

# AF4Q CHRONICLE

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



## AF4Q CONSUMER REPS HONE THEIR STORIES



AF4Q CONSUMER REPS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

### WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

Pre-meetings pinpoint  
the value of story,  
networking, and  
thinking ahead.



## CONSUMER REPS PREP STORY

### Focus on power of story to make change

Consumer input is critical to improving health care, and AF4Q Alliances place a high value on consumer voice. Consumer representatives from each of the Alliances met yesterday to network and learn about how their stories—both personal and from their communities—can make a big impact in their communities and beyond.

The consumer representatives were welcomed by Susan Mende from the

» Continued, **PG. 2**



## PROJECT DIRECTORS MEET

### TACKLE 4.0 AND BEYOND

The AF4Q Alliance Project Directors met all day Wednesday to share stories of their accomplishments and work together on common issues the Alliances are facing as the sites wrap up the 3.0 phase of the project and work to transition into 4.0, AF4Q's last phase. After an invigorating

» Continued, **PG. 2**

## THE CALL OF STORY

### Vergheze: 'Language of Science doesn't do justice to patient stories'

Acclaimed physician, author, and professor Abraham Vergheze, MD, will address attendees at Aligning Forces for Quality's November national meeting today from 8 am-9:30am in the Cyril Magnin Ballroom on the fourth floor. In keeping with the meeting's theme of the value of storytelling, Dr. Vergheze will discuss the call of story, from his perspective of storyteller and physician.

A powerful storyteller himself, Dr. Vergheze is widely renowned for his sensitive discussions on the doctor-patient relationship and has influenced the way modern medical students think about what it means to be a physician. His three books—both fiction and nonfiction—have appeared on bestseller lists and

have won numerous awards. He also has been published extensively in the medical literature.

One of Dr. Vergheze's chief concerns is the possibility of modern doctors losing touch with their patients and with the roots of their profession, and his writing and lecturing reflects this concern.

*There are lots of parallels between writing and medicine ... When we see a patient we take a 'history'—the word "story" is in there. As a consultant, when I see a patient whom others have seen before me, if I can shed light on the problem it is often because the particular patient story resonates with my repertoire of stories and so I know where it is heading. — Abraham Vergheze*

"My impetus to write came from my recognition that data points are not enough," Dr. Vergheze told AF4Q Chronicle. "When I was treating AIDS in Tennessee and working with patients and their families, I found the cold, unimaginative language of

science didn't do justice to my patients' stories."

Born in Ethiopia and trained in India, Dr. Vergheze brings a fresh and unique perspective to practicing medicine in the United States today.



### FOLLOW THE STORY AS IT UNFOLDS (3 TWEETS)

"AF4Q's @Roseperson hearing story about living with HIV - "That story changed my life and brought me here." @AligningForces

"Susan Mende - #AF4Q Consumer Meeting: 'The story starts with you.' @Comma\_Queen

"Patients can FIRE their docs. If doc isn't helping, don't waste your time. Walk away, and get a new resources. ASAP" @Stales

# PRE-MEETINGS

## Consumer

cont. from page 1

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and staff from the National Program Office, who spoke to the issue of why story matters and the effect powerful narrative can have on the process of improving health care.

“We know our consumers have powerful personal tales to tell that can get the word out in their communities about improving care and even saving lives,” said Mende.

The group then heard from consumer Jay Conner, a woman living with AIDS in San Diego, CA, who discussed her struggles with getting an accurate diagnosis, receiving treatment for her condition, and her work with HIV-positive consumers in her community. “I tell my story to anyone who will listen, and some that won’t,” she said. “If there is one black woman or girl who hears something that hits home, that might be the one we save.”

Most of the consumer representatives at this meeting are new to AF4Q, which Albuquerque Project Director Pat Montoya said adds a valuable new dimension to the Alliances’ work.

“More often than not, these individuals return with a newfound passion and excitement about the project,” Montoya said. “After hearing other AF4Q communities discuss their challenges and success, they see our potential to achieve the change needed in our health care. They often go from passive members of AF4Q and its Albuquerque Coalition to new champions for our effort, helping us move forward and connecting us with others to align efforts across the community. These new champions are another example of success.”

