2020 was challenging in every sense of the word — not just for those in healing professions, but for every individual and community across the globe. Together, as one Kaiser Permanente, we confronted the most deadly pandemic in modern history, multiple natural disasters, an economic downturn, civil unrest, and ongoing racial injustice across the country. We also witnessed a historic election that generated unprecedented voter turnout, and also revealed a nation deeply divided.

Kaiser Permanente met these moments with dedicated resolve — reaffirming our mission, living our values, and standing together through the long days and nights. Despite the magnitude of the tasks ahead, our more than 23,000 Permanente physicians and 80,000 clinicians and administrative staff did not waiver in their commitment to our 12.4 million members and patients.

The physicians of our Permanente Medical Groups responded and led our organization in a robust, organized, and impactful COVID-19 response. Within weeks of the coronavirus outbreak being declared a global pandemic, our Permanente physicians created a comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation playbook, which was used broadly across the organization as well as by local and state public health agencies and other health care systems.

The pandemic’s onset underscored the importance of highlighting the physician’s perspective as policymakers addressed the public health emergency.

To the physicians and employees of the Permanente Medical Groups:
In the following months, Permanente physicians and clinicians created numerous science-based resources, including more than 50 clinical guidance documents, 20 digest newsletters, and 10 playbooks and dashboards. Already a leader in telehealth, we quickly scaled up from about 1 in 4 patients being seen by video to more than 3 in 4; and by mid-2020 we were averaging about 200,000 video visits per week across Kaiser Permanente, compared with 200,000 video visits in all of 2019.

We witnessed historic social and political unrest across the country this year, including a sustained movement to address deeply rooted racial inequities. Kaiser Permanente and our communities joined the conversation, demonstrating our leadership on these challenging issues through listening sessions on racism in America; new equity, inclusion, and diversity committees; and enhanced educational tools and training resources to combat bias across our organization.

Overlapping with our COVID-19 response was a series of major wildfires across California, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado. In response, Kaiser Permanente emergency management teams acted with speed and precision to project the need for medical equipment, bed capacity, staffing, and critical supplies at medical centers and intensive care units throughout our affected service areas. Doctors who were already stretched thin by treating COVID-19 patients balanced the emergency care needs for people injured by wildfires.

The pandemic’s onset underscored the importance of highlighting the physician’s perspective as policymakers addressed the public health emergency. We secured meetings with government officials at the White House, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and members of Congress and its committees, to provide assistance in combating the pandemic and advocate for an equitable, transparent approval process and distribution of any COVID-19 vaccines. We also joined health care industry partners in lobbying for fairness in telehealth reimbursement, physician liability protections, and other important health care policies.

Despite the complexities the pandemic posed, Kaiser Permanente continued to get national recognition as a quality leader in health care, receiving top grades for 29 of our hospitals from the Leapfrog Group; at least 4.5 stars out of 5 possible in all areas served for the 10th consecutive year from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; and recognition as the highest-performing plan nationally in 34 measures of the National Committee for Quality Assurance’s Quality Compass rankings.

Major media outlets took notice, highlighting our medical excellence and leadership in responding to COVID-19. In all, our physicians and their leaders from every Permanente Medical Group were quoted more than 150 times on COVID-19 in 2020, including in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Modern Healthcare, NPR, CNN, and the 3 major broadcast TV news networks.

The tireless work of our Permanente physicians, clinical care teams, and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals partners made it possible for us to deliver on our mission during a year full of unprecedented organizational and societal challenges. Your passion and commitment for delivering world-class care that embraces the latest research and innovations continue to be a guiding light as we embark on a new era of practicing medicine.

Ramin Davidoff, MD
Co-CEO, The Permanente Federation LLC
Executive Medical Director and Chair of the Board, Southern California Permanente Medical Group
Chair of the Board and CEO, The Southeast Permanente Medical Group, Inc.
Chair of the Board and CEO, Hawaii Permanente Medical Group, Inc.

