

Innovation Pioneers In Aging Services

An Interview with Jeffrey I. Farber, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, The New Jewish Home

EDITORS' NOTE Jeffrey Farber is President and Chief Executive Officer of The New Jewish Home in New York. Prior to his current role, Farber served as Chief Medical Officer and Senior Vice President, Population Health, at Mount Sinai Health System. He serves as Board Chair of AJAS (Association of Jewish Aging Services), Board Vice Chair for Long Term Care of the Greater New York Hospital Association, and immediate past Board Chair of the CMR Institute. Farber is a graduate of Tufts University and earned his medical degree with AOA honors from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He trained in internal medicine at New York-Presbyterian's Columbia campus and in geriatrics at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. He is a graduate of the Isenberg School of Management at University of Massachusetts Amherst, with an MBA. He is board-certified in both Internal Medicine and Geriatric Medicine and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians. He is a nationally recognized speaker and has twice received federal grant funding through the Health Resources and Services Administration's Geriatric Academic Career Award. His research has been published in The Annals of Internal Medicine, JAMA Internal Medicine, The Journal of Hospital Medicine, and JAMDA.



Jeffrey I. Farber

Will you discuss your career journey?

Since the end of 2017, I've been the President and CEO of The New Jewish Home, where I've focused on expanding critical programs like SkillSpring – a healthcare workforce development program – and introducing innovative care models. As a physician-executive, I am proud to lead a healthcare system with more than 175 years of history that is dedicated to helping older adults live lives full of meaning and purpose. I am a board-certified geriatrician and a healthcare leader with a career that spans clinical practice, academic roles, and

executive leadership. I believe ageism is pervasive in our society, and we have both an obligation and an opportunity to improve how we treat the oldest and most vulnerable among us.

I earned my MD degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine, completed my medicine residency at New York-Presbyterian, Columbia, and a Geriatrics fellowship at Mount Sinai, where part of my training took place at The New Jewish Home. I later earned an MBA from UMass Amherst to strengthen my business acumen and leadership capabilities. At the Mount Sinai Health System, I served as Chief Medical Officer for Population Health and CEO of its Medicare ACO, where I gained invaluable

INSTITUTION BRIEF The New Jewish Home (jewishhome.org) was founded in 1848 as an off-shoot from a local synagogue to serve an emerging need to provide services for older impoverished Jewish women in New York City. It has since grown into an innovative, academic healthcare system for older adults of all races and religions. The New Jewish Home operates a skilled nursing facility in Manhattan, along with a portfolio of home and community-based programs in Manhattan and the Bronx to help older adults. The organization developed a signature workforce development program, SkillSpring, which provides opportunities for underserved youth and young adults to enter the fast-growing healthcare field. SkillSpring also helps address the underlying ageism in America and advance The New Jewish Home's vision of a new reality in which ageism is no longer, and society embraces its older adult members.



The New Jewish Home garden

experience in value-based care and population health management.

I'm deeply committed to improving aging services nationwide and currently serve in leadership roles with the Greater New York Hospital Association, the CMR Institute, and the Association of Jewish Services. I also serve as a Clinical Associate Professor of Geriatrics at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. These positions allow me to advocate for policy changes and share best practices that can transform care delivery for older adults in America.

Will you highlight the history of The New Jewish Home?

As a comprehensive, mission-driven nonprofit healthcare system, The New Jewish Home has been serving older New Yorkers since 1848, making it one of the oldest aging services organizations in the United States. It was founded 177 years ago by Hannah Leo as The B'nai Jeshurun Ladies' Benevolent Society for the Relief of Indigent Females. They began making home visits to impoverished Jewish older adults, and in 1870 opened a 15-bed, long-term facility on West 17th Street, the first Jewish institution of its kind in America. In 1883, the organization opened a facility on West 105th Street for 140 residents and became a charter member of the UJA-Federation in 1917. In 1973, we opened the first Adult Day Healthcare program in New York State, and we were the first to reopen after the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2006, we established the Research Institute on Aging and began our innovative workforce development program that trains underserved young people for healthcare careers while addressing the ongoing workforce shortage.

While we were first established as a facility to serve New York's Jewish population during a time when such specialized care was desperately needed, we now serve New Yorkers of all faiths, ethnicities, and backgrounds, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and community service. Throughout our long history, we have been innovation pioneers in aging services. We are proud to be the first facility in the U.S. to have a full-time professional social worker, recognizing early on that emotional and social well-being are just as important as physical health. We were also the first to employ a full-time in-house doctor and to establish a comprehensive teaching system to train professionals in caring for older adults – innovations that are now standard practice across the industry. Our legacy of innovation continues today as we adapt to meet the evolving needs of New York's aging population while maintaining our founding principles of compassion, dignity, and excellence in care.