## Project Director

cont. from page 1

round robin, where all Project Directors shared what they saw as their Alliance’s single greatest achievement since May 2012, the 25 AF4Q leaders moved into a deep discussion about sustainability, including sharing their challenges, strategies, and successes. “What amazes me every time is how much diversity there is among the alliances—everyone is emphasizing different things in different areas. We all learn so much from each other in these conversations,” said Susie Dade, project director from AF4Q’s Puget Sound Alliance.

Harold Miller then led the group in a discussion of the most effective roles for regional health improvement collaboratives in payment reform and addressing cost of care, reviewing strategies to improve AF4Q’s effectiveness as conveners around these challenging topics.

Finally, the Project Directors met with senior staff from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the National Program Office to discuss synergies among the alliances’ submitted strategic plans for 4.0 and their cost/quality goals.

The Project Directors meet formally twice a year in person at the national meetings and once a month via phone.



# AF4Q IN FOCUS

Check out all the AF4Q stories in the meeting magazine.

**WE FACE** a tremendous challenge in our country in delivering high-quality, affordable care to everyone. So the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation wondered: Can those who pay for care, provide care, and receive care come together and reach consensus about improving quality in their community?

**THESE QUESTIONS** spurred the Foundation to create Aligning Forces for Quality.

**HEALTH CARE** is a national problem, but it is solved locally, and transforming it requires local action.

**NATIONALLY**, ALIGNING Forces for Quality (AF4Q) brings together 16 communities—touching 37 million people, 590 hospitals, and 31,000 primary care physicians—to provide a driving force in health care transformation.

**LOCALLY**, EACH of those communities is taking on the complicated issue of improving quality of care by aligning their local partners to spark reform.

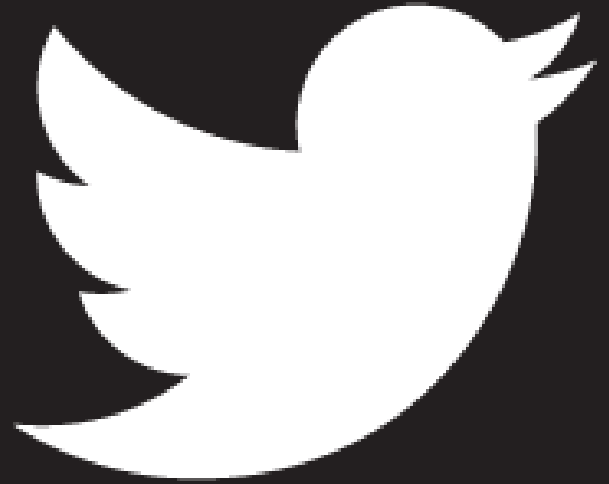
**FOR INSTANCE**, one key effort has been around public reporting. By measuring provider performance and providing data

that were not available before, physicians and patients in AF4Q communities are driving toward higher-quality care. The results of that work were visible at one clinic in Minnesota. Staff there saw dismal 1999 data showing that only 5 percent of their patients with diabetes were getting the necessary care, so they took action. After focused outreach and engagement, the 2010 data showed that a full 60 percent of all patients with diabetes were receiving all of the recommended care—an amazing testament to the power of public reporting and the teamwork that AF4Q alliances embody.

**STORIES LIKE** this one abound in the AF4Q communities. Sixteen are featured in *AF4Q In FOCUS*, the magazine produced in-house by our team for the national meeting, everything from Cleveland’s initiative to use electronic health records to standardize the process for pneumonia vaccines to Puget Sound’s work to develop measures of value in health care services.

**IT IS** our hope that these moments of success—as well as the moments of struggle—will provide a lens for others to use in thinking through their community-level efforts to improve the quality of care.

# #AF4Q



Your story in 140 characters or fewer

@AligningForces  
@RWJF\_QualEqual

*“I came into this six-week program a death-fearing, self-pitying, chronically ill person,” says Eunice Noack of Eureka. “Now I am mainly chronically well.”*

READ MORE OF THIS STORY in *AF4Q IN FOCUS*, page 26.

