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NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE QUALITY INSTITUTE



**A BI-WEEKLY LOOK AT THE BUSINESS & POLITICS OF
HEALTH CARE IN NEW JERSEY**

What's Included In This Edition:

Schwimmer Script - 'Conversation of Your Life' Supports Advance Care Planning During Hospice and Palliative Care Month

Take Five Interview - Nicole McQuillen, MSW, LCSW, Senior Vice President, Children and Family Services at CarePlus NJ; CEO of Paradigm School System

Mayors Wellness Campaign (MWC) -

- Join us at the New Jersey League of Municipalities
- Register for Mental Health First Aid Training (MHFA) on 12/11



**Schwimmer
Script** 

Linda Schwimmer, JD
President & CEO,  NEW JERSEY
HEALTH CARE
QUALITY
INSTITUTE

'Conversation of Your Life' Supports Advance Care Planning During Hospice and Palliative Care Month

November marks Hospice and Palliative Care Month, a time to honor the care that helps people live with dignity, comfort, and respect when facing serious illness. It is also a time when families often come together, creating an opportunity to discuss the kind of care we'd like to receive if we are unable to speak for ourselves.

Through the Quality Institute's [Conversation of Your Life \(COYL\)](#) program, we help communities across New Jersey start these critical discussions. COYL provides tools, education and resources on advance care planning for individuals and the professionals who support them.

This month, we invite you to engage with us in this work:

- Watch our [most recent webinar](#), *Social Work Perspectives on Advance Care Planning and Aging*, co-hosted by the Quality Institute and the Hub for Aging Collaboration at the Rutgers School of Social Work. The discussion features social workers from community, clinical, and private practice settings who share how they support individuals, families, and caregivers in having

- meaningful conversations about care preferences, quality of life, and values.
- Join our quarterly [COYL Partner meeting](#), happening **today** at noon. We will bring together COYL partners, Mayors Wellness Campaign teams, and professionals to share insight and provide feedback on current resources, followed by planning discussions for COYL regional events in 2026.
 - Learn from our partner, the [Goals of Care Coalition of New Jersey](#), which recently launched a [self-paced education program](#) on advance care planning and palliative care. The course helps both clinicians and community members feel more confident in guiding these essential conversations.
 - Sign up as a [COYL Partner](#) to connect with other leaders and receive updates on statewide efforts to support advance care planning.
 - Request [a COYL event in your community](#) to bring these discussions directly to residents and local organizations.

Through COYL, the Quality Institute works to normalize advance care planning by encouraging open, informed dialogue about end-of-life care. Having a plan ensures that care reflects personal values and priorities, and that individuals remain in control of their decisions. When families, clinicians, and communities embrace these conversations early, they make care more compassionate and person-centered...

[Read Full Story](#)

TAKE FIVE INTERVIEW

Nicole McQuillen, MSW, LCSW
*Senior Vice President, Children & Family Services
at CarePlus NJ; CEO of Paradigm School System*



Interviews with members, influencers, and noteworthy people

[CarePlus NJ](#), a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, is a member of the Quality Institute's Provider Council.

Interview Sneak Peek: *How does Paradigm fit into your broader mission?*

[Paradigm School System](#) extends our mission by directly integrating education with behavioral health support. Approved by the New Jersey Department of Education, Paradigm operates both a therapeutic high school and middle school.

Students are referred by their home school district's child study team when additional support is needed. Districts cover tuition and transportation, and currently, we serve students across Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Morris, and surrounding counties.

Our schools deliver the same academic curriculum as public districts, but with added clinical services — social workers, art and music therapy, and other interventions. If a student is struggling in class, they can step out to meet with a clinician and return

ready to learn. Many students face challenges such as anxiety or depression, and this model allows them to succeed academically while addressing their mental health needs...

[Read Full Interview](#)



Join us at Booth 107 at the [New Jersey League of Municipalities](#) from **November 18 to November 20**. Mayors, learn new strategies to strengthen your [Mayors Wellness Campaign \(MWC\)](#), engage your community, and help residents live healthier lives. Visit our booth to discover how to launch or grow your MWC today, with expert advice and resources. Don't miss out on this opportunity to make a positive impact on your community's health and wellness.



With support from [The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey](#), we continue to provide free [Mental Health First Aid \(MHFA\)](#) training to community members who work with youth and adults. This training may be especially valuable to law enforcement, school employees, municipal employees, and those serving the public. Register below for our next virtual Adult MHFA training on **Thursday, December 11, 2025**. For more information, contact Katie Bisaha, Program Officer, at KBisaha@njhcqi.org.

[Register for MHFA Training](#)



For information on how to join, please contact Virginia Tesser at vtesser@njhcqi.org.

To learn more about our current initiatives, please visit our website at www.njhcqi.org.

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