

Medical Home

NEWS

Evaluation and the Patient-Centered Medical Home

By Meredith Rosenthal, PhD, Melinda K. Abrams, MS, and Asaf Bitton, MD, MPH

With the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act extending the promise of health insurance coverage to millions, now more than ever Americans need delivery system reform that can assure meaningful access at affordable cost to the nation. Both federal and state policy makers have taken steps to test and promote a series of policy changes that will reward providers for assuming accountability for patient outcomes and the cost of care. While these changes in accountability are intended to stretch along the continuum of care, a reinforced primary care stratum is a central component to most proposals. Moreover, the patient centered medical home (PCMH) has been a key organizing framework within which primary care reform is being implemented in support of broader system goals of improved quality and affordability of care.

An Opportunity to Refine the PCMH

Individual components of the PCMH have been shown to be associated with higher quality and patient experience¹, but published evaluations of the model as currently formulated have only just begun to emerge in the literature. Findings published during the past year have underscored both the potential for PCMH initiatives to impact health care spending, quality of care, patient and physician experiences, and the obstacles to change that are likely to exist in the vast majority of primary care practices.²

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Coastal Medical, Inc: Transformation to a Patient Centered Care Model

By Anne VanHaaren, PharmD, CDOE

There are currently numerous pilot projects underway across the U.S which are successfully demonstrating the transformation of practices to a patient centered medical home (PCMH) model. Many of these projects have demonstrated both an increase in the quality of care being provided as well a reduction in the total cost of care. Questions remain as to how this model might best be extended beyond demonstration projects, and whether or not the improved quality and cost savings achieved in demonstration projects will be realized with spread of the model across a broader community of providers.

Coastal Medical is one of the largest private providers of primary health care in Rhode Island, serving greater than ten percent of the total Rhode Island population. The organization is a physician owned professional corporation that encompasses 17 practice sites across the state. Our 67 physicians, 24 mid-level providers, and 150 care team members provide predominantly primary care in internal medicine and pediatrics, plus a smaller volume of adult subspecialty care in cardiology, pulmonary medicine, and infectious disease. We also provide ancillary services through our imaging center and mostly in-office laboratory sites.

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