



Common Ground Health-Rochester Regional Health Information Organization co-CEOs Wade Norwood and Marlene Bessette. (Courtesy of Common Ground Health-Rochester Regional Health Information Organization)

Common Ground Health–RRHIO announce leadership transition

Andrea Deckert // October 24, 2025 // 2 Minute Read

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Common Ground Health-Rochester Regional Health Information Organization (RRHIO) announced upcoming changes to the organization's leadership, as co-CEOs **Wade Norwood** and **Marlene Bessette** prepare for retirement.

Norwood will assume a full-time role as chief advancement and government relations officer, focusing on the organization's financial growth and on strategic community partnerships, as of Jan. 1. Bessette will continue as CEO until her retirement on March 31. The organization's board of directors has begun the search for a new CEO.

Rochester RRHIO and Common Ground merged in 2024, combining the RRHIO's expertise providing a secure health and social determinant information exchange with Common Ground's data analysis.

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"Our organization is stronger, and our community's health delivery system works better, because of Wade and Marlene's leadership, said Melissa Gardner, board chair and executive vice president, chief population health engagement officer at **Excellus BlueCross BlueShield**. "They have done a wonderful job over the past year of leading our organization, and what they have accomplished throughout their careers serves as a model for other human-service and business executives."

Norwood has held community leadership positions for more than three decades. In management at Common Ground Health since 2006 and CEO since 2018, he has been central to the **nonprofit's** strategic

planning process, pushing the organization to become a more effective change agent for all Finger Lakes region residents. He continues to serve on the **New York State Board of Regents**.

Bessette began serving as the RRHIO's CEO in August 2022. She retired from Catholic Family Center in January 2022 after serving nine years as CEO and facilitating the merger of that organization with **Catholic Charities Community Services**. She has been recognized with multiple awards as a leader in the business and nonprofit community.

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