

Reflections on 2019



Dear Colleagues,

When I reflect back on this year, what I am most proud of at CHDI and our parent organization the Children's Fund of Connecticut, is the degree to which we collaborate with partners across the state and the country to improve the health and well-being of children and families. **We are grateful to our board of directors, state agencies, community provider organizations, hospitals, foundations, advocates, and countless others who worked with us this year.**

Together, we advanced meaningful changes in pediatric health and behavioral health care so that our State's systems, policies, and practices work better for Connecticut's children and families. Highlights of our work this year include:

- **A new joint framework and vision for children's health** to guide current and future state planning and reform efforts. This framework was developed in collaboration with the Connecticut Children's Office for Community Child Health.
- **A report recommending new ways to pay for pediatric primary care** that will ensure better outcomes for children. This was developed with support from the Connecticut Health Foundation and with the input of a diverse group of statewide partners.
- **Quality improvement support for pediatric primary care sites** to better identify and address the developmental and behavioral health needs of their patients.
- **Expanded access to evidence-based children's mental health practices, trauma-informed care, and school-based mental health care**, implemented in partnership with multiple state agencies, dozens of community mental health providers, family advocates, and 139 schools.
- *We were excited to find in a study conducted this year that the **outcomes for children receiving evidence-based treatments were significantly better than children receiving "usual care," particularly for children of color.***
- **Strategies to reduce and improve the use of emergency departments** for youth with behavioral health needs. These recommendations emerged from discussions with a statewide working group comprised of hospitals, foundations, providers, state agency personnel, legislators, advocates, and parents.
- **Training to deliver culturally responsive behavioral health care** through the Department of Children and Families' CONNECTing Children and Families to Care initiative.

These are just a few highlights of our work this year, conducted with partners from across the state. I encourage you to **view our 2019 infographic** and **explore our website** for more information about ways we are working to ensure all children have the best opportunity to thrive.

Though we are proud of the accomplishments, we are also keenly aware of the challenges still ahead. The number of youth experiencing behavioral health concerns is rising, and accessing effective behavioral health care continues to be a top concern for many. Rising health expenses and high deductibles are straining the resources of too many families. In 2020, with your help, we will continue to tackle these issues with a particular focus on: **improving the payment and delivery of pediatric primary care, integrating and coordinating care across child-serving systems, and making high quality behavioral health care accessible for families in convenient settings** such as homes, schools, pediatric health sites, and communities.

Thank you again for your support over the past year! On behalf of the board and staff of CHDI, we wish you a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey J. Vanderploeg, Ph.D.

President and CEO
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