



UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE  
FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



# Letter from the President

Dear Friends of the Foundation,

In both policy and practice, the climate of the last few years has been stormy. The pathway to a more sustainable future for all state residents must include access to the basic building blocks of good health and quality, affordable health care.

We believe everyone should be able to reach and maintain a state of health that allows them to achieve their fullest potential in life.

We believe government has a duty to protect its constituents from the egregious business practices of the major industries that rule the health care system.

We believe every single person in Connecticut (and the country too) should have equitable access to affordable and high-quality care.

And that is what we continue to work toward. Some years we make big leaps forward, some years we lose ground or stay in place. But we keep focused on the mission. And together we will all prevail.

Last year was a year of strong and effective advocacy. Important bills were enacted to create greater



transparency on rising drug prices, protecting consumers from harm in disputes between insurers and hospitals, and allowing pharmacists to inform customers when their prescriptions actually cost less than their co-pay. And we protected poor, elderly and disabled people from budget cuts.

The public spoke loudly and clearly about the extent of their worries concerning high premium and out-of-pocket costs, especially drug costs. Through a household survey conducted in Connecticut, we learned how worried Connecticut residents are about affording health care. We also learned how strongly they expect government to take effective action.

The public spoke through the mid-term elections too. Our I Vote 4 Health Care campaign raised awareness, created and strengthened bonds between organizations to advocate collaboratively and build stronger accountability of our elected officials.

The storms we endured together last year strengthened our collective roots and our resolve. On behalf of the Board and staff, thank you for your partnership and solidarity. We look forward to fully realizing the mission with you.



**Frances G. Padilla, President**

Universal Health Care  
Foundation of Connecticut



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# Voting: the Foundation of a Strong Democracy

Voting is a form of power. Yet not everyone uses this power. Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut (UHCF) worked to change this during the 2018 elections.

The IVote4HealthCare (IV4HC) campaign, a Foundation initiative in collaboration with Protect Our Care CT, was a nonpartisan voter registration, education, and engagement effort. As part of this campaign, the Foundation worked closely with three Connecticut community foundations and other foundations across the state

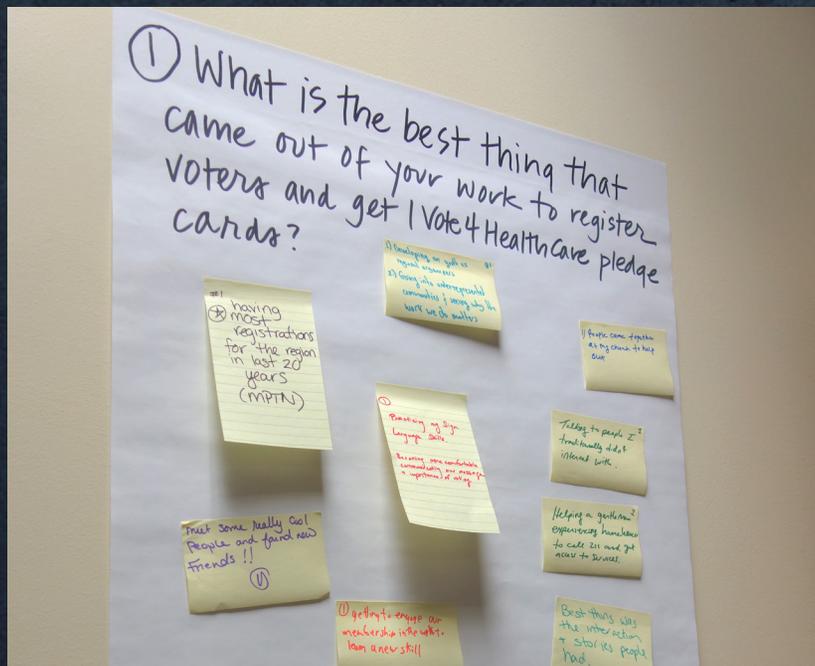
who funded similar initiatives or used their communications capacity to encourage community residents to register and vote.

