

Meet Our VNSNY Impact Challenge Finalists

Here are the eight proposals that advanced to the final round of the VNSNY Impact Challenge, along with the staff members who developed them:

Delivering Medical Nutrition Therapy to Bedbound New Yorkers

Valarie Brockington, Clinical Field Manager, Home Care Manhattan Branch 3

Tameka McCabe, Clinical Intake Manager

Project: Address the poor nutrition that commonly occurs among New York City's vulnerable bedbound residents by offering a Medical Nutrition Therapy program to this population. The program would be implemented during VNSNY Home Care episodes of care, and would combine the in-home guidance of a clinical nutritionist with ongoing care from home health aides who have been trained to deliver nutritional support to clients, based on the nutritionist's plan of care.

Implementing a Care Management Program to Support Low-Income Bronx Residents with Diabetes

Veronica Sirju, Care Manager, Community Mental Health Services

Project: Create an intensive care management program to address the health disparities experienced by low-income Bronx residents with diabetes. The project would employ two nurse managers who would visit program participants weekly at first and then biweekly. The nurse managers would ensure that participants have access to regular blood glucose testing, are eating a healthy diet, and have an available and affordable supply of needed medications. The program would also include monthly education groups and ongoing monitoring of participants' A1C levels.

Connecting Low-Income Seniors with Outpatient Mental Health Treatment

Susan Clayton Meyer, Project Manager, Bronx Geriatric Programs, Community Mental Health Services

Evelyn Pozo, Mental Health Specialist II, Community Mental Health Services

Project: Increase access to outpatient mental health treatment for low-income older adults by expanding and enhancing CMHS's Geriatric Mental Health Initiative in the Bronx, while also subsidizing participants' co-pays for treatment sessions and assisting with transportation costs to and from mental health treatment.

Using Community Outreach to Help New Yorkers Access VNSNY Health Services and CHOICE Products

Michelle Drayton, Director, Hospice and Palliative Outreach

Melissa Henry, Community Relations Manager, Government Affairs

Veronica Torres, Community Relations Coordinator, Government Affairs

Project: Expand on the community-outreach approach used by VNSNY Hospice's Project HOPE by creating the VNSNY Wellness Exchange—a partnership between Project HOPE and Community Collaborations that will use similar outreach methods to enhance awareness, engagement and access to VNSNY hospice, acute care and mental health services and VNSNY CHOICE products among Harlem, the Bronx and Central Brooklyn's Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

Expanding VNSNY's Nurse Residency to Serve Health Care Needs in the Bronx

Faye Ghim, Associate Director, Financial Planning and Analysis

Lawrence Gomes, Student Intern, Financial Planning and Analysis

Abel Guan, Senior Financial Analyst, Financial Planning and Analysis

Larry Lepelstat, Associate Vice President, Finance & Business Operations

Zachary Saliterman, Financial Analyst, Financial Planning and Analysis

Project: Address the lack of access to regular primary care services among vulnerable Bronx residents by expanding VNSNY's nurse residency program through the addition of 20 more recently graduated nurses over a two-year period. The additional nurse residents would focus on serving the health care needs of Bronx residents, and would be trained by six VNSNY nurse preceptors through funding by a grant from the Citywide Nurse Residency Program.

Developing a Larger, Sustainable HHA Health Coaching Program to Fill in Gaps in Care

Danielle Dwyer, Workstudy Office Student, Recruitment & Staffing

Dian Marandola, College Relations Manager, Recruitment & Staffing

James Rolla, Senior Vice President, Partners in Care

Mia Oberlink, Senior Research Associate, VNSNY Center for Home Care Policy & Research

Rhonda Soberman, Manager, Program Development, Residential Channel

Project: Fill in gaps in healthcare support among vulnerable New Yorkers by expanding the current program that trains Partners in Care home health aides to serve as health coaches. This would be done by partnering with two CUNY community colleges to develop a sustainable health coaching program with its own funding stream. This program would allow VNSNY to provide health coaching internally to CHOICE members and other consumers, as well as to customers outside VNSNY. At the same time, it would provide expanded job opportunities for VNSNY's direct care workforce.

Establishing Patient Navigators to Help Patients and Plan Members Overcome Barriers to Care

Sandra Rigby, Home Care Consultant, Regional Intake, Business Development

Project: Create a “patient navigator” position to provide additional logistical support for VNSNY Home Care patients, VNSNY CHOICE members and other VNSNY consumers facing language or other barriers to care—including Spanish-speaking and elderly patients, and especially those suffering from heart failure. Among other roles, these navigators would facilitate communication between patients and medical providers, promote medication reconciliation, and ensure that medical appointments are made and kept.

Supporting Family Caregivers of Patients with Dementia

Julia Burgdorf, Research Scientist, VNSNY Center for Home Care Policy & Research

David Russell, Research Scientist, VNSNY Center for Home Care Policy & Research

Project: Study the needs of family caregivers assisting relatives with dementia, with a particular focus on socioeconomic barriers limiting access to supportive services. The research would take place during home care episodes. Investigators will then use these findings to develop an information-sharing tool that allows caregivers to better communicate their support needs to VNSNY clinicians.