

National Fund NEWS

 National Fund
for Workforce Solutions

August 2017

Prudential Foundation Commits to Better Skills Better Jobs 2.0

The Prudential Foundation announced a three-year, \$2 million grant to the National Fund for Workforce Solutions at the 2017 Leadership Convening. Building on its earlier initiative '[Better Skills, Better Jobs](#),' the National Fund will work with companies across the country to improve the competitiveness of their jobs and strengthen the financial wellness of their employees.

In the *Washington Monthly* op-ed "[Filling the 'Skills Gap'](#)", [Lata Reddy](#), head of Corporate Social Responsibility at Prudential Financial and chair and president of The Prudential Foundation, writes about how companies have partnered with nonprofit organizations—like the National Fund for Workforce Solutions—to provide the resources and investment that workers require.

Read How Prudential & the National Fund are "Filling the Skills Gap"

New Business Impact Case Study: Norton Healthcare

Norton Healthcare is a [national leader](#) in developing the skills and careers of its frontline workers. Based in Louisville, KY the five-hospital system invests \$11 million annually in its 14,000 employees. With more than 6,000 frontline workers, Norton operates three distinct programs—the Office of Workforce Development, Norton University, and the Institute of Nursing—to grow and advance entry-level workers.



Norton Healthcare makes these investments because a skilled and engaged workforce is critical to its success. As President and CEO Russell Cox says, *"Our analytics easily make the case for investment. There is clear correlation between our commitment and our employee's loyalty, but financial ROI is only one benefit. The real return is in employee engagement, self-fulfillment, and self-actualization of the people working with patients and families."*

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INTEGRATING WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS WITH BUSINESS IMPACT.

HOW NORTON HEALTHCARE IS MAKING THE CASE FOR ADVANCING ITS FRONTLINE WORKERS' SKILLS AND CAREERS

By Dr. Randall Wilson

Norton Healthcare of Louisville, KY, the region's leading healthcare provider, has been nationally recognized as a standard for delivering and measuring quality care. Driving this leadership is deep investment in the growth and development of their staff—a "culture of continual, lifelong learning"—and commitment to the Metro Louisville's "cradle-to-career" education strategy. Investing over \$11 million a year in staff education and development, their transformational approach to workforce development integrates their strategic priorities with programs based on assessment and forecasts of staffing needs, data analysis, internal and external partnerships, and quantifiable measures of the impact their investments have on their business.

This combined approach to quality care, workforce development, and analytic capacity is no accident: the three are closely related and

Norton stands as a model of sustainable learning and career growth for a healthcare employer's frontline workforce.

mutually supportive. While not unique in this approach, Norton's integration of it represents an organizational best practice and stands as a model of sustainable learning and career growth for a healthcare employer's frontline workforce.

The Norton Healthcare case study is the first in CareerSTAT's business practice series on how healthcare employers measure the impact of their investments on frontline workers. This study documents Norton Healthcare's approach to workforce programs and measurement with a focus on how analysis of their workforce needs influenced decision making and investment goals, and consequently deepened its reliance on data to inform planning and program development.

Presented here to inform healthcare employers, workforce practitioners and others interested in starting, scaling and sustaining frontline workforce programs of their own, the study explores the ways leading healthcare organizations around the country use frontline investments to improve six key business metrics:

- › Workforce Availability
- › Employee Competency and Advancement
- › Employee Engagement
- › Patient Experience
- › Community Impact and Quality
- › Safety

As a Frontline Healthcare Worker Champion recognized for sustained investment in advancing the skills and careers of entry-level workers, Norton appears in the CareerSTAT Guide to Investing in Frontline Healthcare Workers for demonstrating programmatic and organizational best practices.

