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## TUFTS HEALTH PLAN FOUNDATION RECEIVES NATIONAL GRANT TO FORM THREE-STATE COLLABORATIVE

*Collaboration Will Form Regional Institute for Inter-professional Education*

**Watertown, MA** – Tufts Health Plan Foundation announced today that it has been chosen as one of 11 foundations nationwide to receive funding from *Partners Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN)*, a national initiative to help address the long-term shortage of nurses across the country. The Tufts Health Plan Foundation was awarded a three-year, \$225,000 grant.

This is the second PIN grant received by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation with the first being a collaborative effort among academia and the nursing practice communities within Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island to develop a regional approach to nursing education.

The current regional collaboration will create a *Regional Collaborative for Inter-professional Education* that will focus on the development and implementation of a program of shared learning, resources, curriculum components and an evaluation methodology for inter-professional education. The Tufts Health Plan Foundation will work specifically with the Massachusetts Hospital Association (MHA) and all of the team members to implement this program.

“Care coordination is the central ingredient in ensuring that patients get the best care possible,” said David Abelman, executive director of the Tufts Health Plan Foundation. “This regional collaboration is a testament to the value of the inter-professional collaboration and linkages among care providers across all settings needed to find lasting health care solutions.”

This three-state collaboration grew out of previous PIN success involving nursing practice and education leaders from across the three states that built on the work done in Massachusetts to increase the availability of clinical placements and develop new approaches to educating nurses. As a lead contributor to this work, Tufts Health Plan Foundation funded a nurse scholars program to help meet the escalating need for nurse educators in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

“In Massachusetts, we are seeing excellent overall quality and patient safety results from the use of inter-professional care teams – both within hospital units and across the continuum of care,” said Pat Noga, PhD, RN, MBA, NEA-BC, MHA’s Vice President for Clinical Affairs. “We report and validate these findings through our *PatientCareLink* transparency website and Strategic Performance Improvement Agenda to lower patient mortality, readmissions and healthcare acquired infections. Expanding such collaboration and cooperation efforts to care-giving teams across New England through the new PIN funding will have a tremendous, positive impact on patient safety and care coordination in the region.”

The three state collaboration is building upon the recommendations of the recent Institute of Medicine report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, which seeks to prepare the nursing workforce to meet the needs of America’s health care system and the patients it serves, and ensure an adequate supply of nurses for a growing, aging population. The IOM report focuses on the fact that patients receive safer, higher quality care when health professionals work in inter-professional teams, communicate effectively and clearly understand each others’ roles.

Maureen Sroczynski, RN, MS, project director for the three-state collaboration noted, “This grant provides an opportunity for sharing of best practices and the development of a learning community around inter-professional teamwork and communication that can lead to an improvement in patient outcomes and the quality of patient care throughout the region.”

The lead partners in the grant for Massachusetts are the University of Massachusetts Worcester, Graduate School of Nursing, the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine and the Family Health Center of Worcester. For New Hampshire, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Dartmouth Medical School and Colby-Sawyer School of Nursing, and in Rhode Island, the University of Rhode Island Colleges of Nursing and Pharmacy, the Rhode College Schools of Nursing and Social work and the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

In addition to the Tufts Health Plan Foundation, the project includes nine other funders from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island:

Brown Alpert Medical School  
Colby-Sawyer College Department of Nursing  
The Edward J. and Virginia M. Routhier Foundation of Rhode Island  
The Massachusetts Area Health Education Center  
New Hampshire Area Health Education Center  
The Rhode Island Center for Nursing Excellence  
University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy  
University of Rhode Island College of Nursing  
Rhode Island College School of Nursing

“All health care is local, and nurses are the cornerstone of our health care system. We need community solutions that address the challenges facing a changing health care system and that utilize local and regional experience,” said Judith Woodruff, J.D., director of workforce development at the Northwest Health Foundation and program director for Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future. “With this partnership, the Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island collaborative is in the forefront of communities nationwide helping to create a well-prepared nursing workforce.”

This new funding creates a new total of 61 PIN projects in more than 37 states and collectively, collaborating with more than 500 partners. There are over 220 partners that provide local funding, including private foundations, hospitals and health systems, workforce investment agencies, economic development programs, banks, private industry and individuals.

For more information about *Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future*, go to [www.PartnersinNursing.org](http://www.PartnersinNursing.org).

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*The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, measurable and timely change. For nearly 40 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).*

*Founded in 1997, **Northwest Health Foundation** is a nonprofit foundation that seeks to advance, support, and promote the health of the people of Oregon and southwest Washington. We achieve our mission through a variety of means, including grantmaking, technical assistance and training, convening, commissioning research, and supporting policy advocacy. See [www.nwhf.org](http://www.nwhf.org).*

*Tufts Health Plan launched the **Tufts Health Plan Foundation** in 2008. The Foundation’s mission is to promote healthy lifestyles and the delivery of quality care in our communities. In its first year, the Foundation focused on Disparities, Nursing Faculty Education and Health Consumer Education and awarded \$2.5 million to more than 60 non-profit organizations throughout Massachusetts. The Tufts Health Plan Foundation is currently focused on Healthy Aging to help meet the challenges of an aging society. Through grants in the four areas of caregiver support, fall prevention, intergenerational collaboration and vibrant lifestyles, the foundation seeks to fund programs that will elevate the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of older adults; enable them to contribute their experiences and knowledge to their communities; and ultimately help older adults live healthier lives. See [www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org](http://www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org).*