Cook County Health and Hospitals System (Chicago)
Restructuring Health Care Delivery (2011-Present)

The Client:
Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS)

The Challenge:
In anticipation of the January 2014 Medicaid expansion authorized by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), this large public health system sought support to prepare for Medicaid expansion and a system re-design to retain and attract low-income, previously uninsured adults who would soon qualify for Medicaid.

The Approach:
CCHHS and HMA worked together to create multiple, specialized teams to work along-side County leadership and staff. These teams worked on the 1115 Waiver Demonstration, delivery system improvement, health system strategy, and provided interim staffing.

The Results:

1115 Waiver Demonstration. In 2011, HMA was engaged by CCHHS to assist in the preparation of the 1115 Waiver application for early Medicaid expansion – well in advance of the January 2014 scheduled Medicaid expansion start-date. The CCHHS and HMA team wrote the application and worked together with the County and the Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle in negotiations with CMS and the State of Illinois. The Waiver was approved and led to the enrollment of more than 150,000 individuals into CountyCare, the managed care plan CCHHS developed under the waiver. This allowed for an infusion of funding to the County and required specific delivery system improvements.

Delivery System Improvement. CCHHS and HMA led and staffed the transformational work at the delivery system level to meet the requirements of the Waiver. The elements of the delivery system scope of work include:

- transformation from traditional primary care clinics to a Primary Care Medical Home model with emphasis on the development of empanelment and registry systems, a staffing model aligned with the new model of care, an approach to effective team-based care, and improved access. The program included a learning collaborative for health center leaders and capacity-building for CCHHS quality improvement staff;
- provision of assistance to CCHHS leadership to assure appropriate utilization of specialists and specialty clinics; and
- development of tools to assure appropriate transitions of care, effective staffing levels, PCMH staff competencies, productivity assessments, and a review of community opportunities for ambulatory care.

Health System Strategy. HMA provided CCHHS leadership with strategic assistance in the development of CountyCare, now a full risk-bearing Medicaid health plan in Cook County with 170,000 members. Other strategic assistance included setting priorities; monitoring progress; and anticipating partnership opportunities, including integration strategies between CCHHS and its primary academic affiliate, Rush University.

Interim Staffing at CCHHS. Since 2014, Health Management Associates has filled interim administrative and clinical leadership at CCHHS. Examples include early CountyCare leadership and enrollment positions; the COO position for Stroger and Provident Hospitals; and the COO position and Director of Quality for Cermak Health Services.
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