“The IV4HC campaign worked to build the power of the people who are not normally at the health care decision making table,” says Rose Ferraro, policy officer at Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut.

Through small grants, the Foundation partnered with 12 organizations across the state to engage them in nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts. Grantees worked in diverse communities with people of different ages, socio-economic status, faiths, and racial and ethnic identities.

“The Hartford Alumnae Chapter’s goals around Political Awareness and Involvement are to promote continued leadership, create awareness of issues and policies that affect the community and increase voter engagement. Additionally, we have a focus on Physical and Mental Health, making a partnership with UHCF on health care voters just made sense,” says Tekisha Dwan Everette, PhD, President, Hartford Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. “Our chapter understands that low voter turnout rates highlight a need to continue to identify ways to ensure all citizens exercise their voting power. We answered the call in ensuring that communities are registered to vote, educated on the candidates running for office and most importantly turning out the vote on Election Day.”

Working with grantee partners that are integrated into and visibly active in their community was important when building a ground swell around the elections.



“The energy grantee partners brought to the IV4HC campaign was inspiring,” says Rose. “We heard so many stories of individuals that engaged in the democratic process because of the amazing work done by the grantees. One story that has stuck with me was how a campaign volunteer helped a deaf member of the community register to vote using American Sign Language.”

Using technology to reach a larger number of voters was a huge part of the success of the IV4HC campaign. Thanks to the generosity of the Hispanic Federation, the Foundation and grantee partners had access to a texting platform called Hustle. Statewide, over 100 staff and volunteers of nonprofit organizations dedicated countless hours to texting people to remind them to vote on November 6th. Over 320,000 Latinos and other people of color, new voters, low- to middle-income households, women, and single mothers were encouraged to show up at the polls.

“Civic engagement is a powerful tool,” says Ingrid Alvarez, New England Regional Director of Hispanic Federation. “Mobilizing communities to vote matters across all issue areas.”

Through the IV4HC campaign, 937 people were registered to vote and 2,545 people made a pledge to consider candidate’s positions on health care policy

when going to the polls.

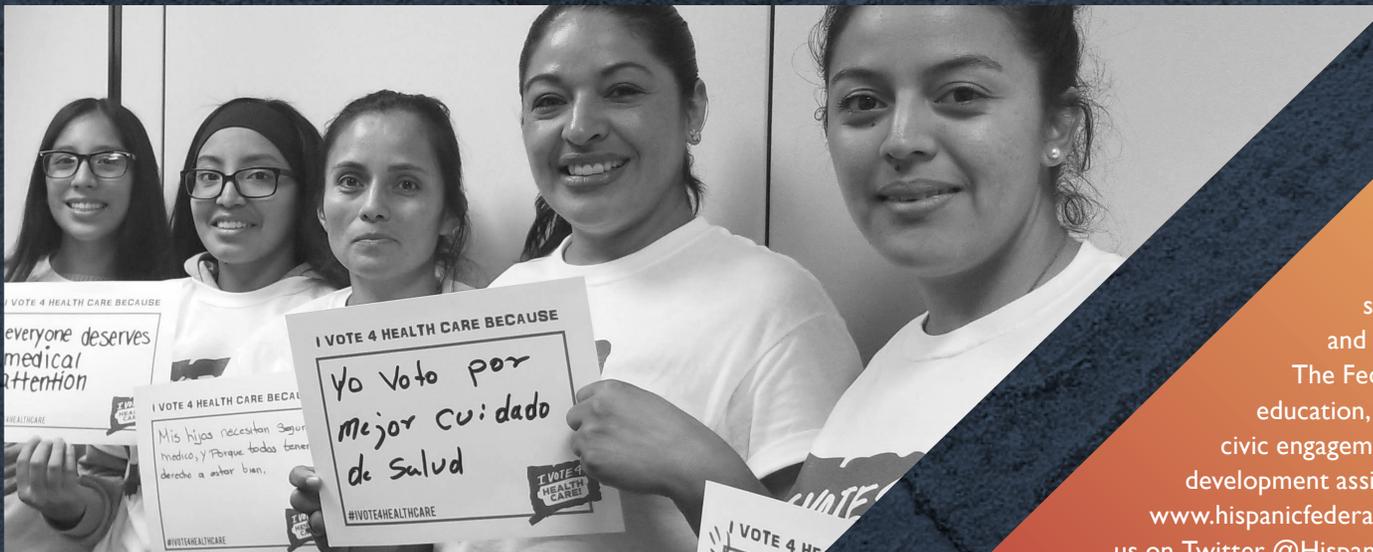
The work of the IV4HC campaign helped contribute to the highest voter turnout rates for midterm elections in decades. Additionally, Connecticut saw the highest level of voter registration, with over 300,000 new voters since the 2016 elections, a large percentage of which were minorities and young people.

