



Community Report  
2018 - 2019



# from Linda's desk

Virginia Premier continues to make significant progress in our mission to make health care accessible across the Commonwealth. In the most recent fiscal year, we upgraded and expanded our Medicaid products, while also introducing four new plans on the Health Insurance Marketplace.

It's worth noting that these accomplishments have been facilitated through the many partnerships we have created over the years—which is fitting given that collaboration is one of our core values at Virginia Premier. In the same way we work to empower our members, we are empowered by a diverse multitude of people. These include employees, providers, government administrators and regulators, community leaders and social groups, as well as our parent organization, VCU Health—and sometimes our members too.

This report highlights the many successes and relationships that drive Virginia Premier to fulfill its mission.

Medicaid remains the largest part of our membership, and successfully transitioning our members from Medallion 3.0 to Medallion 4.0 was a top priority for the company in 2018. Similarly, partnering with Kaiser Permanente paved the way for us to introduce Medallion 4.0 coverage into Northern Virginia, increasing our presence in the region. Additionally, we welcomed newly-eligible Medicaid members onto our plans, thanks to the statewide expansion of Medicaid.

We also expanded our service offerings at the Neighborhood Health Center in

Roanoke with the addition of an on-staff OBGYN. Our services to the Richmond and central Virginia region evolved further with the roll-out of our Individual and Family Plans on the Health Insurance Marketplace—the result of a partnership with us, VCU Health and Bon Secours.

So much of what we've created has been brought to life by providers who are excited to work with us and lend their expertise and by employees who share our values and want to live our mission of inspiring healthy living in the communities we serve.

This is why we are continuing to focus on improving our services and operations to support our Medicaid membership with the statewide expansion and transition to Medallion 4.0. At the same time, we are continually improving our Medicare and Health Insurance Marketplace products and looking to them for growth opportunities.

With the help of our employees and our partners, we are continuing to build on our successes. We're grateful for the cooperation and guidance of all those who have helped us in fulfilling our goal of making health care accessible across the state in the past year. We're eager to continue working with them, and new partners as well, in the next year.



Linda Hines, RN, MS, MBA  
*Chief Executive Officer*

# you the executive

One of the three imperatives of our five-year strategic plan is to build and optimize our infrastructure. (For more on this, see page 7.) To achieve this, we need to maintain strong financial stability, grow a high-functioning and efficient workforce, and improve our customer experience. And with the excellent leadership from our executives in the previous year, we're well on our way to accomplishing this.

Earlier this year, we strategically reorganized to make sure each of our departments is aligned in its mission and goal. This allowed us to better align our organization for continued growth and helped increase efficiencies, increasing our focus on the quality of care for our members and reinforcing our strong partnerships with providers. As part of this we made two notable changes to our executive leadership team with the promotions of Ryan McCarthy and Alicia Turner.



## **Ryan McCarthy, MBA**

*Chief of Product Management*

Transitioning from his role as Vice President of Strategy and Business Development, Ryan now joins our c-suite as our Chief of Product Management, where he will be responsible for providing strategic leadership to all product lines. And with the experience in his previous role, Ryan is well-positioned to help Virginia Premier mature its product offerings and help us build fruitful partnerships in the community.

## **Alicia Turner, MBA**

*Chief Operations Officer*

Alicia, now our Chief Operations Officer (COO), will continue to build on her previous Associate COO role by continually looking for ways to improve how we do business—both externally and internally. Alicia has launched the Op-Ex program, which aims to improve our operations and procedures. Already, the program has identified areas where we can improve our provider billing procedures.





### **David Summers, MSIS**

*Associate Chief Information Officer*

With respect to customer experience, we invested in our technology to make our care more accessible and easier to use. Under David's leadership, we streamlined our web service by converting all products onto one website platform. This makes our site easier to navigate, and it allows our members to access the information they need at quicker rates.



### **Timothy Carpenter**

*Chief Financial Officer*

With a focus on cost savings, we launched our Financial Savings Initiatives to make our care more efficient, which in turn will help us improve health outcomes for our members. Tim is instrumental to this initiative, and so is James Siegel, our new Vice President of Finance and Budget. James comes to us with years of experience in navigating other health care organizations in the financial world, and he will help ensure that Virginia Premier is financially healthy both in the present and the future.