Richard S. Isaacs, MD, FACS
Co-CEO, The Permanente Federation LLC
CEO and Executive Director, The Permanente Medical Group, Inc.
President and CEO, Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group, P.C.

Imelda Dacones, MD
Chair, National Permanente Executive Committee, The Permanente Federation LLC
President and CEO, Northwest Permanente, P.C.

Margaret Ferguson, MD, MBA
President and Executive Medical Director, Colorado Permanente Medical Group, P.C.

Paul Minardi, MD
President and Executive Medical Director, Washington Permanente Medical Group, P.C.

Mary L. Wilson, MD, MPH
President and Executive Medical Director, The Southeast Permanente Medical Group, Inc.
Clinical Quality

From the onset of the pandemic, Clinical Quality rapidly mobilized support across Kaiser Permanente in response to COVID-19, from coordinating expert-informed clinical guidance to developing measurement and forecasting methodologies. Our department developed COVID-19 educational podcasts and interregional quality-improvement projects for physician Maintenance of Certification requirements. The Garfield Memorial Fund also launched investigator-initiated research projects related to COVID-19.

The Kaiser Permanente Excellence in Cancer Care program created a new national physician leader role. The program's notable achievements from 2020 include the creation of an inspiring and far-reaching vision to advance cancer care for our members, as well as the implementation of new, orderable, national cancer-treatment pathways and protocols in KP HealthConnect® and the development of a first-ever report on cancer incidence and mortality across Kaiser Permanente.

In women and children's health, a Maternal Mortality Review Committee was created and began collecting data to identify improvement opportunities. Clinical Quality also coordinated Black Maternal Health Week to help eliminate critical health disparities for pregnant Black women and designed 4 online modules for perinatal patient safety, which were deployed to 5,000 clinicians across Kaiser Permanente.

External Affairs, Communications, and Brand

Our team highlighted Kaiser Permanente’s medical excellence and national leadership in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and elevated Permanente leaders during a pivotal time for health care and the communities we serve. Through extensive national and local media placements, thought leadership opportunities, and social media and website content, Permanente physicians were well-represented in the national dialogue around COVID-19. The team also led the creation and distribution of communications resources, such as playbooks and FAQs, to support physicians in responding to the pandemic.

We developed and launched the Permanente Medicine Brand Center, providing Permanente Medical Group and Federation staff with a centralized location for trainings, branded templates and materials, photography, and other resources to aid in incorporating the Permanente Medicine brand into their work. In a year that required significant flexibility for all Kaiser Permanente staff, the External Affairs, Communications, and Brand team played an integral role by launching a virtual temporary remote-work community and hosting regular check-in meetings to maintain lines of communication between Federation leaders and our workforce.

Finance

The Finance department’s clinical documentation and coding team reacted swiftly to the pandemic’s regulatory and policy changes by working with key contributors to publish and maintain a toolkit for virtual care documentation, coding, and claim adjudication.

Our department led the implementation of new Evaluation and Management Office guidelines throughout the organization, as well as updated professional-fee service reporting requirements for...
all Kaiser Permanente care delivery services in more than 700 medical offices and outpatient facilities.

The Permanente Medical Group chief financial officers collaborated with the Finance team on operational and financial responses to the pandemic; coordination with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals on special pandemic reimbursement and response; Medicaid strategies; opening of the new Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine; and coordination of a new cost-accounting system.

Acknowledging the future financial challenges that will stem from the pandemic for the Permanente Medical Groups and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals, the Finance team partnered with Federation leadership to restructure many Federation services. As a result, medical group fees and charges to the health plan decreased in 2021.

**Government Relations and Public Policy**

The pandemic’s onset underscored the importance of highlighting the physician’s perspective as policymakers developed COVID-19 relief bills to address the public health emergency. In response, the Government and Public Policy team aligned our advocacy work to reflect the ways in which Permanente physicians responded with flexibility and resilience to provide high-quality, culturally responsive, patient-centered care.