One grantee partner, Eastern Connecticut Area Health Education Center, led by Michele Scott of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, registered the most members of the nation in 20 years.

“At the end of the day, it wasn’t just about the numbers,” says Rose, “it’s about the relationships and connections made throughout the campaign.”

“Moving forward, we hope that this groundbreaking partnership will serve as a model for how the philanthropic community can engage and mobilize historically underrepresented communities to more fully participate in our nation’s democracy,” says Ingrid.

The Foundation hopes to continue to build on the momentum of the IV4HC campaign leading up to the 2020 elections.



## About Hispanic Federation

The mission of the Hispanic Federation is to empower and advance the Hispanic community. The Federation works closely with Latino health and human services agencies to promote the social, political, and economic well-being of the Latino community. The Federation’s seven strategic action areas include education, health, economic empowerment, immigration, civic engagement, the environment, and organizational development assistance. For more information, please visit [www.hispanicfederation.org](http://www.hispanicfederation.org) and join the conversation by following us on Twitter @HispanicFed.

# Building a Foundation for Good Policy



**T**he diagnosis of a chronic disease can be debilitating --physically, emotionally, and financially. No one plans to be diagnosed with a chronic disease, especially at a young age. Unfortunately, that is what happened to the Pflug Family.

“It started when my wife’s vision became blurry,” says Dan Pflug of Easton, “An MRI revealed she has Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a disease that causes the immune system to attack itself.”

This was devastating news for the newlyweds. Rather than spending time creating a home and life together, they were spending time finding the best doctors and treatment for MS.

In the 7 years since the diagnosis, the Pflugs have visited countless doctors’ offices, tried several treatments, and collected numerous medical bills.

The family has paid over \$125,000 in medical bills. And this is in addition to the \$22,000 a year premium the family of four pays. The Pflugs are one of thousands of families in Connecticut grappling with the high cost of health care.

“We are paying top dollar for care and not getting coverage when we need it,” Dan. “The emotional and financial impact is tremendous.”

To better understand how prevalent this is in the state, Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut partnered with Altarum’s Healthcare Value Hub to collect data about how people feel about health care affordability and cost in Connecticut.

“National level polls have highlighted people’s concerns about affording health care,” says Lynn Quincy, Director, Healthcare Value Hub, “We were interested in bring this information to the state level. There was a void of data at the state level, especially around affordability.”

In early 2018, the Altarum Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey was completed by over 900 adults in Connecticut. The survey inquired about people’s concerns about affording health coverage, losing care, and the ability to get the care they need.

Of the people surveyed, 50% experienced health care affordability burdens in the past year, even more are worried about affording health care in the future, and, across party lines, most express strong support for policymakers to address these problems.



# 50%

of Connecticut adults experienced a problem with health care affordability in the past year.

# 88%

of people who take prescriptions regularly worry they won't be able to afford their medications.