### **John A. Johnson, MD, MBA**

*Chief Medical Officer*

Under John's leadership and direction, and with the support of the Medical Management team, we improved the care our members experience by bringing our Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) care management services in-house. This has streamlined the care management process for our MLTSS members, making it more efficient and improving health outcomes. In addition, Dr. Johnson and the Quality leadership team have made quality, safety and member experience strategic priorities for the organization which has resulted in Virginia Premier becoming the only MCO in the state to achieve a Commendable NCQA Status.

# by the numbers

## Medicaid

At the end of the fiscal year, membership in our Medallion 4.0 plan grew to 218,841 members, a 27% increase over the previous year. This total includes the additional 45,407 members we gained through the expansion of Medicaid, and the 23,240 members we added through our partnership with Kaiser Permanente in Northern Virginia.

Our Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS), which provides care to those with chronic care needs, now covers 46,713 members, an increase of 12% since we implemented the CCC Plus plan in August 2017.

## Federal Programs

Our three Medicare Advantage products – which includes one dual Medicaid/Medicare product, and two commercial products – will be entering their third year beginning January 2020. Our dual Medicaid/Medicare plan enrollment has doubled from 2018 to 3,446 enrollees. Over the same period, our two commercial plans have nearly tripled to 2,119 enrollees.

In January, we began providing coverage for both individuals and families through the Virginia Health Insurance Marketplace. In partnership with VCU Health and Bon Secours, whose doctors and facilities make up our provider network, we offer four health plans representing three tiers of coverage in the City of Richmond and the following counties: Amelia; Caroline; Chesterfield; Goochland; Hanover; Henrico; New Kent and Powhatan. We now cover 4,638 members with Individual and Family Plans.

## Creating our 2018 - 2023 Strategic Plan

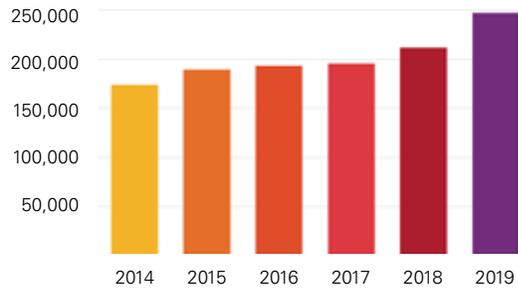
We're evolving how we define ourselves with our new five-year strategic plan, which spells out what our success will look like in the years ahead. The plan has three strategic imperatives, which are: to embrace top quality care, grow and create successful partnerships, and build and optimize our infrastructure. Accompanying these imperatives are our priorities which are specific goals that will help us achieve these imperatives. Overall, the strategic plan will ensure Virginia Premier takes advantage of the changing health care landscape.

## Quality Improvement

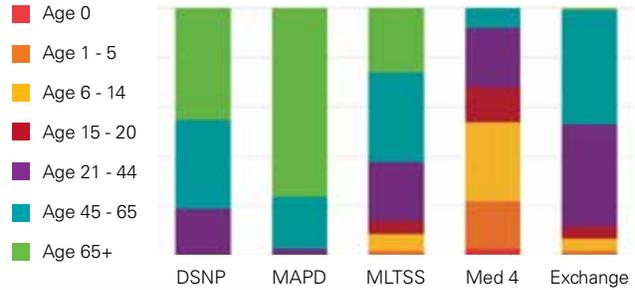
In October 2018, we earned the accreditation status of Commendable by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). We achieved this accreditation due to our improvements the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) and member satisfaction scores: getting care easily, rating of primary-care doctor\*, rating of specialists\*, rating of care\* and coordination of care.