Will you provide an overview of The New Jewish Home's portfolio of innovative healthcare services?

Our comprehensive portfolio spans the full continuum of care for older adults, from delivering at-home care to providing specialized medical services like post-acute rehabilitation to adult day healthcare. We operate a skilled nursing facility on the Upper West Side of Manhattan offering outstanding rehabilitation

in partnership with Mount Sinai Health System and NYU Langone Health, as well as long-term nursing home care. Our Manhattan facility is the only one in New York City staffed by a full-time medical team of Mount Sinai physicians and nurse practitioners.

Despite taking on the highest acuity cases, under the leadership of our Senior Medical Director, Dr. Ruth Spinner, we've lowered our 30-day re-hospitalization rate to just 12 percent, placing us at the top decile in the nation – meaning if you come to The New Jewish Home for rehab, you have the best chance to get well and go home and not land back in the hospital. In our ongoing efforts to enhance the rehab experience, we've embraced new technology through virtual reality headsets. We have a novel partnership with Mynd Immersive and were first in the nation to bring "The Great American Elderverse" to life powered by our outstanding recreation, rehab, and research programs.

Our Adult Day Healthcare programs in Manhattan and the Bronx offer specialized services for older adults with chronic diseases, memory impairment, and behavioral issues. As part of our home care portfolio, we offer Geriatric Care Managers and Home Health Aide services as well as a Certified Home Health Agency so older adults can receive clinical care in the comfort of their homes. In the Bronx, we have a Medicaid Assisted Living Program and three Section 202 buildings for low-income older adults.

SkillSpring, our groundbreaking workforce development program, is training the next generation of high-quality healthcare professionals to become Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), generating excitement and enthusiasm for career opportunities in healthcare while simultaneously addressing the caregiving crisis in New York City. We started the program back in 2006 for high school students because we saw a staffing crisis on the horizon. The program's model was so successful that we expanded it to serve 18-27-year-olds from underserved communities. Since then, we've transformed over 1,400 lives, and over the past year alone, we secured more than \$6 million in new grants. Over the years, we've partnered with RiverSpring Living, MJHS Health System, and ArchCare to help recruit, train and hire CNAs. This year, we will proudly train 220 participants, doubling our impact from last year. This program is not just about creating jobs – we're investing in caregivers who value older adults. We're forging intergenerational connections that build respect and dismantle ageism.

Through our partnerships with leading medical institutions, we provide access to specialized services including cardiology, orthopedics, and geriatric psychiatry, ensuring that our residents receive comprehensive care without having to navigate multiple healthcare systems and settings.

Will you discuss the importance of The New Jewish Home's partners to the organization's success?

At The New Jewish Home, our partners are essential collaborators in our mission, each

bringing unique strengths that help us deliver compassionate care to older adults. These partnerships represent a fundamental shift from the traditional model of isolated long-term care facilities to an integrated approach that leverages the best of what each organization can offer. Institutions like Mount Sinai Health System and NYU Langone Health offer clinical expertise, specialist referrals, training opportunities for our staff, and joint research initiatives which enhance the quality and scope of services we provide. These medical partnerships ensure that our residents have access to the same high-quality specialty care they would receive at a major medical center, without the stress and disruption of frequent transfers. And now, through an innovative partnership with the Alzheimer's Association, we're opening a new Extended Day Program in the Bronx to help older adults with dementia and provide caregivers sorely needed respite.

What are your priorities for The New Jewish Home as you look to the future?

Looking ahead, my priorities center on strategies that will position us to meet the evolving needs of older adults while maintaining our commitment to excellence, innovation, and compassion. We're prioritizing workforce development and sustainability. The aging services industry faces significant staffing challenges, and we must be part of the solution. In New York, nearly 3.5 million residents are over the age of 65 – and that population is growing faster than any other group. The growing population is in stark contrast with the number of openings for Certified Nursing Assistants, a critical position at skilled nursing facilities: New York currently has an estimated 13,000 openings for CNAs – over 5,000 in New York City alone – and the state Department of Labor projects an additional 15,000 positions will be needed by 2030. This gap in people who need care and the number of openings highlights the severity of the shortage and emphasizes the need to bring more people into the industry. That means investing in our current staff, while also working to attract new talent to the field. We're exploring innovative approaches like SkillSpring, which this year became a registered apprenticeship program through the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, as well as partnerships with high schools and community colleges.

We're also focusing on advancing the integration of technology and data analytics to improve care quality. This includes exploring assistive technologies that can help residents maintain independence and live high-quality lives, such as virtual reality.

Last, but not least, we are strengthening relationships with existing partners and exploring new partnerships, as we believe we must work together as a society to continue meeting the ever-changing needs of older adults – providing the highest-quality care possible and ensuring people are able to age with the dignity and respect they deserve. ●