# 20%

reported they were so worried about drug prices, they did one or more of the following:

- Not fill a prescription
- Cut pills in half
- Skip a prescribed dose

“The results of the survey helped show how important the issue of high health care costs is to people in the state,” says Jill Zorn, senior policy officer at the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut. “We now have concrete information about how important this issue is for people and can use it to promote policies that address health care affordability concerns.”

Armed with the data from the poll, the Foundation was able to successfully advocate for a prescription drug transparency bill during the 2018 Connecticut Legislative Session.

“I am most impressed with Connecticut’s use of the data to make changes at the state level,” says Lynn. “New data is helpful to compel legislative discussion. Legislatures want to feel that they are being responsive to constituents.”

“Connecticut is one of the first states to pass a bill that takes aim at the rising cost of prescription drugs,” says Jill.

“The bill passed unanimously which shows how important this issue is.”

The Foundation continues to use the results of the survey to inform health care policies that push for quality, affordable, and equitable care for all people in Connecticut.

### About Altarum’s Healthcare Value Hub

With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Healthcare Value Hub provides free, timely information about the policies and practices that address high healthcare costs and poor quality, bringing better value to consumers. Hub staff are dedicated to monitoring, translating and disseminating evidence, as well as connecting advocates, researchers and policymakers together to further conversations and action around the cost and value of healthcare. The Hub is part of Altarum, a non-profit organization with the mission of creating a better, more sustainable future for all Americans by applying research based and field-tested solutions that transform our systems of health and health care.

### CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS AGREE ACROSS PARTY LINES

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Neither
The US health care system needs to change	80%	73%	81%	85%

### GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE ACTION

Show what a fair price would be for specific procedures	95%	93%	96%	96%
Authorize the Attorney General to take legal action to prevent price gouging or unfair prescription drug price hikes	94%	92%	94%	96%
Make it easy to switch insurers if a health plan drops your doctor	94%	94%	94%	95%
Require drug companies to provide advanced notice of price increases and information to justify those increases?	93%	88%	95%	95%
Set standard payment to hospitals for specific procedures	89%	82%	92%	91%
Set standard prices for drugs to make them affordable	89%	85%	92%	92%

% refers to those who agree or strongly agree

Source: 2018 Poll of Connecticut Adults, Ages 18+, Altarum Healthcare Value Hub's Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey



# Strong Partnerships Lay a Foundation for Change

**U**niversal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut launched Protect Our Care CT (POCCT) in February 2017. We convened organizations and activists who agreed to band together against threats to the gains made by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), women's health programs, Medicaid, and Medicare.

POCCT is committed to building a diverse network of organizations and individuals to make the health care system work for everyone. Its work has focused on policy advocacy, grassroots education and engagement, and holding policymakers accountable.

POCCT shifted its focus in 2018 from defense against attacks on federal policy to state-based

efforts that protect the health and care of Connecticut residents, regardless of what happens in Washington, DC.

Advocates, activists, and voters showed up and spoke up for quality health care for everyone, at a price we can afford. POCCT organized two Health Care Action Days at the Capitol and worked with key partners to coordinate advocacy efforts. This activism contributed to victories that secured within state law insurance benefit protections guaranteed by the ACA. POCCT activists also rallied in solidarity to protect access to health care for low-income, elderly and disabled state residents.

POCCT partner organizations also worked with us



to mount a nonpartisan I Vote 4 Health Care campaign. The campaign worked to register new voters, educate new and existing voters about what candidates were saying about health care, and get people to vote on November 6. POCCT was able to help engage thousands of voters who care about health care and triple the number of individuals on its contact list.

By the end of 2018, POCCT had expanded its network to include over forty supporting partner organizations and 1,800 individuals.