# Our Members

## Yearly Growth in Membership

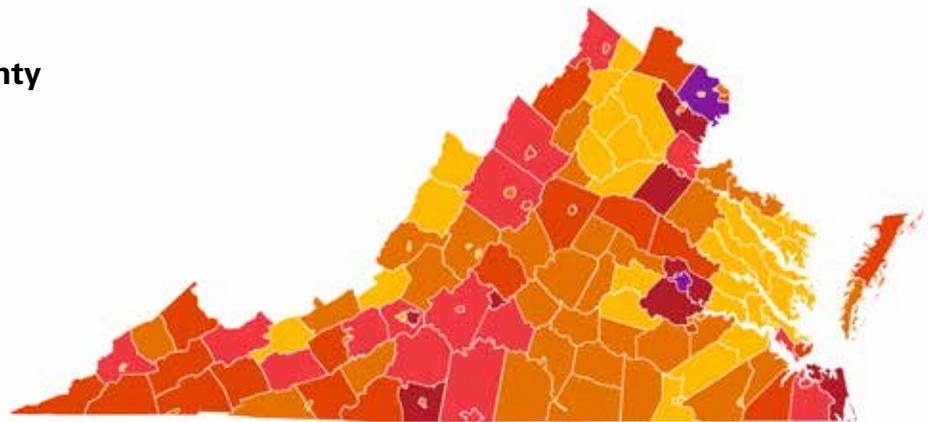


## Age Breakdown by Line of Business



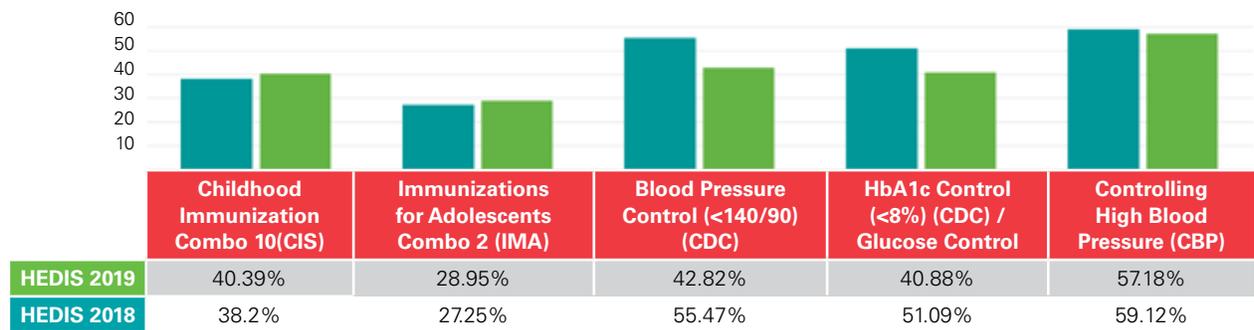
## Our Members by County

- 1 - 500 members
- 501 - 1,800 members
- 1,801 - 3,600 members
- 3,601 - 5,800 members
- 5,801 - 11,000 members
- 11,001+ members

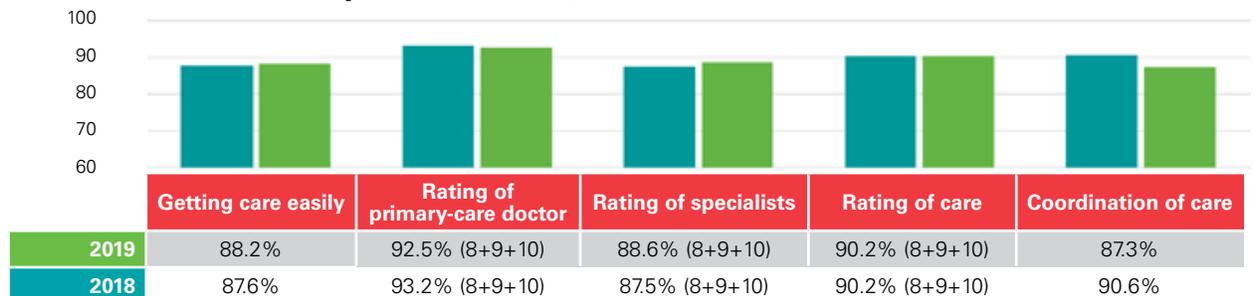


# Quality Improvement

## HEDIS Scores



## Medallion Member Experience (Child)



# *you the* **member**

Embracing top quality care: It's essential to our mission here at Virginia Premier. That's why it's one of the three imperatives of our five-year strategic plan. It's also why we introduced several new health programs for our members in the past year, while improving ones they've already come to rely on.

One of the largest, most successful programs we offer is our Healthy Heartbeats program, which helps mothers give birth to and raise healthy children. Since last year, participation in Healthy Heartbeats has grown almost 7%. Part of this growth can be attributed to the variety of events and services we include in the program, such as our baby showers and breastfeeding classes. In 2018 alone, we hosted 19 community baby shower events, which served over 190 members. And for our Roanoke members, we hosted breastfeeding classes throughout the year. As a result, our member's breastfeeding rate is up almost 20%.