During this pivotal time, we secured an array of meetings with government officials at the White House, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and members of Congress and its committees to advocate for an equitable and transparent approval process and distribution of any COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, we lobbied for the inclusion of physician liability protections in proposed relief legislation to ensure that our care providers could continue to focus on treating our patients and the practice of Permanente Medicine.

**People and Leadership Strategy, Human Resources, and Labor**

Our team helped the Permanente Medical Groups and the Federation respond to a number of challenges presented by COVID-19 and longstanding societal inequities, including adapting to remote work, promoting a more equitable work culture, and extending COVID-19 benefits to employees.

The People and Leadership Strategy, Human Resources, and Labor team coordinated the Federation’s restructure to optimize responsiveness and enhance our ability to serve the medical groups during the pandemic. Additionally, we supported the creation of an enhanced benefits package for care delivery personnel during the COVID-19 response and negotiated a new bargaining contract with the National Union of Health Care Workers.

To demonstrate the value of leadership-development opportunities across Kaiser Permanente, we created a comprehensive inventory of all Permanente Medical Group
leadership-development programs and activities, and defined a unifying framework. The People and Leadership Strategy and Human Resources team also strengthened and advanced a shift to 100% remote delivery of leadership-development programs.

The Inclusive Climate Assessment was deployed to nearly 17,000 clinicians and employees in 6 Permanente Medical Groups, Permanente Dental Associates, and the Federation. This was done in conjunction with the formation of an Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Advisory Committee, to ensure that these values are promoted throughout the Federation.

Permanente Advantage, LLC
Permanente Advantage converted to fully paperless functionality and successfully installed work queues for Tapestry — a workflow management program for KP HealthConnect — in Kaiser Permanente service areas.

Permanente Advantage managed multiple COVID-19 cases. This work ensured that members received the best possible care at the right time, in the appropriate setting.

Additionally, we developed and implemented processes and workflows for the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine. For California Medicare Advantage, Permanente Advantage managed multiple COVID-19 cases. This work ensured that members received the best possible care at the right time, in the appropriate setting.

Products, Sales, and Marketing
The Product, Sales, and Marketing team engaged the executive medical directors to develop a long-term plan for measuring department success. Our team responded with nimbleness and flexibility to new job demands brought about by COVID-19, including providing virtual support and engagement to clinical customers and shifting to remote work.

Working with The Southeast Permanente Medical Group, the Products, Sales, and Marketing team completed an objective assessment of the sole carrier–dual choice PPO by using data that had not previously been provided. Additionally, we engaged with sales and marketing leaders from Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals about incorporating Permanente Medicine into customer-facing marketing materials and collateral.

Strategy and Corporate Development
In collaboration with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals, the Strategy and Corporate Development team helped to create a new strategic plan for Kaiser Permanente that strongly reflects the voice of Permanente Medicine.

Our department continued to advance work with the executive medical directors on care delivery strategies, including acute care at home. We also provided support to the Permanente Medical Groups, including on hospital transactions, Medicare transformation, and the development of an external provider management-capability roadmap, regional growth plans, and other opportunities to optimize care delivery.

The Strategy and Corporate Development team also continued to advance a growth strategy that included learnings from our allied relationships, and we supported quality and communications efforts on 11 COVID-19 projects that needed analytical and project management resources.

Ventures
This was a unique year for the role of innovation and the Ventures program. In a variety of important and impactful ways, the companies within our portfolio directly addressed many key challenges presented by COVID-19, including increased access to mental and behavioral health care via virtual engagement; more effective collaboration across care settings, facilitated by the coordinated sharing of data and insights; and more sophisticated remote monitoring solutions to support physicians and care teams with patient management.

The Ventures program invested in 5 new companies, addressing opportunities such as cybersecurity for clinical technologies, advancements in nutritional products, resource support for post-acute care settings, and virtual-reality approaches to surgical training. The program also saw the successful exit of one company through acquisition and the initial public offering of another, both representing important value-creating milestones.
As the COVID-19 pandemic enveloped the world, our medical group’s physicians and professional staff remained adaptable and nimble. From quickly transitioning to increased virtual care during the pandemic’s early months to staffing a COVID Consult Line for physicians when tests and personal protective equipment were limited, we collaborated with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Colorado partners to ensure quality care.

