



The Pulse

Over 405,000 Strong and Growing – 2018 – Another Year of Exceptional Growth

A Message from HealthWell Foundation President, Krista Zodet

As we enter our 16th year of operation, my heart is filled with gratitude for our continued growth and the ability to assist the tens of thousands of underinsured patients who turn to us every year. Our exponential growth would not have been possible without the gracious contributions of our individual and corporate donors. As a result of their selfless generosity, the HealthWell team was able to assist more than 117,500 patients in 2018 – 28,000 more than in 2017! I'm honored that since awarding our first grant in 2004, we've been able to help over 405,000 underinsured patients by providing more than \$1.25 billion in financial assistance. Thank you to our donors who continue to put their trust in the HealthWell Foundation and support our mission to reduce financial barriers to care for underinsured patients with chronic or life-altering diseases. We continue to set new records year-over-year and look forward to serving even more patients in 2019!

As we kick-off 2019, we have so much for which to be thankful. We just launched our very own [Contact Center](#) with more than 75 highly trained and dedicated HealthWell employees; we launched or re-opened more than 18 disease funds and expanded our corporate team in 2018. As we continue to soar to new heights – the dedicated efforts of the amazing team that surrounds me everyday reminds me that anything is possible! Our continued growth has been recognized by charity watchdog groups and publications like *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, Guidestar, and Great NonProfits. Most recently, we received the prestigious rank of #41 on the 2018 Forbes list of the [100 Largest U.S. Charities](#). We are truly honored for the recognition of these wonderful organizations.

I'm looking forward to sharing some of our 2018 achievements and our goals for 2019 later in this edition, so I hope you'll continue to read.



A Place to *Call* Home

Over the past few months, my team worked diligently to launch HWF Direct, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of the HealthWell Foundation. Thanks to their tireless efforts, it is with tremendous excitement that we announce the opening of our very own Contact Center. Now, when calling our hotline for assistance, you'll be speaking with a dedicated HealthWell team member. Our new contact center is located in near-by Frederick, Maryland and is home to more than 75 professional representatives.

In addition to opening the contact center, we are honored to have recently become a member of the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce.

"We're thrilled to have the HealthWell Foundation join the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce," said Rick Weldon, CEO and President of the Frederick Chamber. "The creation of the contact center and the over 75 jobs it brings to Frederick County would be reason enough to celebrate. Add to that the critical financial support provided by the HealthWell Foundation to patients suffering from chronic illness for mounting medical bills, and we have the perfect alignment of interests and needs. Relieving the burden of treatment costs from a patient and their family allows them to focus on getting well, and that's a truly noble mission!"

Meet the Newest Members of HealthWell's Corporate Team

Early last fall, we were honored to welcome two new members to the HealthWell family - Albert Mejia and Rob Hidalgo. I thought I'd share a little information about their respective roles and what inspired them to join the foundation. Learn about Albert and Rob!

Albert Mejia joined the team as Junior Accountant and provides support to the Foundation in the areas of accounting and financial oversight. He brings over 14 years experience as program supervisor for two local contact centers where he was responsible for management and supervision of day-to-day operations for multiple client programs.



Albert Mejia
Junior Accountant

Albert shared what inspired him to join the team. "As a result of working in the pharmaceutical and reimbursement industry for many years, I've gained firsthand experience interacting with patients from all walks of life. Having the opportunity to help patients, and having a direct impact on their well-being is not only a privilege, but an honor that I take seriously. It is absolutely humbling to be a member of the HealthWell family and I look forward to becoming an integral part of the Foundation's continued growth."

We were also honored to welcome Rob Hidalgo as Solutions Architect. Rob manages the ongoing operation, maintenance and upgrade of the Foundation's grants management system (GMS) and works directly with the Foundation's contact center and operations team to identify and prioritize GMS customization projects required to meet the needs of individuals accessing Foundation grants and services. Rob brings more than 12 years experience in client solutions technology, successfully launching patient care, customer support, and inside sales programs for medical device manufacturers, health care providers, and trade associations.



Rob Hidalgo
Solutions Architect

Rob tells us, "Having previously worked with the HealthWell Foundation as a consultant, I have long admired and respected its work in helping chronically-ill patients manage and treat the difficult conditions they face. I consider myself fortunate to work among a team of professionals who each contribute to an overwhelmingly positive workplace atmosphere and culture. As someone who has spent nearly 20 years serving in various roles within the health care industry, I am proud to be part of an organization that impacts so many lives in such a positive and meaningful way."