Additionally, we engaged with ProgenyHealth—a third-party care service dedicated to improving the health outcomes of premature and medically complex newborns—to help our babies who go to Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU). As part of this partnership, ProgenyHealth will help to provide care and guidance to both the

providers and parents throughout the baby's whole first year.

For our members with older children, we introduced our positive discipline classes to help give parents tips and techniques on raising children. Additionally, we're partnering with a local YMCA in the Roanoke area to offer free fitness classes for younger members. And not only that, we're supporting The Basics program which helps mothers prepare their children for school. Last but not least, we distributed 648 dental kits to both our adult and child members.

We've also found ways to connect with our members. We conducted nearly 2,000 member home-visits in the previous year to make sure our members health care data is up to date, and we're in the loop with regards to their health. We also incorporated advanced tools and capabilities for our commercial products by offering our MyHealth online portal to our Individual and Family members. Now, they can access health resources 24/7.

In the year ahead, we're expanding the services our Watch Me Grow program offers by including school preparedness, positive social behaviors and strengthening family bonds as part of the program. And we're also planning to continue to focus on addressing the social determinants of health.



**Wholistic Health Care for  
Those Young and Young at Heart**

*From healthy babies to healthy  
adults, we are here to support every  
step of the journey.*

# Brett's Story

For Brett Smith, and countless other young adults, turning 26 can be bittersweet. That's because 26 is the age when they can no longer receive health insurance coverage through their parent's health plans. For Brett, a full-time VCU School of Pharmacy student, this meant he was no longer covered through his father's group insurance plan.

"I was worried that if I got sick or hurt, I'd be paying ridiculous health care prices if I didn't have any coverage," said Brett.

Luckily for Brett and other young adults without health coverage, Virginia expanded its Medicaid coverage in January 2019. Under the new rules of Medicaid expansion in Virginia, single persons with a yearly income of less than \$16,754 are now eligible to receive health care coverage.

Upon turning 26, Brett applied for and received Medicaid expansion health coverage. Initially, he was assigned to a different managed care organization (MCO). But after doing some research and learning about the dental and vision benefits offered, Brett switched to Virginia Premier. He already knew about Virginia Premier through VCU and the pharmacy internship program Virginia Premier runs for VCU students. In fact, Brett completed an elective five-week internship with Virginia Premier just prior to his graduation.

Without the availability of Medicaid expansion, Brett's other options for health care would have been COBRA coverage through his father or an individual plan through the federal exchange—either of which would have been costly for a full-time student.

"For me, Medicaid is stop gap coverage until I find a full-time job," Brett noted. "But it's a big relief knowing that I'm covered, just in case something happened."

What full-time work does Brett envision for himself? A "hospital or managed care setting," he says. For an alumnus of VCU and former intern with Virginia Premier, we think either is a good choice.





# Laura's Story

Laura Nyman, 34, has been a Virginia Premier member since 2014 and a patient at the Virginia Premier Neighborhood Health Center in Roanoke for four years. "It's a really big deal for me to say I totally trust and enjoy the people who treat me at the Neighborhood Health Center," she says.

Laura is a former opioid addict. She says addicts tend to be wary of the medical establishment because they feel "judged and dismissed by doctors, and we're not always treated with respect." But things were different when she went to the Neighborhood Health Center for her primary medical care and ongoing treatment for substance abuse.

Laura first came into contact with opiates at age 21 via cough medicine prescribed to her for a severe case of bronchitis. Later, she began taking pills because she liked the way they made her feel. By age 23, Laura was addicted to painkillers, using "whatever I could get."

At age 30, she got through a Suboxone-treatment program, but it wasn't geared toward long-term maintenance. Her boyfriend then recommended the Neighborhood Health Center because of his positive experience with the staff there. Laura switched to one of Virginia Premier's primary care physicians (PCP) and entered its office-based opioid treatment program. Today, the program helps her maintain her sobriety.

"I have personal relationships with everybody there. I like them all very much," she says. In fact, Physician Assistant Jennifer Johnson serves as a PCP for not only Laura, but also her 10-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son. "I trust her with my life, and my children's lives," says Laura.

