



NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE **QUALITY INSTITUTE**

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



PRESIDENT & CEO, LINDA SCHWIMMER **Gratitude and Investment as Public Health Emergency Ends**

New Jersey has lifted the state's public health emergency, and we can all breathe a sigh of relief. We're re-opening our state just as the earliest signs of spring are beginning to emerge. It's a time to share our gratitude to those who pushed themselves above and beyond to protect us — and those who put themselves at risk to keep programs, services, and schools operating.

From home health aides to nurses, from teachers to public health officers, many people across the Garden State innovated, adapted, and responded to the changing needs of their patients, students, and communities during the past two years. Due to their work, as a state we have much to be grateful for and will recover. But the pandemic's impact was uneven across individuals, racial and ethnic groups, professions, and communities. We must recognize these disparities as we move forward.

Watching Governor Murphy's budget address this week, I was pleased to see needed investments in health care and efforts to address social determinants of health, such as job training and housing. This funding will be essential to address the pandemic's disparate impact and recognize and address local needs across the state.

Throughout the pandemic, through our Mayors Wellness Campaign (MWC), we saw local leaders more focused than ever on the health needs of their residents. We saw communities create innovative programs to respond to the urgent and changing needs of their residents. Now we have the honor of announcing the 2021 MWC

Healthy Town designees. We recognize cities and towns in three categories: Healthy Town (Gold), Healthy Town to Watch (Silver), and Healthy Town Up-and-Coming (Bronze). You can see the [32 designated communities](#) on our website and read about their impressive work to make their [communities healthier places to live, work, and play](#). It was inspiring to receive so many first-time applications this year...

[Read Full Story](#)



HEATHER HOWARD, JD

PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE
AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY'S
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



TAKE FIVE INTERVIEW

Interviews with members, influencers, and noteworthy people

Heather Howard, JD, a member of the Quality Institute's Board of Directors, is a Professor at Princeton University. She is also co-director of the Center for Health and Wellbeing's Global Health Program and director of State Health and Value Strategies, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded program assisting states with transforming their health care systems to be affordable, equitable, and innovative.

Interview Sneak Peek: You served as New Jersey's Health Commissioner from 2008–2010. How does that experience influence your work as a board member of the Quality Institute?

First, it's a joy to serve on the board of the Quality Institute along with several other former New Jersey Health Commissioners. Dr. Jacobs (Fred. M. Jacobs, MD, JD), whom I followed as commissioner; Dr. Elnahal (Shereef Elnahal, MD, MBA); and Judy Persichilli, who served as Quality Institute Board Vice Chair before becoming our current Health Commissioner.

When I was Commissioner, the Quality Institute was an important partner. Now to participate in helping the Quality Institute complement the work of the State is a great opportunity. I'll give you two examples. The first is all the great work the Quality Institute is doing to highlight the enormous value of primary care in advancing health equity. Another real passion of mine is maternal health — and that traces back to my time as Commissioner. To see this work flourish at the Quality Institute and to see the needed focus on reproductive health care and improving maternal health outcomes is so rewarding to me.

Your program, **State Health and Value Strategies**, advises states on critical issues in health care, including issues of importance to us at the Quality Institute. One issue is aligning the state and federal Surprise Billing laws to streamline protections for consumers. What is your advice for New Jersey...?

[Read Full Interview](#)



MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN, 2021 NEW JERSEY HEALTHY TOWN DESIGNEES

HEALTHY TOWN

- BAY HEAD
- EVESHAM
- MONTCLAIR
- PATERSON
- PLAINFIELD
- SCOTCH PLAINS
- WILDWOOD CREST
- WOODBRIDGE

HEALTHY TOWN TO WATCH

- BELLEVILLE
- BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD
- FRANKLIN LAKES
- HILLSBOROUGH
- JEFFERSON
- NORWOOD
- VERNON

HEALTHY TOWN UP-AND-COMING

- BERNARDSVILLE
- ORADELL
- CRANBURY
- CRESSKILL
- DEERFIELD
- DENVILLE
- EATONTOWN
- FORT LEE
- GARFIELD
- HIGHLANDS
- KEYPORT
- LAWRENCE (MERCER)
- MORRISTOWN
- PRINCETON
- RIDGEWOOD
- SOUTH BRUNSWICK
- STAFFORD



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We are thrilled to announce our [Mayors Wellness Campaign](#) 2021 New Jersey Healthy Town Designees. Check out our [press release](#) to learn more about the efforts towns have taken to make their communities healthier places to live, work, and play.

[View Healthy Town Press Release](#)

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NEW MEMBER



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Princeton Health

Princeton Health

[Princeton Health](#) is proud to be among the most comprehensive healthcare systems in New Jersey. Their full continuum of care includes acute care hospital services, behavioral healthcare, acute

rehabilitation, home care, hospice care, ambulatory surgery, and fitness and wellness services.



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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