

## **Press Release: Virginia Center for Health Innovation Convenes Healthcare Leaders to Discuss Future of Primary Care in Virginia**

*Richmond, Virginia, October 8, 2025* – Today, the Virginia Center for Health Innovation (VCHI) convened 100+ key healthcare leaders from across the Commonwealth for its first ever [Primary Care Summit](#). Participants met to learn about the current state of primary care in Virginia, gain deeper insights into patient and community experiences; and identify and expand opportunities to advance innovative payment reforms and strengthen the primary care workforce at a time when concerns about access to and affordability of primary care are accelerating across our state and nation (learn more via Virginia's Primary Care Scorecard and Primary Care Investment Report). The event concluded with a forward-looking conversation on emerging state legislative priorities and building a unified voice to sustain primary care in Virginia.

As part of the event, VCHI recognized exceptional contributions to primary care with the following awards:

- *Innovator of the Year* - Suzanne Brixey, MD, Fortify Childrens' Health
- *Catalysts of the Year* – Robert Krebbs (Sentara Health Plan) & Alyssa Ward (Elevance Health)
- *Workforce Champions* – Stephen P. Combs (Ballad Health), MD, Lisa A. Uherick, MD (Carilion Clinic) and Andrey B. Risser, MD (Bon Secours Mercy Health)
- *Advocacy Champions* – Senator Barbara A. Favola, Senator Todd E. Pillion, Delegate Mark D. Sickles, and Delegate M. Keith Hodges
- *Virginia Task Force on Primary Care Founding Co-Chair* – Jeff Ricketts (2020-2025)

VCHI extends its gratitude to Aetna, Aledade, Anthem, Bon Secours Mercy Health, Humana, and Patient First for sponsoring the Summit.

The Primary Care Summit builds on the work of the [Virginia Task Force on Primary Care](#). Launched by VCHI in 2020 with initial financial support from Arnold Ventures and then ongoing financial support from the Virginia General Assembly, the Task Force was created during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure the sustainability of essential primary care services. The Task Force's mission centers on stakeholder coalition building and the identification of the necessary payment models, infrastructure, and quality metrics for advancing high value primary care.

Looking ahead, the Task Force has outlined key [recommendations](#) for Fiscal Year 2026 to strengthen and sustain primary care. Priorities include advancing and evaluating pilot programs that drive primary care innovation, improve clinician retention, and build a

comprehensive Roadmap for Integrating Care with guidance on same-day billing, care models, workflows, training, and workforce development. Additional recommendations call for strengthening research through VCHI's new Primary Care Research Consortium, expanding health plan data submission to better include infrastructure and value-based payment measures, continuing the publication of annual reports that track progress, and pursuing Medicaid payment parity with Medicare to ensure greater equity and sustainability for primary care providers. Together, these initiatives are designed to build a more evidence-based, patient-centered system that improves access, quality, and sustainability of primary care for all Virginians.

### **About the Virginia Center for Health Innovation**

Incorporated in January 2012 following a recommendation from Gov. Robert McDonnell's Virginia Health Reform Initiative, the Virginia Center for Health Innovation (VCHI) seeks to facilitate innovation by convening key stakeholders and securing the resources to accelerate value-driven models of wellness and health care throughout Virginia. VCHI's work is focused on achieving three aims: reducing low-value health care, increasing high-value health care, and ensuring Virginia has the infrastructure in place to measure and reward value in health care.

For more information visit: [www.vahealthinnovation.org](http://www.vahealthinnovation.org) and follow on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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