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# Celestine's Story

For Celestine Young, being a Virginia Premier member feels like being part of a family rather than a health insurance company. And if you've ever seen her attend one of our Member Advisory Committee (MAC) meetings, you'd understand why.

MAC meetings are quarterly events where members and Virginia Premier staff come together and discuss different areas of care, benefit information updates and any problems that may have cropped up.

Celestine got a ride in a Virginia Premier transportation van to attend one such meeting. Soon after arriving, she stopped to chat, laugh and catch up with fellow members, nurses and Virginia Premier staff—among them her friend and care manager, Ashley Christopher.

Celestine and Ashley first started working together in the fall of 2018, and Celestine still remembers their first session. "She called me and covered all my benefits. She explained all the things I didn't know about my plan, like the dental and eye doctor benefits—so [now] I use them."

Since then, the pair have developed quite the relationship. "She keeps me laughing," says Ashley referring to Celestine. And Celestine calls Ashley a "loving and caring spirit." Whenever Celestine needs help, Ashley is always there to listen and help out. The two usually talk at least once a month. But if Celestine is in a time of need, it's not uncommon for them to talk every day.

In one such case, Celestine was experiencing trouble with her wheelchair. "It was cutting my hand and it was missing parts. Ashley called them [the medical equipment company] to set up an appointment for them to see the wheelchair and get it fixed." In another, Celestine was having difficulty in arranging pick-up and drop-off times. She brought the issue up at a MAC meeting, and the process was improved. Now, members can call drivers directly for better communication and organization. As a result, transportation wait times dropped down from around 30 minutes to two minutes.

This is why Celestine loves going to MAC meetings: as she puts it, "someone's gonna listen." Celestine has a place to share her thoughts on how Virginia Premier can improve. And for Celestine, this is how Virginia Premier is more than just a health plan; it's a family. "They care about me. I know. I don't make up things." Within the past year, Celestine has added Virginia Premier Elite Plus to her existing health plan.

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# *you the* **provider**

As part of our five-year strategic plan, we aim to grow and create successful partnerships throughout the areas we serve. To do this, we've defined several priorities, such as: addressing social determinants of health through community engagement, collaborating with community and provider partners to improve health outcomes, and growing our membership to 350,000. But on a basic level, we're creating successful partnerships by being a helpful resource for the providers we work with—and we're doing this in a few different ways.

Last year, we implemented a new provider relations call center, so we can offer real-time feedback and assistance to our provider community. And not only that, we enhanced our provider training for our new Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) populations. As part of this training, we developed a broad-scope training curriculum; and we leveraged our technology capabilities to include a virtual option, so we can meet our providers where they are.

This strategic plan and the goals within it aim to improve the health outcomes for our members. Accomplishing this goal is only possible with the help of high-quality, passionate providers. In their own words, here are a few illustrations of the kind of care our providers are offering every day.



# Drs. Richard Bennett and Krishna Madiraju

Our mission is simple: to inspire healthy living in the communities we serve. Through our network of highly qualified providers like Drs. Richard Bennett and Krishna Madiraju, we are able to successfully achieve our goal and provide our members with excellent care.

For almost 20 years, Dr. Bennett has been working with Virginia Premier to provide top quality health care to our members. Reflecting on this partnership, Dr. Bennett says, "Working with Virginia Premier has been a wonderful experience."

A big reason for this positive experience is the emphasis Virginia Premier places on collaboration, team work, and compassionate care – all of which are important to Dr. Bennett. For example, Dr. Bennett recently had a patient who benefitted from all three of these. The patient was a young man who was mad at the world. He had failed the 9th grade three times and was thinking of dropping out. Dr. Bennett remembers one time when the young man "came to my office ready to fight. I asked his mother to leave, and he and I had a heart to heart." After their talk, the young man agreed to start taking medication to help him focus. Dr. Bennett believes Virginia Premier was crucial in this, "Virginia Premier gave me the opportunity to prescribe the correct medicine and do it quickly without a prior authorization," said Dr. Bennett. As a result, the young man not only passed the 9th grade, but caught up the next year. And it gets better. The young man also convinced his friend to re-enroll in school, and as of May 2019, they're both high school graduates. Both of their lives are forever changed thanks to Dr. Bennett's compassion, and the collaboration with Virginia Premier.

Like Dr. Bennett, Dr. Krishna Madiraju knows the importance of building partnerships. Through his practice, Century Pediatrics Inc., he's always working to recruit other pediatricians to join him – a skill he got to practice when he joined the Virginia Premier network.

