State at a Glance: South Carolina

Overview

In February 2010, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** awarded grants to 10 States under a 5-year, $100 million effort to improve health care quality and delivery systems for children enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Funded by the **Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA)**, the **Quality Demonstration Grant Program** aims to identify effective, replicable strategies for enhancing quality of care for children. Because some grantee States are partnering with other States, the grants will support the implementation and evaluation of quality improvement strategies for children in a total of 18 States under five broad categories.[1]

As one of the 10 grantees, South Carolina is implementing projects in three of the five grant categories:

- Showing how a core set of children's quality measures can be used to improve quality of care for children.
- Promoting the use of health information technology (IT) to enhance service quality and care coordination.
- Implementing more comprehensive provider-based models of service delivery.

South Carolina's Objectives

South Carolina will test the initial core set of children's quality measures; use health IT to automate quality reporting and feedback and improve care coordination; and implement a medical home model with a behavioral health focus using a learning collaborative approach. Activities under each category will occur in 18 pilot practices. The practices include 12 pediatric practices, three academic practices, and three Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), representing small, medium, and large practices located in rural and urban settings across the State. The practices intend to implement electronic health records (EHR) or subscribe to the CHIPRA data registry. Within 2 years, they plan to receive quality data reports and be able to extract, standardize, and transmit data from their EMR to the State's health information exchange (HIE). By the grant's completion, most of the practices should have the ability to obtain medical home certification from the **National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA)**.

Working with the Initial Core Set of Children's Quality Measures

South Carolina will automate the collection and reporting of the initial core set of children's quality measures in 18 pilot pediatric practices. By examining the ease of measuring the indicators and their impact on quality improvement, South Carolina will suggest strategies for statewide reporting of quality data and the use of such data in broader quality improvement efforts. The project will use a learning collaborative approach and will focus on the collection of quality measures, quality report feedback and review, and quality report consultation.

[1] The five categories are projects that (1) show how a core set of children's quality measures can be used to improve quality of care for children, (2) promote the use of health information technology to enhance service quality and care coordination, (3) implement new or more comprehensive provider-based models of service delivery, (4) demonstrate the impact of a model electronic health record format for children, and (5) test an approach to quality improvement of a State's own design.

Using Health IT to Improve Child Health Care Quality

Leveraging other HIE statewide infrastructure investments, Regional Extension Center EHR adoption support, and health IT adoption incentives, South Carolina will support the 18 practices so they can collect, submit, and receive feedback on quality measures electronically and deliver coordinated care through a "connected" health care system.

Assessing a Provider-Based Model of Care

South Carolina will transform pediatric practices into patient-centered medical homes that effectively integrate physical and mental health services. The State will use a learning collaborative model that involves semi-annual meetings, technical assistance, coaching, site visits, the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle, and a project blog for sharing information.

Evaluation Questions

The national evaluation team will gather information from South Carolina to address a wide range of questions about the implementation and outcomes of its efforts, including:

- How did South Carolina automate the reporting of clinical data to a new database and transmit feedback to providers through EHRs?
- To what extent did previous knowledge, skills, or experience related to using health IT to improve delivery of care provide support for the current project?
- To what extent did the medical home model succeed in effectively integrating physical and mental health services?
- What are the key lessons from South Carolina's experience that would be useful for other States?

Learn More

This information is current as of March 2012, slightly more than 2 years after grant award. To learn more about the projects being implemented in South Carolina under the CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grant Program visit their website **http://www.scdhhs.gov/service/chipra** or please contact:

Lynn Martin, Project Manager, South Carolina CHIPRA Grant
PO Box 8206, 1801 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29202-8206
803-898-0093
MartinLy@scdhhs.gov

To learn more about the national evaluation of the CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grant Program, visit the evaluation's Web page at **http://www.ahrq.gov/chipra/demoeval** or send an email to **CHIPRADemoEval@ahrq.hhs.gov**.