



## STRONGER TOGETHER: HOW BETTER SYSTEM COORDINATION LEADS TO BETTER OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

**Phyllis Albritton, P-Cubed Partners**

Over the course of my career, I have observed that people who use or need services are not served well by our bifurcated systems of care which, I believe should be symbiotic. I am beginning to understand how to leverage resources to bridge gaps between health care and human services to assure that people needing assistance find no wrong door on their path to health, wellbeing and self sufficiency.

Accomplishing this will require a fundamental realignment of how these systems approach their work. Systems and the individuals who operate them across sectors will need to be agile enough to execute their unique responsibilities while embracing a broader vision to improve health and human services outcomes on the whole as opposed to health or human services factors individually.

There is a growing body of evidence to prove this effect. For example, CareMore CEO Sachin Jain and Kaiser Permanente CEO Bernard Tyson both not only discuss these important effects frequently in their public presentations and online presence, but invest their community benefit dollars in efforts to address housing and hunger issues in communities they serve. In addition, Benefits Data Trust, a contractor to the State of Colorado among others, has partnered with Johns Hopkins University and other showing a 13 percent decrease in hospital usage simply by signing up Maryland senior citizens for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The body of evidence is growing, but more needs to be done to demonstrate these significant savings and develop sustainable alliances to normalize these efforts.

In Colorado, Medicaid is beginning to incent counties to expand enrollment in SNAP since the evidence of its benefit is growing. Organizations, such as the Mental Health Center of Denver, are beginning to invest heavily in housing and human services to support the needs of the healthcare patients they serve. And other organizations, such as the Center for African American Health, are becoming not only health centers, but family resource centers as well to provide a more holistic approach to their services.

This shift in how we care for those who entrust their health and wellbeing to us is a classic example of a transition that faces headwinds initially but will yield significantly better results for all involved ultimately. If we commit the time and intentionality

necessary to transition to a more connected, coordinated system of care, we can greatly improve health outcomes, reduce costs of care and improve peoples' lives by supporting them more holistically.

---



**Phyllis Albritton**  
**Principal**  
**P-Cubed Partners**

*Phyllis Albritton is a principal with P-Cubed Partners. She is the former director of the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Economic Security.*