Strong physician leadership in the emergency operations command center ensured that physician expertise was part of all decision-making. As the pandemic extended, we also worked to facilitate growth by staffing new partner hospitals — identifying care gaps, managing chronic diseases, and continuously seeking to improve access and interactions with patients.

Our leadership maintained open lines of communication through virtual town halls and listening sessions. At the end of 2020, we saw the beginning of our Listen to Heal work, which used a trauma-informed care approach to gather stories of professional and personal experiences during the pandemic.

At the onset of the pandemic in Hawaii, our medical group treated the state’s first 2 patients diagnosed with COVID-19. Our physician leaders later launched an innovative program to provide remote blood-oxygen monitoring for outpatients with COVID-19, resulting in several lifesaving interventions.

We provided significant consultation to the Hawaii State Department of Health regarding various aspects of COVID-19 prevention, care, and coordination, which contributed to Hawaii’s low COVID-19 death rate. In particular, we advocated for and created public health messaging and initiatives to mitigate COVID-19 disparities for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

Despite the challenges faced in 2020, our focus on quality care helped Kaiser Permanente maintain an undisputed top-rated health plan in Hawaii, including the state’s only 5-star Medicare plan. To advance performance measures for ongoing operational success, we affiliated with the Southern California Permanente Medical Group.

In a year that brought significant change and challenges, Hawaii Permanente Medical Group had the great privilege of celebrating our 60th anniversary, reflecting a long legacy of caring for Hawaii’s people like family.

COLORADO PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP

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HAWAII PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP

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- In a year that brought significant change and challenges, Hawaii Permanente Medical Group had the great privilege of celebrating our 60th anniversary, reflecting a long legacy of caring for Hawaii’s people like family.
We began offering video visits more than 10 years ago, positioning us well to broadly provide high-quality service from the outset of a historic pandemic. By year’s end, we approached 1 million video visits. Our medical group cared for over 31,000 patients in our virtual home-care program, saving many patients from unnecessary hospitalization.

Our Largo Medical Center became the first freestanding Kaiser Permanente ambulatory surgery center to use the Intuitive da Vinci Xi, a robotic surgical system designed to facilitate surgery with a minimally invasive approach.

For the 9th year in a row, our Medicare health plans received 5 stars from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. We also earned the most number 1 quality ratings in the nation for the second consecutive year for our commercial health plan, as measured by the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Northwest Permanente launched Kaiser Permanente at Home, our first-ever virtual hospital. We ramped up our care delivery system to handle more than 90% virtual care at its peak and stood up a Cancer Detection Command Center to rapidly return to prepandemic screening levels.

Building on our experience as the first region to implement Thrive Local, we supported the launch of Connect Oregon, a new statewide social-health program to help close social needs gaps through strategic engagement with a rich network of community-based organizations.

Most importantly, we focused on the resilience and well-being of one another — a focus that has earned us accolades as a B Corp for more than 3 years running. During the pandemic, catastrophic wildfires, and social unrest, we supported Northwest Permanente staff with enhanced communications, including daily podcasts and virtual town halls, Zoom classes to manage stress and anxiety, resilience workshops, and a robust peer-support program for physicians.
In 2020 we experienced one of the most challenging years in our organization’s history: navigating the biggest public health crisis in a century. Our systems and our people evolved at a rapid pace to meet the year’s demands through innovation, interdependence, and a steadfast commitment to practicing Permanente Medicine.

In response to the pandemic, the Southern California Permanente Medical Group rolled out a substantial COVID-19 testing and vaccination effort, streamlined workflows, increased physician support, and pivoted successfully to virtual care for many nonurgent appointments. We participated in multiple, large, COVID-19–related clinical trials, including for remdesivir and the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, and our targeted enrollment efforts proactively reduced participant disparities.

