

Well Being Trust Launches Far-Reaching Initiatives Addressing Mental Health and Wellness

National foundation builds its team, forges partnerships, makes initial grants

JUNE 7, 2017

Oakland, CA — Well Being Trust, a new national foundation focused on innovation and improvement for mental health and wellness outcomes in the U.S., today announced its first round of grants and partnerships. These initiatives include projects that are transforming care across health systems, including in emergency departments and primary care settings, helping to create social and physical environments that promote good health for all, and identifying local, state and federal policy opportunities to measurably improve health and well-being.

Well Being Trust recently changed its name from The Institute for Mental Health and Wellness to emphasize its whole-person, whole-system approach to advancing the mental, social and spiritual health of the nation. Founded in late 2016 as a national foundation with an initial \$100 million endowment from Providence St. Joseph Health, Well Being Trust will partner with other health systems and philanthropies, and work closely with organizations across sectors and perspectives to identify and implement strategies that address: critical mental health challenges; promote resilience in children; teens and families; and lead to human and community well-being.

“Mental health and substance abuse have become the most pressing health issues in the nation. One in four Americans directly suffer, without respect to race, ethnicity, age, or socioeconomic status. Beyond the human, family and social toll, mental health challenges are costing our nation hundreds of billions of dollars annually,” said Tyler Norris, MDiv, chief executive, Well Being Trust. “Through these early grants and partnerships, we are bringing leading organizations, innovators and influencers together to do what none of us can do alone.”

In selecting its first slate of grants and partnerships for funding, Well Being Trust is prioritizing access to care, anxiety and depression, addiction and recovery, and improving health conditions and well-being of the individuals through community development approaches. Initial grants and partnerships include:

- A two-year collaboration with the **Institute for Healthcare Improvement** to improve the quality of care individuals with mental health and substance misuse disorders receive in hospital emergency departments, and to better integrate behavioral and mental health with emergency services by partnering with other leading health care systems across the nation.
- A state and federal policy blueprint, in partnership with the non-partisan **Trust for America’s Health**, to develop policy recommendations and advocacy strategies focused on an array of mental health issues, with a particular focus on substance misuse and suicide.
- \$30 million in grants over three years to the **California Mental Health and Wellness Initiative**. For the first round of funding in June 2017, Well Being Trust is focused on initiatives that integrate behavioral and mental health along the full spectrum of care from clinic to community.

These early stage grants and partnerships are guided by an advisory council chaired by **Maureen Bisognano**, president emerita of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Well Being Trust also announced today its new medical director, **Arpan Waghray, M.D.**, system director for behavioral medicine with Swedish Health Services in Seattle, Wash., and leader in tele-psychiatry and care approaches for vulnerable populations; and chief policy officer, **Benjamin F. Miller, Psy.D.**, founding director and current senior advisor of the Eugene S. Farley, Jr. Health Policy Center, and national leader in the field.

“As health care leaders and community members, we have a major role and responsibility to address the nation’s growing mental health crisis affecting our neighborhoods, schools and workplaces,” said Rod Hochman, M.D., CEO, Providence St. Joseph Health. “We invested in Well Being Trust to bring the right people to the table, who can help change how the nation talks about and addresses mental health and wellness. This is a commitment we should all be making.”

“The work of Well Being Trust and its partners can significantly reduce the personal, familial, social and economic costs of mental illness and substance misuse,” said Bisognano. “By focusing upstream and on whole-person care, we can invest in better health and improved care at lower costs.”

In the coming months, Well Being Trust will make additional partnership, grant and staffing announcements, while identifying other opportunities for investment.

Norris will also co-present on advancing a national movement for mental health and wellness with Amy Compton-Phillips, M.D., chief clinical officer with Providence St. Joseph Health, at the upcoming Catholic Health Association’s annual assembly in New Orleans on June 12.

About Well Being Trust

Founded in late 2016 with a \$100 million endowment from Providence St. Joseph Health, and an additional \$30 million specifically for use in California, Well Being Trust is a national foundation dedicated to advancing mental, social and spiritual health in the nation. Created to include participation from organizations across sectors and perspectives, Well Being Trust is committed to innovating and addressing the most critical mental health challenges facing America, and transforming individual and community wellness. www.wellbeingtrust.org