CHI Summer Internship Final Project Report

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Organization –
Native American Community Clinic

Project Title –
Health Care Home program development
• **Introduction**

The Native American Community Clinic (NACC), a 501©(3) non-profit organization and Federally-Qualified Health Center (FQHR), has been serving the Phillips neighborhood since 2003 by promoting health and wellness of body, mind and spirit in Native American Families, decreasing health disparities of native Americans in the metropolitan area, and providing quality care regardless of ability to pay. As part of a FQHR Urban Health Network, it is a primary care organization dedicated to clinical excellence and consistency through provision of a robust care coordination with the aid of technical support systems to measure and report on quality and cost of care. They strive to constantly develop the necessary infrastructure and skills for the implementation and management of this service delivery model.

**Project description**

The overarching goal was being involved with the Health Care Home program development which has a focus on implementing innovative strategies towards increasing quality of care, patient experience, and cost-savings. With the recently installed Electronic Medical Record system, carrying out audits of health outcome measures (PHQ-9 (Diabetes), ACT score (Asthma) and HBA1c (Diabetes)) as a means for monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness of quality improvement strategies was made more feasible. Also, I was involved carrying out an appraisal of the health information of the most expensive cohort of the patient population
and making necessary recommendations to the providers and Health Care Home group towards efficient implementation of strategies.

- **Goals of the project**
  The overarching goals of the project was to inform the decision-making process of the Health Care Home workgroup towards improving quality of care and patient experience at the Native American Community clinic, while achieving cost-savings through activities like literature reviews regarding best-practices, audit of health outcome measures, involved in the grant proposal development process, referral tracking process, and review of high-risk and expensive patients.

- **Tasks necessary to complete project**
  Attend strategic meetings with staff (Doctors, Nurses, Social Worker(s) of the Native American Community Clinic to discuss policy initiatives surrounding the objectives of an Accountable Care Organization.

  Assist in grant writing to source for funds to support the prenatal care program of the clinic.

  Assist in audits and outcome assessment of the three major chronic conditions faced by the patient population – diabetes, asthma, depression.

  Referral tracking to help inform decision-making on improving the referral process between the clinic and specialist hospitals.

  Conduct site visit to the Minneapolis Native American Community Center which is an important community partner of the clinic.

  Assist in literature reviews as regards best practices in harm reduction towards managing the high prevalence of substance abuse in the community.
Project Outcomes and/or Recommendations.

Prenatal care grant proposal

Cost-savings due to restriction of seven of the most expensive patients to a single clinic.

Relevant literature regarding Harm Reduction, a chemical dependence management strategy.

Number of completed and incomplete referrals, and indicating which incompleted ones need to be re-contacted to re-book an appointment based on severity of condition and other factors.

Conclusion

The project gave me a firm base for understanding how a local non-profit organization functions, as well as the various strategies explored and implemented by health clinics in improving quality of care and achieving cost-savings, as part of the overall Accountable Care Organization strategy. Being able to contribute some necessary skills towards program support helped reinforce them, and contribute towards the effective and efficient implementation of these programs.