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What's Included In This Edition:

Schwimmer Script - Guest author Adelisa Perez-Hudgins, MSN, RN

Take Five Interview with Eric Frieman, CEO of Forge Health

What We're Reading - *Prioritize Oral Health for NJ Kids*

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Member Breakfast & Engagement Event 3/5

Welcome, New Member, TCNJ College of Nursing & Health Sciences

A graphic for the 'Schwimmer Script' section. On the left is a circular portrait of Adelisa Perez-Hudgins, a woman with long brown hair wearing a purple top and a pearl necklace. To the right of the photo, the words 'Schwimmer Script' are written in a large, bold, dark blue font. A stylized pen nib icon is positioned to the right of the word 'Script'. Below the title, her name and title are listed: 'Adelisa Perez-Hudgins, MSN, RN' and 'Director of Quality, Q | NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE QUALITY INSTITUTE'. The background is white with blue decorative dots on the left side.

Recognizing New Jersey's Quality & Safety Teams: Take-Aways from Our 2025 Annual Convening

We recently held our annual Quality Improvement convening to recognize quality and safety professionals from every hospital in the state. While patient safety is a collective effort, these individuals were named by their organizations and recognized by the Quality Institute for their ongoing dedication to safety and quality. We honored their commitment to their patients, colleagues, and communities. You can find their names [here](#) and join us in celebrating these outstanding health care professionals working to provide safe, quality care to all their patients.

At the convening, we also had a panel on [The Joint Commission's Advanced Certification in Health Care Equity](#), a prestigious designation awarded to only 17 health systems nationwide, including five in New Jersey. This certification recognizes organizations that take meaningful steps to integrate health equity into their work through leadership, data collection, collaboration, and performance improvement. Today, the Quality Institute is releasing a [Quality Briefing](#) to assist health systems that are interested in pursuing this designation or otherwise furthering their efforts in advancing health equity and improving health outcomes for all their patients...

[Read Full Story](#)

[Read & Share Quality Briefing](#)

TAKE FIVE INTERVIEW

Eric Frieman,
Chief Executive Officer, Forge Health



Interviews with members, influencers, and noteworthy people

[Forge Health](#) is a member the Quality Institute's [Provider council](#).

Interview Sneak Peek: *How has your personal background and family history with veterans informed Forge Health's focus?*

At Forge Health, we provide goal-oriented treatment proven effective in helping people overcome mental health challenges, substance use, and associated trauma. My brother Jon served in the U.S. Army as an infantry officer deployed to two war zones, including Iraq. And the devastating statistic is that my brother lost more of his soldiers to suicide than in combat. He also lost soldiers to alcohol-related driving accidents.

That experience showed me what happens when mental health treatment is not effective, affordable, or accessible. I saw the need for providers who can treat high-acuity patients on an outpatient basis. Treatment needs to be in-network with commercial health insurance companies, as well as Medicaid and Medicare. And you need to have qualified and trained professionals providing care. That's why we founded Forge Health in 2016.

[Read Full Interview](#)



WHAT WE'RE READING

In [an op-ed](#) published in USA Today, Dr. Michal Herman, a dentist who cares for young children, and is COO of the KinderSmile Foundation, shared how New Jersey "is well behind other states in providing access to dental care, particularly for those in marginalized communities. The first Basic Screening Survey by the New Jersey Department of Health found that children in Head Start have untreated dental decay at twice the rate of the national average. We are failing our kids." She explained that,

“When we don’t have enough dentists willing to accept Medicaid, the program fails. The driving problem is the Medicaid rates. New Jersey Medicaid fee-for-service rates have been frozen for nearly 20 years. Furthermore, the MCOs pay even less than the fee-for-service rates.”

[Read & Share Full Op-Ed](#)

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Please join the Quality Institute on **Wednesday, March 5, 8 – 9:30 a.m.**, for an **in-person** Member Breakfast and Engagement Event at Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, 230 E. Ridgewood Ave., Paramus.

Start your morning with a quick breakfast while networking with local leaders and health care decision makers. Hear brief updates from Quality Institute staff about how to get involved in our policy, quality improvement, and community health work.

Register today to maximize your membership value.

**This event is for members and invited guests only.*

[Register Now For The 3/5 Event](#)

NEW MEMBER

TCNJ THE COLLEGE OF
NEW JERSEY

WELCOME

[The College of New Jersey School of Nursing and Health Sciences](#) is a nationally recognized school and offers rigorous programs in nursing, public health, kinesiology, and health sciences with a focus on integrative health and wellness.



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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