## Reflections from POCCT partners

*“Protect our Care has been an important partner to Christian Community Action’s grassroots HEALTH (Helping Everyone Achieve Life-long Trusted Healthcare) group. POCCT provided a trainer for one of our healthcare advocacy trainings in January 2018. Our membership was kept informed about upcoming legislation during the 2018 CGA and through their influence were able to help up set up meetings with legislators.”*

– Merry Eaton, Mothers and Others for Justice

*“Protect Our Care CT has allowed the Center for Medicare Advocacy to keep in touch with other advocates at the state level, to have a better grasp of state level issues of import, and to better share information where those issues have overlapped with our own. The efforts of Protect Our Care CT have been invaluable in the fight to defend access to health care, including defense of the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, and the Medicare Savings Programs. We applaud the work that POCCT has been able to do with minimal resources and staff and hope to continue to work with them in the future.”*

– Matthew Shepard, Communications Director, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.

*“Protect Our Care CT has allowed various health care organizations and people in the community to come together to learn about each other’s goals to improve our health care system, as well as provide opportunities for members of the Coalition to amplify each other’s voices on these issues.”*

- Deb Polun, Senior Director for Policy & Outreach, Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHCACT)

*“Protect Our Care and the I Vote 4 Healthcare Campaign gave us all the materials and training we needed to set up voter registration tables at the Medical and Nursing School in North Haven. Young busy students are notoriously hard to mobilize, but we were able to register a number of students and faculty in addition to posting information and reminders so participating in the midterm elections was easy and exciting!”*

– Leia Fecteau, Quinnipiac Medical School student

*“I have been a member of the Interfaith Fellowship for Universal Healthcare for more than 10 years because I believe that by working together, united in faith, we stand with those in our community who are voiceless and powerless. We must be the moral voice of health care for all in our community.”*

– Reverend Tracy Johnson Russell, Rector, St. Monica’s Episcopal Church, Hartford

*“I’ve been in the struggle since before Obamacare. We’ve gotten a lot. But we still need universal health care for everyone.”*

– Imam Kashif Abdul-Karim, Resident Imam, Muhammad Islamic Center of Greater Hartford



# Policy Victories

With 2018 characterized by gridlock in Washington DC, it was more important than ever to make progress on protecting and improving access to quality, affordable, equitable health care in Connecticut. 2018 was a year of achieving important legislative victories in the Connecticut General Assembly and of laying the foundation for bold change in the future.

## **Protecting Quality Health Care Coverage, PA 18-10**

A major focus of our 2018 advocacy was to lock in gains made under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to protect Connecticut residents from the sabotage efforts underway in Washington. This bill makes sure that the benefits that the ACA requires all health insurance to cover will be available to Connecticut residents, even if these requirements are eroded at the federal level. The ten Essential Health Benefits protected include: hospitalization, pediatric care, prescription drugs, maternity care, preventive & wellness services, emergency services, rehabilitative services, mental & behavioral health services, laboratory services, and ambulatory patient services. The bill also protects a few more things required by the ACA: preventive services, such as a physical or prescription contraceptives, will continue to be offered at no cost to the patient; and insurance companies cannot cap the amount they will spend on a patient in a year or over a lifetime.

## **Taking on Rising Prescription Drug Costs, PA 18-41**

This bill is an important first step in dealing with one of the key drivers of rising health care costs – prescription drugs. It focuses on shining a light on the activities of all three major corporate players: drug companies, pharmacy benefit managers, and insurance companies. It requires all them to provide pricing, revenue, and cost data to state government. Armed with this information, the state can identify actions that can be taken to curb costs and protect patients. It is the start of an effort to hold all three industries accountable for their role in unaffordable prescription drug prices.

## **Restoring Cuts to Parents on Medicaid/HUSKY and the Medicare Savings Program**

In the final hours of the legislative session, the Connecticut General Assembly approved a bipartisan budget deal that reversed harmful cuts to the Medicaid program. It restored eligibility for 13,000 caregivers and parents (90% of whom work) to allow them to continue to be covered by the HUSKY A program. The budget changes also allowed 113,000 elderly individuals and people with disabilities to once again receive extra help from the Medicare Savings Program to pay for much-needed care not covered by Medicare. The Foundation worked shoulder to shoulder with the Medicaid advocates that led the charge to make this victory possible.