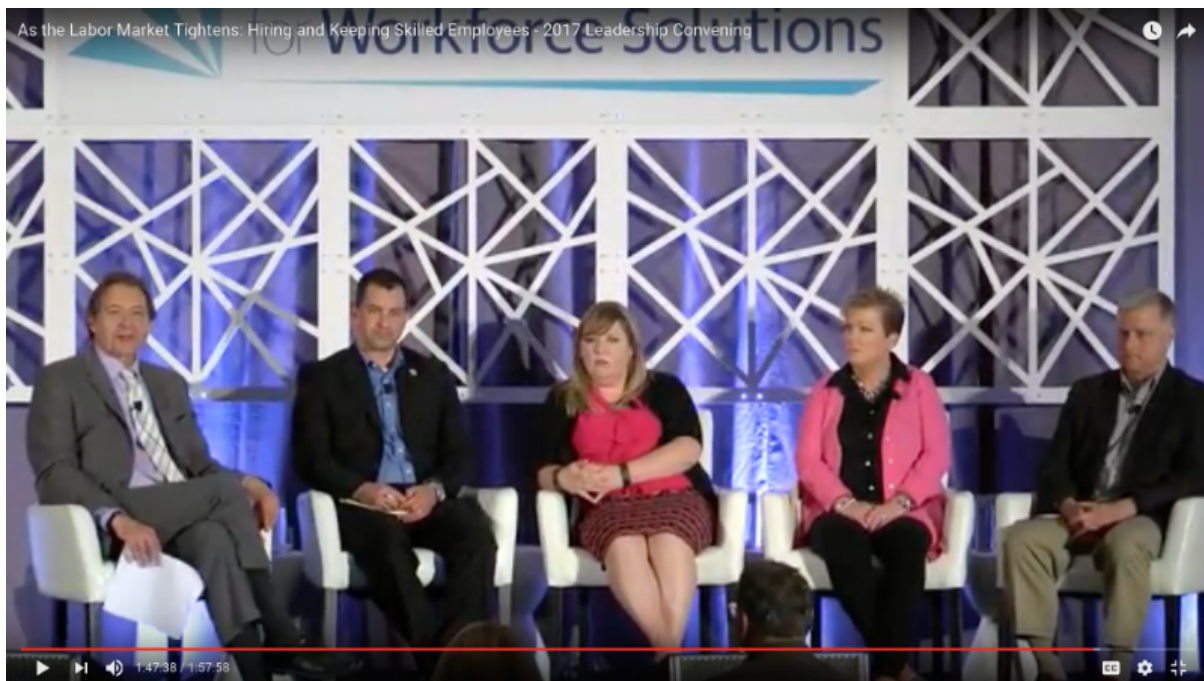
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CareerSTAT case study "[Integrating Workforce Investment with Business Impact: How Norton Healthcare is Making the Case for Advancing its Frontline Workers' Skills and Careers](#)" documents how Norton uses frontline investment to drive business impact. It explores the tools that inform Norton's investments, the programs and partnerships used to develop employees and the ROI measure in engagement, retention and performance generated from these programs.

[Learning and evaluation](#) are at the core of the National Fund's local and national effort to improve America's workforce system. The [Evaluation Series: Using Qualitative and Quantitative Information](#) provides tangible advice and recommendations on how local organizations can collect and use qualitative and quantitative information to improve their work. Items in the series include:

- [Making Data More Useful for the Next Generation of the National Fund](#)
 - Focuses on successful evaluation practices that local organizations can use to strengthen evaluation efforts and use learning to improve program design.
- [How to Use Qualitative Research in a Workforce Collaborative](#)
 - Focuses on the importance of qualitative or ethnographic evaluation in understanding the impact of a program from a worker or employer perspective. These findings provide clarity on the effective and challenging elements of a workforce intervention.

2017 Leadership Convening - What to Know



More than 380 business, workforce development, and philanthropic leaders met in Philadelphia, PA to discuss how communities can *build prosperity together*.

Watch Plenaries from the Leadership Convening

Videos of the five plenaries from the National Fund's 2017 Leadership Convening

are available on our [YouTube channel](#). Watch and join the conversation!

- [West Philadelphia Skills Initiative Building and Prosperity Together](#)
- [What Motivates Executives to Invest in Frontline Workers?](#)
- [Promoting Health and Financial Wellness](#)
- [As the Labor Market Tightens: Hiring and Keeping Skilled Employees](#)
- [Leveraging Economic and Workforce Development Strategies](#)

Access Event Resources

Visit the [Leadership Convening app](#) to access workshop and plenary materials, speaker bios, and social media information.

Join the Conversation ([#NFMeeting](#))

Scores of attendees recorded their conversations and insights from the Leadership Convening. Search [#NFMeeting](#) to continue the conversation and recap key conversations from [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Webinar Series: How to Advance Your Frontline Workforce

Save the following dates for the CareerSTAT Wednesday webinar series on effective workforce development practices.