Aligning Forces | Improving Health & Health Care  
for Quality | in Communities Across America

AF4Q IN  
**FOCUS**



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

**Spotlight on Success:  
16 Communities  
Share Their Secrets**

don't forget to visit  
[www.forces4quality.org](http://www.forces4quality.org)

# HAPPENING TODAY

## Schedule for Thursday, November 8

### Agenda Updates:

**6:30 am–8 am:** Breakfast and registration  
Pick from:

Making Local and Regional QI Connections Easier Through the National Quality Forum (NQF) Action Registry  
[Mission, 4th Floor]

Networking—What Stories Do You Want to Share?  
[Cyril Magnin Foyer, 4th Floor]

**8 am–9:30 am:** Opening plenary: “The Call of Story”  
[Cyril Magnin Ballroom, 4th Floor]  
*Join keynote speaker Abraham Verghese as he discusses his experiences as a physician and author and explores the elements of story.*

Note: Anne Weiss will deliver the introduction in place of John Lumpkin

**9:30 am–9:45 am:** Break

**9:45 am–11:15 am:** BREAKOUTS—Connecting the Dots: Bringing Value to Your Story  
The following three sessions run concurrently:

**Targeting Depression: Connecting Measurement and Payment**  
[Powell, 3rd Floor]

*Several Alliances are targeting depression and other mental health conditions in order to improve quality and reduce cost. The panel will focus on the intersection of QI, payment, and measurement in the context of improving care for patients and lowering health care costs. Their stories use evidence-based QI strategies to promote better health outcomes at a lower cost.*

**Beyond the Clinic Walls: Connecting Population Health and QI to Reach Vulnerable Populations**  
[Embarcadero, 3rd Floor]

*Equity is an essential component of quality. Yet, many of the factors that contribute to inequities in care occur outside the health care delivery system. What can be done to extend the reach of providers*

*beyond the clinic walls to leverage community resources and improve clinical quality outcomes for vulnerable populations?*

**Beyond 2015: Showcasing the Value of AF4Q**

[Mission, 3rd Floor]  
*Alliances will share how they have developed roles and relationships with key stakeholders and how they leverage local and federal opportunities to build relationships to develop committed resources to continue to advance the AF4Q work.*

**11:15 am–11:30 am:** Break

**11:30 am–1:00 pm:** Luncheon Plenary: “How the Election Results Might Impact Your Story”  
[Cyril Magnin Ballroom, 4th Floor]  
*Sara Rosenbaum, Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor and founding Chair of the Department of Health Policy at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services.*

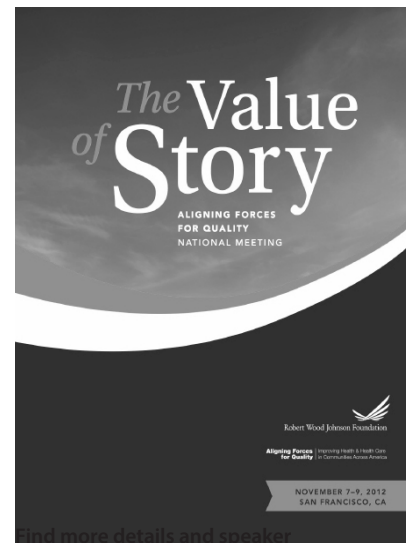
**1 pm–1:15 pm:** Break

**1:15 pm–5:15 pm** Storytelling Clinic  
[Cyril Magnin Foyer, 4th Floor]

*Teams will work together with their own alliance team, with professional storytellers Rick Stone and Shirley Decker from I.D.E.A.S. Orlando. Teams will craft, hone, and form their strongest stories, as well as learn the craft of storytelling to wide audiences. The session will be interactive and fun, with plenty of refreshments and a few fun surprises.*

**5:15 pm–6:15 pm:**  
Networking Reception

**6:15:** Dinner on Your Own.  
Get restaurant ideas in the “area and information” tab of your Program Book.



## ‘ELECTION INTERRUPTUS’

**GWU policy expert discusses election results in light of ACA implementation and deficit reduction**

By Lydia Orth

With the result from the Presidential election in, we now can begin to focus on how the outcome could affect AF4Q Alliances and how they tell their story. At Thursday’s lunch plenary, Sara Rosenbaum, Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor of Health Law and Policy and Founding Chair of the Department of Health Policy, George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, will discuss that with the re-election of President Obama, the direction continues on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) course.

“The story of the ACA is a confluence of two enormous stories with a minor ‘election interruptus,’” said Rosenbaum, “one side being whether to proceed forward with ACA implementation and the other being how to address the deficit.”

