



For Immediate Release

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**Tri-state Learning Collaborative on Aging Announces Aging Summit &
New Dementia Learning Collaboration**

Regional healthcare, community and education leaders will explore
emerging trends and solutions together

Age of Possibilities Summit Announced

Each new era brings with it possibilities for change and growth; the emerging longevity era is no exception. As we are living longer than ever before; the world around us offers unparalleled opportunity to test old assumptions, make new discoveries and modify our ecosystems to support our changing needs. In Northern New England, our institutions of higher education, research laboratories, and healthcare and tech companies are leading the way in exploring these possibilities. They are developing revolutionary approaches to learning and living in later life that enhance health and well-being.

On October 21st, 2019 these innovators will gather to share their work and ideas at the **Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging Summit - *The Age of Possibilities***. The Summit will be held at the Grappone Center in Concord, NH from 8:00 to 3:30. The Keynote speaker is Dr. Alice Bonner, PhD, RN. Dr. Bonner's work focuses on supporting and empowering older adults to be able to age in their communities, creating and improving age-friendly health systems, promoting dementia-friendly communities and support for caregivers of individuals living with dementia. The Summit is sponsored by the Maine Community Foundation and the Tufts Health Plan Foundation. More information can be found [here](#). Please share this event with your audience and assign a reporter to cover the event.

Healthcare & Aging Organizations Launch Dementia Collaborative to Enhance Care and Health of Older Adults in Northern New England

Project ECHO: Northern New England Network, the [Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging](#), [Qualidigm](#), and the [Maine Council on Aging](#) will bring together key leaders within nine communities from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont to identify and share successful approaches, models, and supports that improve the health, healthcare, and care coordination of community-dwelling older adults diagnosed with dementia and their care partners.

The program, “*Enhancing the Care and Health of Older Adults Living with Dementia and their Care Partners*” will use the proven Project ECHO® model of web-enabled, case-based virtual learning sessions to promote collaborative learning and sharing of best practices across communities over a nine month period, beginning October 24, 2019. Recognizing the importance of coordination efforts within communities, a local leader within each community (i.e., a “Community Convener”) will bring together leaders of key sectors to work together and participate in this ECHO program.

The project is supported by a multi-disciplinary team of faculty experts from across the Northern New England Region including:

- Katlyn Blackston, MS, LSW, Southern ME Agency on Aging; Cliff Singer, MD, Northern Light; and Tamara Herrick, Ph.D., MaineHealth Center for Health Improvement representing Maine.
- Ellen Thompson, RN, Lyme Parish Nurse; Anne Marie Olsen-Hayward, LCSW, Referral, Education, Assistance and Prevention Program; Renee Pepin, PhD, Dartmouth Center for Health & Aging; and Ellen Flaherty, PhD, APRN, Dartmouth Hitchcock representing New Hampshire.
- Mary Val Palumbo, DNP, APRN, GNP-BD, University of Vermont College of Nursing and Health Sciences; Cinda Donton, Rutland Mental Health Services; Mark Boutwell, Senior Solutions (AAA) and Allegra Miller, Memory Center representing Vermont.

In addition to the faculty experts, the following adjunct faculty members will support the project: Peter Baker, LCSW, Maine Alzheimer's Association; Tom Mueser, PhD, UNE Center for Excellence in Aging and Health; Melissa Grenier, MSW, MA-NH Alzheimer's Association; Laura Davie, Institute for Health Policy and Practice Center on Aging and Community Living; Emily Vivyan, MSW, VT Alzheimer's Association; and Jess Maurer, Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging.

We are pleased to announce the following communities and conveners selected for the project:

- **Healthy Peninsula**, Anne Schroth, Convener; **Maine Highlands Senior Center**, Tara N. Smith, Convener; **Aroostook Agency on Aging**, Joy Barresi Saucier, Co-Convener; **Elder Abuse Institute of Maine**, Patricia Kimball, Co-Convener representing Maine.
- **Pathways Thru Aging**, Kelly Wilsey Convener; **Gibson Center for Senior Services**, Marianne Jackson Convener; **Coos County Family Health Services**, Bridget Laflamme Convener representing New Hampshire.
- **The Town of Wilmington**, Jennifer Fitzgerald Convener; **Community of Vermont Elders**, Ruby Baker Convener; and **Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging**, Aaron Brush Convener representing Vermont.

Project ECHO: Project ECHO® (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) is an evidence-based method developed by researchers at the University of New Mexico. The ECHO model™ links teams of interdisciplinary experts with teams of participants from each community. During teleECHO™ sessions, experts’ mentor and share their expertise across a virtual network via case-based learning, enabling community teams to build capacity and expertise to address systems issues within their community and improve the quality of care for older adults diagnosed with dementia living within the community.

Project ECHO: Northern New England Network (NNE Hub): Through the generous support from the HRSA Rural Health Network Development program, Qualidigm, formerly Maine Quality Counts, has developed strategic partnerships across Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont over the past several years to establish a collaborative focused on advancing the use of Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) across the rural region.

Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging (TSLCA): The TSLCA is a staffed shared learning collaborative on aging hosted by the Maine Council on Aging, a broad, multi-disciplinary network of 90+ organizations and older adults working to ensure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives as we age in our homes and communities. Created in 2015, the TSLCA provides free, credible, and relevant educational programming to people in Northern New England with the goal of increasing the collective impact of community-based healthy aging initiatives and improving the health of older people in the region. The TSLCA is supported by foundations and organizations across Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, and an Advisory Council guides the overall work of the project. The TSLCA is being supported on Project ECHO through the generous support of the Maine Health Access Foundation, UNE Center for Excellence in Health and Aging, UNE AHEC, Endowment for Health, and Qualidigm.

Qualidigm: Qualidigm is a national, mission-driven, healthcare consulting organization with over 35 years of experience leading healthcare quality improvement programs. In support of the organization’s strategic vision of working collaboratively to make New England the healthiest region in the United States, as a Qualidigm has been a Centers for

Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Quality Improvement Organization for over 30 years, mostly recently serving healthcare providers and stakeholders in New England, and leads the Northern New England Practice Transformation Network (PTN). With its corporate headquarters in Wethersfield, Conn. and offices in Manchester, Maine; Dover, NH; Barre, VT; and Providence, RI, Qualidigm provides process quality improvement, analytics, evaluation, learning and diffusion, project management, and technical assistance services to healthcare providers, healthcare organizations, and communities to promote quality, safety, and value across all care settings.

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[**Click Here to Register for the Age of Possibilities Summit!**](#)