

David C. Leach Award



Named to honor the ACGME's former Executive Director, Dr. David C. Leach (1997 – 2007), and his commitment to resident education and physician well-being, this award recognizes resident/fellow-led projects and innovations.



Jeremy Weleff, DO

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About the project:

“Dr. Jeremy Weleff has sat as the Cleveland Clinic House Staff Association (HSA) Officer for Trainee Well-being for the last two years, and in doing so has been the lead or core founding member of several novel projects dedicated to improving resident and trainee wellness. Apart from these many responsibilities, he has also engaged in the creation of broad, health care system-wide patient-focused efforts to improve care for persons

experiencing homelessness within the Cleveland Clinic Health System.”

“Dr. Weleff was the founder of the Wellness Council – a council with at least one sitting representative from each of all the medical, surgical, and fellowship training programs under the Cleveland Clinic GME. This council is the first within the Cleveland Clinic GME and has led to increased communication and coordination between residents and the GME. The overarching goals of the council is to coordinate efforts to improve resident and trainee wellness and create solidarity amongst the many diverse training programs at the Cleveland Clinic.”

“Apart from his work representing the HSA listed above, Dr. Weleff is the founder and Team Lead of the Homelessness Initiative at the Cleveland Clinic. This project seeks to improve the care for all patients facing homelessness and housing insecurity within the health system and led to the creation of a diverse multidisciplinary team made up of leaders in Psychiatry, Emergency Medicine, Social Work, Case Management, the Center for Populations Health, as well as multiple community organizations. Dr. Weleff was initially awarded a \$30,000 Caregiver Catalyst Award in 2019 to start this work, and it has now attracted over \$100,000 in philanthropic donations in direct support of the many projects dedicated to improving patient care for persons experiencing homelessness. He has also been awarded a Center for Populations Health Research collaboration award for statistical support for the project. The work is centered around the simple goal of providing the best possible care for persons experiencing homelessness and is based on three principles: effective identification and documentation of social determinants/social needs, having the services in place to act on these needs, and having the established healthcare system/governmental/community connections in place to improve and measure outcomes for

those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. In addition to practical improvements in patient care and coordination, the *Homelessness Initiative* has many components ranging from community engagement to research. This work initiated monthly meetings with all local community organizations and leaders that are working to improve coordinated care for persons experiencing homelessness in Cuyahoga County and Northeast Ohio, building bridges between these healthcare systems and community organizations. Dr. Weleff has also presented the research findings of this project at multiple, large annual scientific meetings such as Academy Health, American College of Emergency Physicians, and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

“This project led to the creation of multiple pilot projects to improve patient care, as well as institution-wide improvements in the screening and documentation of homelessness. The work of this group led to universal screening for housing status at each emergency department visit and the creation of a new field in the electronic health record for the documentation across the entire Cleveland Clinic Health System. This allows for the most up-to-date and accurate information about a patient’s current living condition and detailed analysis of health needs, and other areas of care that could be improved. Two main pilot projects have been started based off this work: the Transportation Pilot and the Community Health Worker pilot. The Transportation Pilot provides the funding and scheduling of rides for homeless patients post-hospitalization or emergency department visit to their follow-up medical appointments, ensuring they are well wrapped in with needed primary and specialty care. It has provided well over 4000 free rides to patients since its inception. Partnering with community organizations focused on helping those with housing needs, the Community Health Worker Pilot program links homeless patients identified in the emergency department of inpatient psychiatric units with an additional community health worker who is responsible for linking with that patient in the community and completing pathway-based goals directed at addressing health and social needs. Data-sharing agreements between the healthcare system and community organizations allow for highly detailed examinations of the impact of these interventions after discharge from the hospital, and possible improvements in health, social needs, and healthcare utilization. Dr. Weleff was the team lead on the creation of both of these pilots which continue on to this day.”