A few states are undecided on how to implement the act. “This is where we don’t know exactly how things will play out on the state level. Only about 14 states are moving ahead on their own, and a few are opting

out of the entire process, not to mention we have a whole bunch of states in the middle with a great deal of uncertainty,” Rosenbaum explained.

The President will to keep health care reform on track, although he is under enormous pressure to forge a budget deal and keep financial affordability in the mandate so the insurance exchanges can move forward. Over the coming weeks and months, more clues will come to light on how the landscape will shift over the next year and how this monumental act will influence each Alliance’s story.



## Storytelling Clinic

**Work with your team to develop, hone, and share your stories.**

Everyone loves a good story, but not everyone knows how to tell one.

I.D.E.A.S. Orlando is conducting a storytelling clinic today (1:15 pm to 5:15 pm in the Cyril Magnin Foyer, Fourth Floor) that will stimulate and invigorate participants as they identify the building blocks they need for constructing messages that will make a real impact. I.D.E.A.S.’ central premise is that powerful stories create powerful experiences, and the presenters will lead participants through exercises to help craft powerful stories about the work they do.

“Good stories allow the reader to view the world through the eyes of another, they grab readers or listeners, they inspire,” said Rick Stone, Story Analysis Master. “Good stories are emotionally appealing—a key component to convey the overarching goals of any anecdote—and may help the audience remember the story enough to share it with others. Data and general overviews elicit analysis, and stories elicit powerful emotional involvement that invigorate.”

Sessions leaders will talk through what makes a story work—and why good stories help you sell yourself to potential partners, funders, and other stakeholders. You will identify your story’s “characters,” show how the work your Alliance has done has made a difference in the lives of those characters, and explore complicating factors and how they faced those challenges.

Alliance members will then work together in small groups and brainstorm ways to tell their tales from what they’ve learned so far.

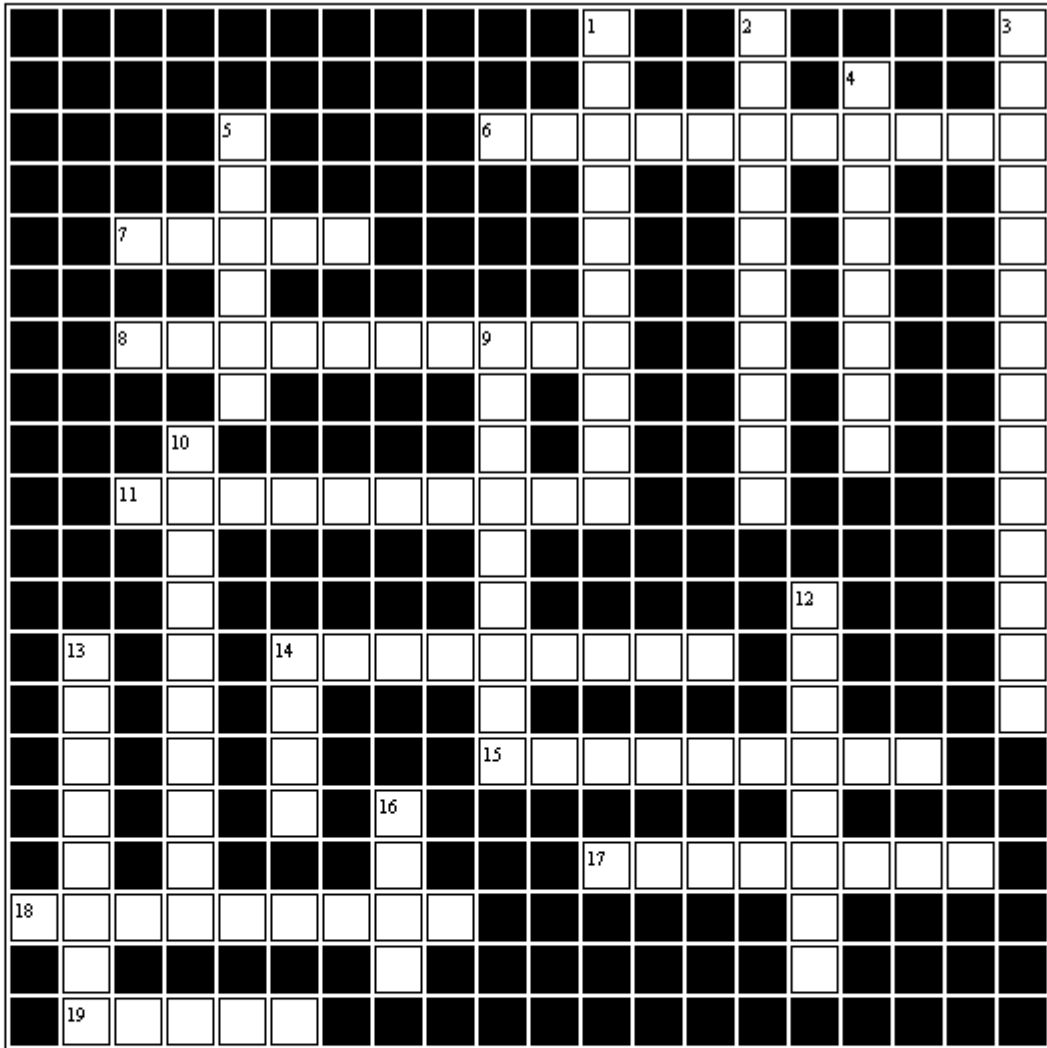
I.D.E.A.S. believes you can pull together a coherent narrative without worrying too much about the actual words themselves, as “wordsmithing” often is a stumbling block for people trying to craft a compelling message.