- **REGISTER NOW:** September 13, 2:00PM EST: [Integrating Workforce Investments with Business Impact: How to Use Data to Drive Decision Making](#)
- October 11, 2:00PM EST: *Pathways and Partnerships: Strategies to Advance Incumbent Workers*
- November 15, 2:00PM EST: *Investing in your Backyard: Strategies to Hire, Retain and Advance Local Community Members*
- December 13, 2:00PM EST: *Making Learning and Advancement Accessible: Work-Based Learning Programs and HR Practices that Support Frontline Workers*

Register for September 13th Webinar

Successes Across the Network

The National Fund's network of 33 partner communities are continually testing and scaling new efforts to help workers, companies and communities succeed. Our partners are strengthening their regions' workforce system, preparing workers for good jobs, and helping companies hire and retain talented employees. Recent stories include:

- [Are Apprenticeships the Answer?](#)
- [West Alabama Works Aligns with Federal Group](#)
- [Filling the Skills Gap with Investments in Workforce Retraining](#)
- [Summer Job Program at Spirit Taps Potential New Talent Pool](#)
- [Nurses Skill Up with Hebrew SeniorLife, JVS Boston](#)
- [Five Illinois Manufacturers Receive National Recognition](#)
- [Employ Milwaukee to lead 12-city workforce development initiative](#)
- [ViewPoint: Let's Bring Tech Into the 21st Century](#)

INTEGRATING WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS WITH BUSINESS IMPACT.
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- > Patient Experience
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- > Safety

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How Norton Healthcare is Making the Case for Advancing Its Frontline Workers

Read

USING EVIDENCE TO DRIVE HIRING AND INVESTMENT:
HOW MERCY HEALTH, WEST MICHIGAN IS MAKING THE CASE FOR INVESTING IN FRONTLINE WORKERS' SKILLS AND CAREERS
By James W. Guest

Mercy Health, a regional health ministry of Trinity Health, is a regional partnership of hospitals and healthcare providers throughout Western Michigan. As one of the largest health systems in the region, Mercy Health is a multi-campus healthcare provider with 700 hospital beds and over 8,600 employees, including 400 physicians and nearly 3,000 frontline workers. The system uses a range of practices to hire and engage employees including evidence-based hiring practices to build a diverse talent pipeline and extensive workforce investments to advance frontline workers. Mercy Health's strategy is centered on the knowledge that excellent patient care requires talented workers with the right skills tailored to their responsibilities. Employee/colleague development and advancement are critical to Mercy Health's business strategy, and it has a long history of investing in its frontline staff.

Mercy Health believes that collaboration best serves the healthcare system and the community, works with employer groups such as Talent 2025 (a group of 100 CEOs from the West Michigan region) and the Health Careers Council (composed of eight to ten regional employers, including three hospitals) to develop sustainable talent sources. Partnering with Grand Rapids Community College, West Michigan Works! workforce agency, and other local healthcare employers, they recently received a \$6 million U.S. Department of Labor America's Promise grant to continue building talent pipelines. Mercy Health has also been recognized by Grand Rapids Mayor

The Mercy Health, West Michigan case study is the second in CareerSTAT's business practice series on how healthcare employers measure the impact of their investments on frontline workers. This study documents Mercy Health's approach to workforce development and program measurement with a focus on how strategic goals, workforce needs, and programmatic tools influence decision making and investment goals.

With the goal of supporting healthcare employers, workforce practitioners and others in starting, scaling and sustaining frontline workforce programs, this study explores the ways leading healthcare organizations around the country use frontline investments to improve six key business metrics:

- > Workforce Availability
- > Employee Competency and Advancement
- > Employee Engagement
- > Community Impact
- > Patient Experience
- > Patient Safety and Quality

Rosalynn Bliss in her Racial Equity Initiative. Mayor Bliss has taken a strong stand for inclusion and workforce equity, and has specifically recognized Mercy Health's achievements in approaching equity across its workforce.

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Mercy Health: Using Evidence to Drive Hiring and Advancement

Read

MAKING DATA MORE USEFUL FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF THE NATIONAL FUND

Prepared by Program and Policy Insights
August, 2017

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation Tools: Using Qualitative and Quantitative Information

The National Fund commissioned this research to respond to priorities identified in the National Fund network's Learning Agenda. In particular, collaboratives were interested in effective strategies to gather data and use those data to understand participant progress and make program improvements.

The purpose of this report is to provide regional collaboratives, industry partnerships, and service providers with insights from research across National Fund sites, focused on three primary questions:

- > 1. **Data collection**—What are the processes and systems used to collect data by National Fund regional collaboratives and industry partnerships—especially those with consistently high(er)-quality data?
- > 2. **Data utilization and learning**—What do we know about how regional collaboratives and industry partnerships analyze and use data to inform program practice and strategy?
- > 3. **Implications**—What are the implications for the data collection, utilization, and learning activities of regional collaboratives and industry partnerships, as well as for future National Fund strategies?

In pursuit of these questions, the research team drew on its collective experience evaluating the National Fund, collaboratives, and partnerships since 2007. The team reviewed and studied past documents, memos, and reports generated over nine years of evaluation activities with the National Fund. The research team also carried out new research steps to understand and analyze current issues, challenges, and opportunities that the collaboratives and partnerships encounter.

