



# SPOTLIGHT PARTNER: AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AND TRINITY HEALTH OF NEW ENGLAND

## Million Hearts® in Action

[ Strategies for Achieving Million Hearts® Goals ]



Welcome to the Million Hearts® Spotlight!

There are more than 212 partners in the Million Hearts initiative working together to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes through aligned evidence-based strategies, shared goals and the collective action of these diverse partners.

Health care practices and systems have long been on the front lines of caring for millions of patients with high blood pressure and implementing innovative hypertension management strategies. From new training methodologies to interdisciplinary teams of physicians, nurses, pharmacists and patient navigators to home blood pressure monitoring protocols, various strategies are being implemented to achieve successful BP control rates above 80 percent.

### [ Prioritizing and Partnering ]

Trinity Health of New England, located in Western Massachusetts, serves a cross section of urban and suburban communities with primary and multi-specialty care in thirteen offices. In the fall of 2018, Dr Daniel Weiswasser, Director of Quality and Clinical Information, began working with the American Medical Association's (AMA) Practice Facilitation team to implement quality improvement strategies for blood pressure control. At that time approximately 20,000 patients in their offices were diagnosed hypertensive and they began with a control rate below 72 percent. An active partnering the Million Hearts® Collaboration, AMA Senior Program Manager Linda Murakami, RN, BSN, MSHA led one of the first training sessions with the interdisciplinary team that Trinity Health created. "I could tell right away they were motivated, creative and serious about success," Linda described.



## [ The First Step and a Key Tip ]

MAP stands for Measure accurately, Act rapidly, and Partner with patients, families and communities. Dr. Weiswasser attributes much of Trinity's rapid success to actively engaging a broad, interdisciplinary team and spending time planning, training and then more planning and re-training. Their team included administrative leadership, a physician, a nurse, IT staff and a person from their facilities team. Yes, you read that correctly. Facilities staff. And Dr. Weiswasser's advice to other systems: involve your facilities staff at the very beginning. "If I could do one thing differently, it would have been to involve facilities sooner."

This first step in MAP focuses on having all practice team members following a series of evidence-based protocols. These protocols involve preparing the patient, measuring blood pressure accurately (documenting and averaging the readings), and giving the readings to the patient both verbally and in writing.

During the planning and assessment phase, the Trinity team learned that trust of the readings was a concern for the providers. To address this concern, they spent time calibrating sphygmomanometers, purchased an adequate amount of automated blood pressure devices and provided detailed training sessions conducted by AMA and Linda Murakumi's team.

It became clear, as some offices moved through this first step, that their exam room setup was not conducive to the proper measurement techniques. Including facilities staff in the planning team is invaluable as each office and room is unique; by working together with facilities staff the team was able to position the BP cuff near a chair and provide to support the patient's arm, while allowing for a visual of the proper measurement poster.

## [ Measuring and Acting Rapidly ]

Trinity's improvement strategy included a significant investment in automated office blood pressure machines. One device for every two providers allowed for three readings in an unattended fashion. Training and preparation included a flagging process in the Electronic Health Record and office workflow included a follow up loop and reporting which enabled nurse supervisors to ensure confirmatory readings are performed.

The adoption of these best practices and a focus on the small details within a holistic approach propelled Trinity's thirteen New England offices to achieve a 12% increase in blood pressure control within one year. Now at more than 84% control, Trinity achieved the Gold Standard Recognition of the American Heart Association and AMA's TargetBP program.

Dr. Weiswasser identified key steps to their success:

- Build trust throughout every step in the MAP:BP process
- Involve key players at every level - including facilities for reconfiguring your exam rooms
- Utilize successful programs such as TargetBP to train your interdisciplinary teams members

The American Medical Association is dedicated to driving medicine toward a more equitable future, removing obstacles that interfere with patient care and confronting the nation's greatest public health crises. To learn more about the Target BP program, the national initiative formed by the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American Medical Association in response to the high prevalence of uncontrolled blood pressure, visit their website at: <https://targetbp.org/>

This page is not an endorsement of any particular member, or organization, but simply a space to share the outreach efforts of various entities.