We affiliated with the Hawaii Permanente Medical Group, sharing performance measures for successful future operations. Kaiser Permanente in Southern California also continued to earn high ratings and awards from key external stakeholders, including 5 stars from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for Kaiser Permanente California’s Medicare health plans for the 10th consecutive year.

Our medical group’s transformational response to COVID-19 led to several important achievements in 2020. This included the development of comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation playbooks and plans, which were shared broadly with other health systems; elected officials; and local, state, and federal health agencies.

We internalized and significantly expanded COVID-19 testing capabilities, including building a lab in Berkeley in 2 months, which enabled us to process up to 20,000 tests per day. We developed an innovative COVID-19 home care program to support patients through a population health approach and participated in the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine trials. Kaiser Permanente in Northern California’s Vaccine Study Center was selected to lead national active surveillance for serious adverse reactions after vaccinations.

The Permanente Medical Group built upon our strong track record of excellence in quality performance, receiving 5 stars from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (for Kaiser Permanente in California) for the 10th straight year, the only 5-star plan in the state. We also received 5 stars from Covered California for the 3rd straight year, and 5 stars from the California Office of the Patient Advocate for the 13th straight year.
The threat of COVID-19 prompted a rapid response in 2020, requiring unprecedented coordination and collaboration throughout our medical group. We made numerous clinical and operational changes, such as increasing bed capacity and staffing, to care for members with the disease and protect the health of patients, physicians, and staff. Clinical experts within our group played an important role in educating Georgians through media appearances, community outreach events, and frequent member updates.

In the wake of racial and social unrest, we joined the call for an end to systemic racism and the fostering of an equitable and inclusive environment. We instituted awareness and training programs, launched a program to address community health-care disparities, and appointed our first special adviser for confronting systemic racism.

Regionally, we worked to better serve our patients by simplifying access to care and expanding services such as telehealth, video visits, and our Chat with a Doc messaging service. Kaiser Permanente’s Medicare Advantage plan in Georgia was once again awarded a 5-star rating by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

When the first U.S. COVID-19 death was confirmed in Washington state in February 2020, we found we needed to lead Kaiser Permanente in managing expectations and response. We were the first in the nation to launch drive-through testing, and the Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute collaborated with Moderna and the National Institutes of Health on the world’s first COVID-19 vaccine study. We led in our state by advising the governor on the need for a unified response effort.

While continuing usual operations, our medical group made advancements in our strategic initiatives. We fully implemented a virtual care strategy, which included telemedicine, virtual guided navigation, remote monitoring, and a digital front door. Additionally, we opened 2 facilities, purchased land for new multidisciplinary hubs, launched an Acceleration Office for transformation and transparency, and partnered with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals on a virtual-first product.
Service areas of the Permanente Medical Groups, based on ZIP codes.

**Executive leadership**

**COLORADO PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, P.C.**
- Margaret Ferguson, MD, MBA
  - President and Executive Medical Director

**HAWAII PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, INC.**
- Edward M. Ellison, MD
  - Chair of the Board and CEO
- Ramin Davidoff, MD
  - EMD-elect

**MID-ATLANTIC PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, P.C.**
- Richard S. Isaacs, MD, FACS
  - President and CEO

**NORTHWEST PERMANENTE, P.C. PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS**
- Imelda Dacones, MD
  - President and CEO

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP**
- Edward M. Ellison, MD
  - Executive Medical Director and Chair of the Board
- Ramin Davidoff, MD
  - EMD-elect

**THE PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, INC.**
- Richard S. Isaacs, MD, FACS
  - CEO and Executive Director

**THE SOUTHEAST PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, INC.**
- Mary L. Wilson, MD, MPH
  - President and Executive Medical Director

**WASHINGTON PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP, P.C.**
- Paul Minardi, MD
  - President and Executive Medical Director

**THE PERMANENTE FEDERATION LLC**
- Chris Grant
  - Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

1. Member of the National Permanente Executive Committee, The Permanente Federation LLC