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Community Care of North Carolina: Transforming medicine, boosting quality

Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC) is a community-based, public-private partnership focusing on population management and care coordination. Through its 14 local network partners represented in all 100 counties, CCNC creates “medical homes” for 1.3 million North Carolina residents, including individuals covered by Medicare and Medicaid, privately-insured employees and uninsured populations. CCNC has developed extensive outreach embedding care managers in 55 hospitals and 120 practices throughout the state. The goals of the organization are to improve care for targeted patient populations by emphasizing primary care, care coordination, and physician-lead processes. The end results are better outcomes and decreased costs.

CCNC has developed an extensive Informatics Center (IC) to empower this mission. Centralized at CCNC’s organizational headquarters in Raleigh, NC, the North Carolina Community Care Network IC has utilized information technology to empower clinical care givers by creating applications that facilitate care coordination. The Case Management Information System (CMIS) has been in use since 2001 and has over 1,500 users. CMIS contains standardized health assessments, care plans, disease management modules and other tools to help care management activities. In 2010, the Provider Portal was released, a web based management tool expanding the abilities to facilitate care delivery. The Portal contains care team contact information, visit history, medication lists, lab results and other information used to augment electronic health record information. An extensive IC Reporting Site has also been developed to provide networks and individual practices information on population assessments, risk stratification, and key performance indicators. Historically, these applications have been sourced through provider claims data and manual extracts, but as the adoption of electronic capture of health information matures, the ability to bring in real-time clinical data will be incorporated into the existing IC infrastructure.

Private sector employers, intrigued by a patient-doctor partnership focused on outcomes and cost reductions, are beginning to work with CCNC to improve the quality of care delivery to their employees. The First in Health project is one of these initiatives. Launched in August of 2011, First in Health is a collaboration between CCNC and notable public and private North Carolina employers, including GlaxoSmithKline, SAS, KERR Drug, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, and the State Employees Health Plan. Through its innovative delivery model, resource stewardship and provider support, Community Care of North Carolina hopes to deliver the same level of care coordination to these organizations as is currently provided to 1.3 million patients in the state.