When he first joined our network, Dr. Madiraju worked closely with AJ Binga, a Virginia Premier provider representative. The two hit it off immediately, and began to cultivate a strong partnership. This relationship proved important in Virginia Premier's growth in the central and northern Virginia regions. Dr. Madiraju had such a great experience working with AJ Binga that he helped to recruit other pediatricians and specialists into the Virginia Premier network. Working together, the two built a network of primary care providers and specialists so that Virginia Premier members can access services in the most expedient way. Looking back on that time, Dr. Madiraju says, "My association with Mr. Binga has been one of the most fruitful experiences."

We're beyond fortunate to have providers like Drs. Bennett and Madiraju in our network. And we know our members feel the same way.

# Dr. Andrea Cobb

In September 2018, Dr. Andrea Cobb started working as an obstetrician (OB) at our Neighborhood Health Center in Roanoke, Virginia. In the year she's worked at the center, Dr. Cobb has already noticed something. "More than anywhere else I have ever worked, the staff at the Neighborhood Health Center embody a desire to help people and promote compassion and dignity for our patients." And this is no small compliment, as Dr. Cobb has worked in the public health field for most of her career.

Dr. Cobb's arrival at the Neighborhood Health Center came about from Virginia Premier's OB-behavioral health initiative. For a few years now, Virginia Premier has been pushing to provide services to members who are pregnant and dealing with behavioral health and addiction issues. The Neighborhood Health Center has already had a successful behavioral health and addiction clinic for some time. But those services needed to be integrated with OB care to improve access to prenatal care, and to assist members in improving their physical and mental health during pregnancy and afterwards. And with Dr. Cobb, all of that is now possible.

We're pleased to provide a continuum of care at the Neighborhood Health Center. Many women with behavioral health issues or addiction don't access gynecologic care, often due to past trauma and/or perceived poor treatment from the medical community. Speaking on behalf of the Neighborhood Health Center, Dr. Cobb says. "We hope to bridge the gap of that fear and provide a comfortable place for them to receive care, including cancer screening, screening for sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, and more." Overall, the goal is to provide compassionate, welcoming care and to encourage regular access to that care.

Dr. Cobb's excitement to work at the Neighborhood Health Center is clear. "My being here is a testament to Virginia Premier's dedication to the community and its overall plan to improve the care of its members."



# *you the* **community**

Virginia Premier empowers the community by actively supporting organizations across Virginia through events and sponsorships. Beyond the care we deliver, we partner with organizations who align with our mission and values to create a positive impact on the community through our outreach efforts. Partnerships afford us greater opportunities to support healthy living for those in need.

Both as an organization and through employees' volunteer efforts, we have supported and participated in over 130 events this past year. These activities include program sponsorships, donations, community events, health and wellness expos and fairs, fundraising walks, volunteer events, health clinics, and food and supply drives. By volunteering

with and supporting these organizations, we connect with communities and bring our values to life.

Partnering with our communities also helps us address social determinants of health, those things that impact well-being based on where we live, work, learn and play. Our outreach and partnerships make a difference when it comes to food insecurity, access to health care, health literacy and transportation. By working with farms, food banks, farmer's markets and educational programs, we're able to support health literacy and provide access to healthy foods. And through our support of cooking and fitness classes, food drives and delivery services, our partnerships help to address food insecurity.





**Neighbors Supporting Neighbors**

*Virginia Premier supported neighbors and communities coming together for food and music at Richmond's ¿Qué Pasa? festival, located minutes from our downtown headquarters.*

# Volunteer Events

As a Remote Area Medical (RAM) corporate sponsor, we support free, high-quality health care for those living in some of Virginia's most isolated regions, where access to health care is limited. Through this sponsorship, we have helped RAM serve 4,521 patients with free medical, dental and vision care at approximately 10 local clinics. By partnering with organizations like RAM, we're able to give people access to health care who would otherwise not be able to afford or receive the care they need.

Our support doesn't stop there. Since January 2018, Virginia Premier has supported the Health Brigade's Food Farmacy program by providing funding, transportation and health education to serve their patients. This 12-week program alternates nutrition and cooking classes with health coaching sessions. This partnership also adds a benefit for Virginia Premier members by offering them five slots in each class. The program has helped people take control of their diabetes through a healthy diet and good medical care.

