

POPULATION HEALTH FORUMS

The Longevity of Population Health

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"Population health will absolutely need to have longevity...population health is a business imperative and longevity is one of the best outcomes," explained Dr. Susan Freeman as she began her Forum presentation. Dr. Freeman is the founding CEO and President of [Temple Center for Population Health, LLC](#). She is also the Chief Medical Officer, Temple University Health System, Vice Dean of Health Care Systems and Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University.

Dr. Freeman explored how the definition of population health is really very complex and, in her expanded view, longevity is a key component. The conceptual framework that she shared involves tackling large-scale social, economic, and environmental issues in a way that changes outcomes. Within this framework, it is important to examine why some populations are healthier than others while at the same time including policy development, academic agenda and resource allocation in the equation.

Dr. Freeman organized her talk into different themes and started out by sharing a framework of **population health as a clinical and business model** – a model she states

is vital for population health to survive. Reimbursement promoting new healthcare delivery models and social programs that reward health outcomes rather than the volume of services are the cornerstone of this model. She emphasized that the Triple Aim is inextricably linked to value.

Dr. Freeman spent some time talking about the **longevity of value**. The impact of ACA has been critical in bringing to life the shift from volume to value. The components of ACA (such as shared savings, value-based purchasing, readmissions reduction programs, ACOs, health insurance exchanges and Medicaid expansion) have been important to the longevity. Freeman explained that ACA created new pathways for connecting people to coverage and she described the impressive numbers of enrollees for Medicare, Medicaid, [SCHIP](#) and the [Basic Health Program](#). She emphasized the importance of the role of CMS and the [CMS Innovation Center](#), particularly as it relates to the success of ACA.

Despite the successes of ACA, Freeman doesn't feel that the Triple Aim has been fully achieved. Issues of disease burden, socioeconomic factors and social determinants of health, legacy systems, and interoperability are major challenges. She went on to describe data related to disease burden in Philadelphia, which includes high percentages of obesity, smoking, sexually transmitted infections, opioid related mortalities, and persons living below the poverty level.

Dr. Freeman then provided an overview of Temple Health and [Temple Center for Population Health](#) (TCPH). The goal of TCPH is to attain a sustainable, coordinated model of health care delivery through clinical and business integration, community engagement, and a balance of medical and nonmedical interventions to promote high value care and healthy populations. The immediate focus has been on low-acuity admissions, high utilizers, post-acute care, ambulatory sensitive conditions, predictive analytics, and balancing the revenue cycle against the value proposition. As part of the overall structure, there is a strong emphasis on primary care, investment in infrastructure, value-based contracts, care transitions, and care reaching into the community using community health workers.

Dr. Freeman summarized her talk by discussing **longevity, high-value healthcare, and the future**. She does believe that the insurance market is likely to change and that Medicare may shift to all "Advantage" and Medicaid may shift to block grants and more control at the state level. She outlined various initiatives and themes which may play a big role in the longevity of population health such as consumerism, collaboration, academic mission, [Healthy People 2030](#), [Public Health 3.0](#) and ongoing efforts to improve access and quality to decrease disparities. Particularly important to the future is the [21st Century Cures Act](#), which provides funding to various research and healthcare initiatives including the [Cancer Moonshot](#).