The research steps included:

- Review of literature in the field of national data collection practices and lessons for national and multisite workforce development efforts, including the Benchmarking Project¹;
- Review of national Fund site-level reporting practices and data quality;
- Analysis and identification of collaboratives and partnerships generating high-quality data reports;
- Site visits to National Fund collaboratives and partnerships to review on-the-ground practices and lessons from site-level data collection, utilization, and learning; and
- Interviews with national data experts in workforce development, evaluators for collaboratives, and select former and current collaborative leaders.

Findings

The findings indicate the importance of organizational leadership and staff putting in place intentional systems and processes that support quality data collection and meaningful use. Importantly, the findings also suggest that higher data quality is linked to how it is used to inform program design and practice. That is, the more likely that leadership and staff can use data to learn about program practice and improvements, the more likely data users will invest in making sure the data are of high quality. The recommendations are grouped into two main sections:

- > 1. **Findings about the data collection practices among collaboratives and partnerships, and**
- > 2. **Findings about how they utilize their data for learning and decision-making.**

Evaluation Tools: Using Qualitative and Quantitative Information

The National Fund is committed to tracking results, measuring value for its collaborators, leveraging information and evaluations and sharing insights throughout its network. The Evaluation Tools series provides tangible advice and recommendations on how local organizations can collect and use qualitative and quantitative information to improve their work. See <https://nationalfund.org/learning-evaluation/> for more information.

EVALUATION TOOLS: MAKING DATA MORE USEFUL

HOW TO USE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN A WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE

Prepared by Business Government Community Connections
August, 2017

Introduction

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide practical guidance for workforce collaboratives interested in embedding qualitative research into their Learning Community Partnership (LCP). The content in this report is informed by the work of SkillUp Washington, a Seattle-based workforce funder collaborative. The qualitative research conducted by SkillUp has acted as a catalyst for program improvements and funder investments. This work complements, and is intended to be reviewed in tandem with, quantitative approaches. The qualitative research strategies presented in this report are aimed at developing a comprehensive view of how different workforce development programs are working from the vantage point of workforce participants, instructors, navigators, college administrators, employers, and other key partners. Qualitative data provides insight into the work under way, setting the stage for LCP members to collectively analyze their work and resolve challenges.

Create a Rich and Layered Data Trail Step One—Establish a Learning Community

This briefing paper is based on the assumption that the workforce collaborative or partnership has an LCP in place that includes people who plan, manage, implement, and share responsibility for improving or sustaining the program. It also assumes that LCPs: (1) have a strong interest in learning why, when, and how their workforce programs are meeting their goals, contractual requirements, and other shared LCP-determined knowledge and capacity building aims; (2) place a high priority on understanding the qualitative factors accelerating/hindering different outcomes, including enrollment, certificate and credential acquisition, training, job placement and retention rates, and employer engagement; and (3) are interested in integrating and utilizing qualitative and quantitative data to learn about the work under way in order to make timely program improvements.

Evaluation Tools: Using Qualitative and Quantitative Information

The National Fund is committed to tracking results, measuring value for its stakeholders, leveraging information and evaluations and sharing insights throughout its network. In order to understand and amplify its impact, it works to improve the evaluation and learning capacity of its partner communities. The Evaluation Tools series provides tangible advice and recommendations on how local organizations including regional funder collaboratives and industry partnerships, can collect and utilize qualitative and quantitative information to improve their work. See <https://nationalfund.org/learning-evaluation/> for more information.

Step Two—Plan, Implement, and Analyze Qualitative Data

Actions (a) through (e) below are presented as suggestions for learning communities or LCPs to pursue in order to plan, gather, and use qualitative information.

(a) Identify Research Questions

In order to ensure that the qualitative research questions reflect the priorities of the LCP, it is important to:

- > Identify key qualitative questions that the LCP members want to be able to answer "along the way" to tell why the project is or is not progressing as planned toward achieving contractual outcomes. (Refer to Appendix A.)

¹The author encourages workforce practitioners to establish a learning community or LCP in order to discuss and use the findings from the evaluation to improve the effectiveness of the program and its services. It is important to gather multiple stakeholder perspectives from qualitative evaluation and to discuss the findings as a group in order to benefit from the shared dialogue and prioritize response, benchmarking actions.

EVALUATION TOOLS: HOW TO USE QUALITATIVE INFORMATION

Making Data More Useful for the Next Generation of the National Fund

Read

How to Use Qualitative Research in a Workforce Collaborative

Read



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