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy.
5. Improve oversight and the quality of non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT), a required Medicaid service that provides transportation to health care appointments for beneficiaries.
6. Improve public oversight of our Medicaid system to ensure quality for vulnerable Medicaid patients and efficiency and accountability for our state's taxpayers.

The governor-elect also tapped the Camden Coalition's Associate Director for Policy & Engagement, Shabnam Salih, a lifelong New Jerseyan who served as a staff member on the transition team's housing committee. In 2016, the Coalition launched a Housing First program with frequently-hospitalized and housing-unstable individuals in Camden. Housing First is a widely-used, evidence-based housing model, which provides safe, dignified housing with extensive support services to participants with complex needs so that they can improve their health and manage chronic conditions. The Coalition has seen about a 60 percent reduction in emergency department utilization among its Housing First participants.

"Being part of the governor-elect's transition team was an incredible opportunity to learn from other stakeholders who work on housing issues and to make sure that health care is part of that conversation," Ms. Salih said. "Our Housing First initiative is still new and it's too early to gauge its overall success, but the reduction in emergency room visits is certainly a promising number."

The United States spends far more than other industrialized countries on health care and far less than its peers on social services while lagging along important measures of health such as life expectancy and infant mortality. Research shows that the conditions in which people live, work and play have an enormous impact on health.

"Medicaid is our second biggest expenditure," Ms. Rozario wrote in a November op-ed for the [Bergen Record](#) and [Camden Courier Post](#). "We're making great strides toward reducing the inefficiencies in the system, and given the lack of clarity at the federal level, now is the time to double down on evidence-based, data-driven solutions here in New Jersey. We can reduce avoidable hospital stays, emergency room visits and lost lives.

"Better care at lower cost is possible, but only if we transform our systems so that they work for us when we need them most."

About the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers

The [Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers](#) is a citywide coalition of over 25 hospitals, primary care providers, and community organizations working together to deliver better health care to vulnerable citizens in Camden, NJ. Founded by Dr. Jeffrey Brenner in 2002, the Coalition knits together a fragmented health care system for patients with complex needs and repeated, ineffective and expensive hospitalizations, using smart data and holistic, multidisciplinary team care. We believe if we can deliver better care at lower cost here in Camden, it can be done for everyone, everywhere in America.

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