The session will be entertaining and fun, so bring your laptop and prepare to find your inspiration!

If you are not a member of an Alliance, you are welcome to stay and participate at one of the guest tables. For instance, the staff of the National Program Office will be working on the story of AF4Q from our perspective. ●

### Did You Know?

AF4Q in Focus was created by NPO staff using a template purchased for \$11?



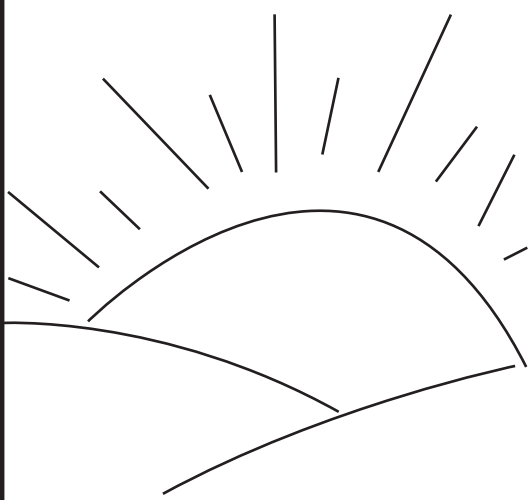
**Across**

**Down**

- 6. Chocolate Square
- 7. Lost and Found Here
- 8. Ginsberg Howled Here
- 11. Only McD's and BK in Sight. I'm Not Lovin' It
- 14. SanFran Treat
- 15. AF4Q Crooners
- 17. Hurried Metal
- 18. Help Up Hills
- 19. Quality\_\_\_\_\_
- 1. Illuminated Idea
- 2. 1906 Shake
- 3. Star Wars Meets Us
- 4. Care Across\_\_\_\_\_
- 5. 3 Tall Strikes
- 9. Meaningful Use Genesis
- 10. Not A Pearly Gate
- 12. Spanish for Pelican
- 13. Project\_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Our Founders
- 16. For the Love of Nurses

**Align Your Forces with Early Morning Yoga**

Friday, November 9  
6 am - 7 am  
Embarcadero  
Third Floor



The AF4Q National Program Office Staff: "Feelin' Groovy" about San Francisco!

[www.forces4quality.org](http://www.forces4quality.org)

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Find the Bright Spots.



Bright spots are ideas that take flight. AF4Q communities innovate every day, finding new ways of approaching old problems in our health care system.

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**WIFI INSTRUCTIONS**

Connect to: "Parc55\_Conf"  
Username: gwu55  
Password: gwu55

**QUESTIONS?**

[events@forces4quality.org](mailto:events@forces4quality.org)

**MORE STORIES**

[www.forces4quality.org](http://www.forces4quality.org)

**New! Engaging Employers**



AF4Q Alliances in Wisconsin, Memphis, and Albuquerque share their stories of success working with employers to change their communities.

Employers have great leverage in buying health care, but many businesses—intimidated by conditions in the vast, dysfunctional health care marketplace—often remain on the sidelines when it comes to health care quality.

Read this and more at [www.forces4quality.org](http://www.forces4quality.org)

**With Special Thanks to the**



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