Fund Updates and Program Enhancements

Each year, we strive to serve even more patients in need through our programs and services. In 2018, we accomplished that goal by serving more than 117,500 underinsured Americans – a record year for us and our most impactful one to date! Our goal for 2019 is no different. In fact, so far this year we have opened new funds to assist people living with migraines, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, nontuberculous mycobacterium, and hepatocellular carcinoma.

Hayden Burns, Director of the Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia Foundation, commented on the CLL Fund, “I commend the HealthWell Foundation for launching a fund for Medicare patients living with CLL.” Mr. Burns continued, “The new fund will be helpful to those who are struggling to pay for the exciting new treatments that are becoming available. CLL is often diagnosed in older people who have retired and are no longer in their peak earning years. Such patients would welcome a new source of financial support.”

I’m also excited to share that we recently reopened funds for glioblastoma/multiforme and astrocytoma, and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma in addition to the dozens of funds we kept open in 2018. We are honored that our dedicated donors recognize the financial burden out-of-pocket costs represent to those we serve and continue to place their trust in us through the launch of new funds and the re-opening of funds that were previously closed. Please continue to visit our [Disease Funds](#) listing for the latest status on fund activity or openings.

We continue to identify and implement thoughtful and creative ways to communicate with and educate our stakeholders. I’m excited to share our recently published video that illustrates our [Income Document Verification process](#). As we continue to enhance our programs, we’ll be developing a series of educational videos to guide our users through each step of the grants process. The team and I hope you find these videos helpful and informative.

Since launching our first fund in 2004, we are honored to have served as a financial lifeline to more than 405,000 underinsured patients. We are on the right trajectory to make 2019 another amazing year for our team and for those we serve. I look forward to sharing our final 2018 statistics and more of our 2019 initiatives in future issues.

Real World Health Care

Fresh New Look - Same Great Content

Almost six years ago, we launched our blog – RealWorldHealthCare.org. Since our first blog post in March 2013, we've captured the interest of thousands of industry leaders, health care professionals, government agencies, patient advocacy organizations and enthusiastic stakeholders who want to stay on top of health care news. We recently wrapped-up our year-long [Behavioral Health](#) blog series.

I'm excited to share that we kicked-off 2019 with a brand new look and format for easier viewing and searching previous posts. As we planned our series posts for 2019, we reached out to industry experts to determine what's top-of-mind for our readers. The results of our outreach demonstrated heightened interest in the specialized needs of family-and-friend caregivers taking care of loved ones with chronic diseases such as cancer, MS, Parkinson's, heart failure, migraines, and Non-Alcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH). We look forward to bringing you timely and educational posts through these exciting new series!

Upcoming Events

As you may recall, 2018 was an extremely busy year on the conference scene for me and the team. This year will be no different and I'm excited to share that we'll be attending and exhibiting at even more industry and disease-specific venues. During the first quarter, we'll be heading to Atlanta to exhibit and present at the [American Psychosocial Oncology Society \(APOS\) 16th Annual Conference](#). Then, the team heads back to Baltimore to exhibit and present during the [CBI-PAP 20th Patient Assistance & Access Programs](#) conference – our largest industry meeting of the year. If you're attending either of these meetings, please stop by our booth and meet the team. I'm looking forward to sharing details of our 2nd quarter travels in the next issue.

Change a Life Today

In addition to serving more patients than ever before, we received a record number of donations from individuals in 2018, which helped support our [Pediatric Assistance Fund](#), [Cancer-Related Behavioral Health Fund](#) and other special initiatives. We invite you to join our growing network of supporters by making a tax-deductible [donation](#) today!

You can also help us spread the word through our social communities by liking us on [Facebook](#), following us on [Twitter](#), and by visiting our [LinkedIn](#) profile.



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A nationally recognized, independent non-profit organization founded in 2003, the HealthWell Foundation has served as a safety net for more than 405,000 underinsured patients in more than 65 disease areas by providing access to life-changing medical treatments they otherwise would not be able to afford. For more information, visit www.HealthWellFoundation.org.