

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

The Medical Home Initiative provides individualized technical assistance and peer support for safety net health care clinics to implement core standards of the patient-centered medical home model of care. Eight safety-net clinics have participated in the initiative, with seven now actively engaged. The clinics represent a wide range of safety net health care, including nurse-led clinics, a federally qualified health center, pediatric clinics, free clinics, and other community health centers.

A technical assistance team from Qualis/Outlook Associates provides tailored technical assistance, training and a learning collaborative to support clinics' quality improvement activities. Through technical assistance, the participating clinics have assessed their technology capacity, including utilization of practice management systems; examined how they manage appointment scheduling and patient flow; developed procedures for data tracking and reporting; instituted clinical care teams, and set quality improvement goals and quality measures.

2008

In 2008, REACH launched the initiative with four local safety-net clinics. During the first phase, basic operational needs were identified that required support before beginning medical home transformation. These needs included medical records management, human resources and office management systems.

2009

In 2009, eight safety-net clinics signed up to participate in technical assistance and professional development provided by Qualis/Outlook Associates. Activities included baseline assessments, development of individualized technical assistance plans, and implementing systems for monitoring and reporting on transformation efforts. Group workshops were conducted on topics such as access scheduling, quality improvement and health information technology (HIT).

2010

In 2010, Qualis redirected efforts to focus on the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) standards endorsed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The goal for the year was to support interested clinics in successful completion of NCQA's PCMH recognition survey.

Group workshops were conducted on the following topics: Anchoring NCQA standards in the clinic, team-based care, care management, HIT, managing supply and patient demand/access, and process improvement/quality improvement. During the year, clinics were offered a separate curriculum for nurse leaders to define the nurse role in medical home transformation.



ABOUT REACH

The REACH Healthcare Foundation, located in the Greater Kansas City area, was established in 2003 through the sale of a regional nonprofit hospital and health care organization.

The Foundation's grant making is directed at achieving two outcomes: increased access to health care services and coverage, and improved quality of health care services. Our primary interest areas are oral health, mental health and safety-net services. Since 2005, REACH has invested \$33 million in health programs and initiatives.

In 2011, individualized technical assistance continued toward meeting NCQA standards. Workshops included anchoring medical home standards in the clinic; team-based care and care management; HIT optimization and meaningful use; empanelment; integration of behavioral health into the patient-centered medical home; and leadership challenges in the medical home.

A curriculum was developed for medical assistants to strengthen their knowledge base, improve clinical skills and prepare them for expanded roles on clinical care teams. Qualis also introduced a Reporting Collaborative to capture clinics' administrative and clinical data in the following domains: patient access, communication with providers, coordination of care, whole person care, and patient perceptions.

In 2012, six clinics participated in technical assistance. A major focus for the year was on the critical role of medical providers as medical home transformation leaders. In addition, clinics that had achieved NCQA recognition continued to strengthen patient-centered care practices, and those preparing their NCQA applications worked toward meeting and documenting standards.

RESULTS

Since August 2011, five clinics have earned NCQA Level III Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) recognition. It is expected that a sixth clinic will complete the review process in early 2013.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR REACH

- 1 Leadership development – Focus technical assistance on engaging clinic leadership and medical directors in sustaining quality improvement efforts and practice changes.
- 2 Dental practice analysis – Provide access to evaluation and planning to help safety net clinics assess clinical and business practices of their existing or planned dental programs and make changes to ensure their viability. REACH is currently funding Safety Net Solutions to work with three safety net clinics engaged in the Medical Home Initiative.
- 3 Oral health integration – Provide coaching and technical assistance through the Medical Home Initiative to support full integration of oral health care in the primary medical care setting.
- 4 Health Information Technology – Provide capacity and program grants to organizations that need technical assistance to address health information technology and electronic health records challenges, including those that support dental care interfaces for electronic health records systems.
- 5 Medical Home pilots – Encourage state health leaders and policy makers to support Medical Home pilots, explore payment reforms that reimburse for patient-centered practices, and implement policies that advance integration of oral health and behavioral health care in publicly funded care delivery systems.