## **Protecting Consumers During Insurer/Hospital Contract Disputes, PA 18-115**

Too often consumers have been caught in the middle when insurance companies and huge hospital systems can't agree on payment rates during contract negotiations. This bill makes sure that policyholders will be protected for 60 days if their insurance company and local hospital system can't settle a contract dispute before the contract expires. With hospital systems consolidating, patients have fewer options to turn to if their regular provider is suddenly out of network with their insurer. It guarantees people will be able to get the care they need while negotiations continue.

## Celebrating the First Year of the Office of Health Strategy

2018 marked the opening of the Office of Health Strategy (OHS). OHS brings many key health reform and improvement functions under one roof. The mission of OHS is to “promote equal access to high quality health care, control costs and ensure better health for the people of Connecticut.” OHS is organized to allow input from key stakeholders through its oversight of both the Health Care Cabinet and Consumer Advisory Board. It is becoming the hub for the collection and analysis of key health care data. The hope is that now that OHS is operational, state government will have the information and tools it needs to make decisions that lead to quality, affordable health care and better health for all residents.



# 2018 METRICS

16

Number of bills testified on

937

Voter registrations

\$85,594

Grant dollars awarded in 2018

\$15,836,716

Grant dollars since inception

39

Number of POCCT partner organizations

1,750

Number of POCCT individuals

2,545

IV4HC pledges

57,900

Total people urged to go out and vote

## GRANTEE PARTNERS

Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition at LifeBridge Community Services

CT Early Childhood Alliance/Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)

CT Students For a Dream/United We Dream Network

Council on American-Islamic Relations CT Chapter (CAIR)

Cross Street Academic & Training Center

Eastern Area Health Education Center (AHEC)

Hartford Alumnae of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority/Delta Research Foundation

Health Equity Solutions

Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut

Long Hill Bible Church

National Council of Negro Women – New London

Torrington Child Care

Connecticut Health Investigative Team (C-HIT)

Connecticut Mirror – Connecticut News Project

Office of Health Strategy

# Summary of Finances

As of December 31, 2018

As of December 31, 2017

## STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets	21,922,971.00	24,441,249.00
Liabilities & Net Assets	128,804.00	127,469.00
Unrestricted Net Assets	21,794,167.00	24,313,780.00
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	-	-
Total Net Assets	21,794,167.00	24,313,780.00
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	21,922,971.00	24,441,249.00
<b>Total Operating Revenue &amp; Support</b>	<b>1,580,936.00</b>	<b>1,472,075.00</b>
Operating Expenses	1,505,266.00	1,360,192.00
Grants Paid	85,594.00	57,500.00
Results of Operations	75,670.00	111,883.00
Change in Net Assets	(2,519,613.00)	2,504,813.00
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	24,313,780.00	21,808,967.00
Net Assets, End of Year	21,794,167.00	24,313,780.00

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Connecticut Health Foundation

Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

The Sassafras Foundation, Inc.

Perrin Family Foundation

## IN-KIND

Blu-Prints Unlimited

Altarum Healthcare Value Hub

Hispanic Federation

# About Us

## CHART

The Connecticut Health Advancement and Research Trust (CHART) is the parent organization of Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut (UHCF). It is a 501(c)3 research, development, and education organization that hosts forums on various issues related to health care policy in Connecticut.

## UHCF

The Foundation supports CHART's mission by making grants, developing public policy, and supporting research to further the vision of quality, affordable health care for all Connecticut residents.

### Contact information

290 Pratt St, Meriden, CT 06450

203-639-0550 | [Universalhealthct.org](http://Universalhealthct.org)

 [Facebook.com/UniversalHealthCareFoundationofConnecticut](https://www.facebook.com/UniversalHealthCareFoundationofConnecticut)

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