Apart from financial support, we also promote health and wellness through volunteer opportunities. Our employees have volunteered time, money and supplies to 12 different events and organizations across the commonwealth. These opportunities include walks, fundraising lunches and food and supply drives for various non-profits.

One such volunteer partnership involved the Boys & Girls Club. Virginia Premier employees stuffed stockings with items such as hats, socks, gloves, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and coloring books for 250 children in central Virginia. Virginia Premier also helped the Boys & Girls Club of Metro Richmond's reach their goal of collecting 500 stockings for kids in need during the holidays.

Over the past three years, more than 100 Virginia Premier employees have volunteered at the Special Olympics of Virginia's Summer Games. This event yields the highest participation rate of employees, primarily because of the interactions with the athletes. Our employees help the athletes get to their events, cheer them on, and hand out medals.

To further address the social determinants of health for our members, we began a long-term partnership with Shalom Farms, located just outside of Richmond. Employees attended "A Day at the Farm," offering their time to volunteer and learn about food insecurity. By supporting the program, we are bringing awareness for members and our employees to support food deserts across central Virginia. Over 300 employees are expected to assist Shalom Farms in providing our members and communities access to healthy food.



**Making  
care right,  
every day.**



**The Heart of Virginia Premier**

*Virginia Premier employee, Christopher Foster-Baril, hauls a wheelbarrow filled with mulch to a nearby plant bed — one of many trips for Chris, and one of many trips to Shalom Farms for Virginia Premier.*

# *you the* employee

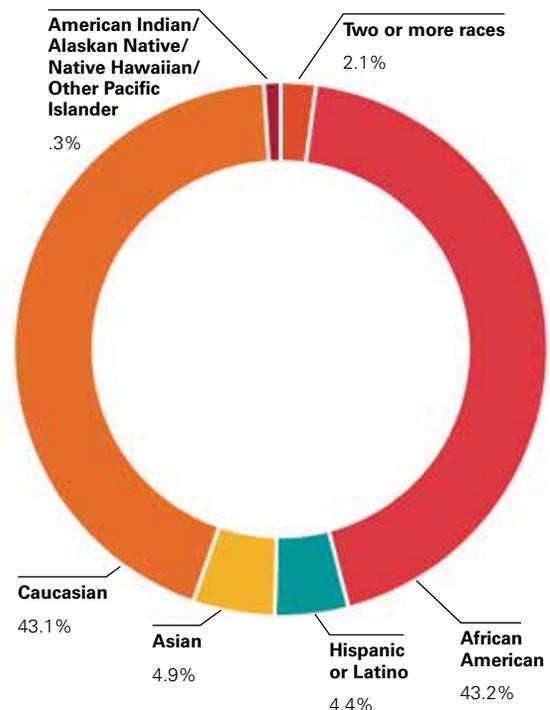
At Virginia Premier, our mission is simple: to inspire healthy living within the communities we serve with a focus on those in need. But to accomplish this mission requires a lot of strategic planning, excellent performance, and solid execution. Or more simply, it requires great workers.

This is why Virginia Premier conducted our first ever employee engagement survey in the second half of 2018. The survey was open to all employees, and it asked about job satisfaction and for suggestions on how to improve as an organization. Over 87 percent of Virginia Premier employees provided feedback, which we're using to improve the way we conduct business.

One such improvement is our new internal cascading communication system, which helps strengthen internal communication and increase collaboration across our departments. The communication comes from our leadership, and it includes all of the news and updates relevant to employees. This new system reinforces our organization-wide emails by allowing teams to sit down and talk about these updates. For example, employees were able

to talk with their team about our new organizational structure—determining how the new structure will impact their team and work.

The engagement survey also gave us an opportunity to hear from a number of different viewpoints—from those high in leadership, as well as our associates. We're a highly diverse workforce, both in thought and background, and it's essential to our success that we listen to all points of view. For a breakdown in our demographics, see the chart below.



# Tanya's Story

Tanya Corprew wears many different hats: she's a mother of three, a grandmother to her seven-year-old grandson, a "team mom" to the kids on her children's sports teams, and a medical outreach representative in Virginia Premier's Tidewater community. But no matter which hat she's wearing, Tanya always treats everyone like family.

