

This *Evaluation Highlight* is the ninth in a series that presents descriptive and analytic Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA) Quality Demonstration Grant Program.¹ The *Highlight*

KEY MESSAGES

The experiences of the six States featured in this *Highlight* may be helpful to other States that are seeking to use care coordinators as an integral part of their strategy for achieving the functions of care coordination in primary care practices serving children and adolescents. Key messages include:

- including educating practices about the functions of care coordination and providing
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- States facilitated the integration of care coordinators into practices by providing
- States and practices reported that care coordinators contributed to increased
- Participation in the CHIPRA quality demonstration helped practices recognize the coordination services after the CHIPRA quality demonstration ends.

Background

to facilitate and organize the appropriate delivery of health care services for a patient. Care coordination comprises

and it requires close communication and collaboration among all care team

and providers. Some evidence suggests that practices that coordinate care improve the quality of services and realize cost savings.⁶

reveals that embedding care coordinators (sometimes referred to as care managers) in practices leads to positive health outcomes and reduced expenditures.⁷

Hiring a care coordinator or designating an existing team member as a care coordinator is one of many possible

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coordinate care. Practices can identify the care coordination activities that should be performed and match them to

expertise and availability.

Care coordinators have traditionally been employed by health insurance

risk for poor health. These entities have typically delivered care coordination services by phone.⁹

Care coordination is also a key feature of PCMH models. As part of the

States supported pediatric practices in improving care coordination as part of

that took a more directive approach to improving care coordination found that it

original Request for Proposals (RFP) to participate in its PCMH demonstration

coordinator hired by a State contractor.

analytics and therefore hired a person

care over the long term via previsit calls

a collaborative approach to hiring by

the coordinators in the six States make up a diverse group of individuals.

even though the State is the employer.

Matching care coordinators to practices' needs and culture is essential

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and health care administrators.

communicative and able to engender

Care coordinators perform care coordination and quality improvement activities

by multiple States as important qualities for all care coordinators to have. States also reported that matching a care

Care coordinators in the six States split

activities and quality improvement (QI) activities aimed at transforming practices

Although supporting families that have CSHCN is the primary focal

successfully integrating a care coordinator into the care team and to ensuring that

reported that care coordinators often reach out not only to other children

care for children and families. Care

as needing additional supports such

activities.

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Care coordination activities. The States noted that practices should determine the types of services provided by care

QI activities. Care coordinators play a key role in transforming practices into PCMHs. This role typically involves participating in learning collaboratives on PCMH transformation and helping

States structured the hiring process to

Idaho set minimum job requirements

from State to State and from practice

administer screening and assessment

improving behavioral and mental health

interested in being recognized as a

Care coordinators also identify and gather key information from caregivers to support clinicians during upcoming

**States helped practices understand
how care coordinators can be of
value**

The CHIPRA quality demonstration

that the presence of care coordinators enhances the quality of care. Practices

- **Care that is more patient-centered.**

Many practices found it easier to

tailor visits more precisely to the

and engage patients in shared decisionmaking because of the previsit phone calls and shared care plans developed by care coordinators.

Some practices plan to fund care coordinators beyond the demonstration

a care coordinator because practices

- **Better population management.**

higher rates of completed referrals. Providers attributed these improvements to the care

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care coordinators to children and

been able to enlarge their panels overall or increase the percentage of CSHCN they serve.

- **Greater caregiver satisfaction.**

received because they included

identifying and accessing additional

managing the multiple providers

deploying care coordinators need to be tailored to the particular

of practices. To support both the integration of care coordinators into

guidance on the functions of care

to recognize the value added by care coordinators. States also provided training and support directly to care coordinators.

Financing care coordination services can be challenging. Although most States and practices have not yet

services after the end of the CHIPRA quality demonstration. The payment and delivery systems unique to each

States can continue to help practices improve care coordination in general and support care coordinators in particular.

Implications

States interested in supporting the use of care coordinators in primary care practices that serve children and

CHIPRA quality demonstration States featured in this *Highlight*:

- Educate health care providers about care coordination and the value that care coordinators can add to a practice.

- Consider the capacity and care coordination needs of practices before requiring a designated care coordinator. Some practices

that a designated coordinator is the better option.

- Support practices in hiring care substantial role in the hiring process

needs.

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LEARN MORE

Additional information about the national evaluation and the CHIPRA quality demonstration is available at <http://www.ahrq.gov/chipra/demoeval/>.

Use the tabs and information boxes on the Web page to:

- Find out about the 52 projects being implemented in the 18 CHIPRA quality demonstration States.
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Acknowledgments

The national evaluation of the CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grant Program and the *Evaluation Highlights* are supported by a contract (HHS A29020090002191) from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to Mathematica Policy Research and its partners, the Urban Institute and AcademyHealth. Special thanks are due to Cindy Brach and Linda Bergofsky at AHRQ, Karen LLanos and Elizabeth Hill at CMS, and our colleagues for their careful review and many helpful comments. We particularly appreciate the help received from CHIPRA quality demonstration staff and providers in the six States featured in this *Highlight* and the time they devoted to answering many questions during our site visits and telephone calls and to reviewing an early draft. The observations in this document represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or perspectives of any State or Federal agency.