Born and raised in the Tidewater area, Tanya has a strong connection to the people who live there—explaining her volunteer work as a team mom. Tanya first started working as a team mom for her son's football team. She'd bring snacks for everyone, wash dirty uniforms, and always cheer for the team. She enjoyed meeting the local parents and their kids—although she wasn't too crazy about the laundry. "You know how many jerseys I've washed over the years?" Tanya says with a laugh. Despite this, Tanya continues to volunteer as a team mom, but now with her grandson's track team. Being a team mom is a big time commitment, but family is important to Tanya. That's why she loves Virginia Premier.

"It's really family-oriented here," Tanya says when she reflects on the culture of Virginia Premier. This focus on family is why Tanya has worked at Virginia Premier for almost 12 years. "If I need to leave early to pick up my child, or take them to a doctor appointment, it's no problem." Virginia Premier respects families, and Tanya mirrors this approach with the work she does. She goes out into the neighborhoods, knocking on doors and meeting members in their homes to assess and get them the care they need.

Tanya takes her responsibilities seriously because she knows how it feels to be in need of care. "I used to be in their position back when I was younger... back when I was a teenager and I got pregnant." Back then, Tanya didn't have access to health education or resources our Medical Outreach team provides, which is why she loves what she does now: "It gives me a chance to meet different people and kind of help somebody that was in my predicament."





# Angela's Story

Angela Poreda is living her dream. She's engaged to the love of her life, she's the mother to three wonderful dogs, and she gets paid to fulfill her passion of helping people become fit and healthy. Angela is a health educator at Virginia Premier. She teaches our members how to live healthy lives.

When she's in the office, Angela takes phone calls from members and answers any health-related questions they may have. She'll also suggest health benefits they can use to improve their health. Angela also goes out into the community for our sponsorship and outreach events, where she meets members face-to-face. And she works to address the social determinants of health in our communities by working with local community partners to help identify and fix things that cause illness and ill-health.

This is all part of her role as a health educator, and she wouldn't have it any other way: "What I really like about the role is that I'm not just sitting at a desk. I get to go be out in the community. I get to meet members, I get to meet people. I get to do all kinds of things." Before working with Virginia Premier, Angela had no idea you could do all of this in a job. "It just like blew my mind that being a health educator was a job and that it was actually something that I can do for the rest of my life."

Angela first learned about health education through her graduate studies at Virginia Commonwealth University. She was enrolled in the Health Behavior Change certificate program and her advisor, Dr. Joann Richardson, told her about an externship opportunity with Virginia Premier. Dr. Richardson helped put Angela in touch with her future mentor at Virginia Premier, Lajune Fowlkes.

For four months, Angela interned with Virginia Premier and learned what health educators do. She worked closely with Lajune and with Sarah Morris, another health educator. "They both taught me what it was like to be a health educator, and it was really through their passion that it sort of like grew my passion."

At the end of her externship, a health educator position at Virginia Premier happened to open up. She applied and got the job, one of only eight health educator positions in the state. "It was literally like all the stars aligned."

Reflecting on it all, Angela believes, "This is where I was meant to be."

**looking ahead**

With membership in our health plans totaling 275,757 at year-end, we believe we are on track to meet our goal of providing affordable health care coverage for 350,000 Virginians by 2023. But we will not sacrifice the quality of our services for the sake of growth. In the years ahead, we will continue to focus on improving our processes, technology and staff to more effectively administer our plans from both the member and provider perspectives. Our goal is to enhance the experience for members, providers and business partners, while providing greater value for all.

We expect our Medicaid membership to grow organically, through Medicaid expansion and other special populations transitioning into managed care. We also seek to maintain and strengthen our Individual and Family Plans offered on the Health Insurance Marketplace, as they continue to be an important option for affordable care in central Virginia. More intentional efforts will be placed on maturing and growing our Medicare Advantage plans, in keeping with our longer-term goal of providing affordable health care to Virginians through all phases of life. Our growth will be purposeful, thoughtful and strategic. Where possible, we will enter into partnerships that will help us differentiate our products and reduce our financial risk.

We will never lose sight of our core mission: to provide access to affordable, quality care for those in need. We will continue to listen, and respond, to your needs—whether you are a Virginia Premier employee, member, provider, community partner or business associate.





VirginiaPremier.com