

Attachment R: Health Workforce Development Protocol

Introduction

The Special Terms and Conditions (STCs) of Rhode Island's Section 1115(a) Demonstration #11-W-00242/1 approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on October 20, 2016, provides expenditure authority to Rhode Island (RI) Medicaid for Designated State Health Programs. Accordingly, Rhode Island established a Health Workforce Development (HWD) Designated State Health Program (DSHP) enabling Rhode Island to promote improved access and quality of care for Medicaid beneficiaries in the State by supporting the education and training of the health care workforce. Specifically, STC 85 states "to ensure that DSHP funds promote the development of workforce training to benefit the Medicaid population and improve access, the State shall commit to implementing the Health Workforce Development Methodology Protocol that will be **Attachment R**".

This document is **Attachment R** to those STCs. The methodology described herein includes: a) the planning efforts Rhode Island has undertaken for workforce development; b) the State, higher education and provider collaboration efforts that have occurred to identify the current environment, needs for the workforce, and plans for continued collaboration; c) the workforce development strategies resulting from the analysis of the previous collaboration efforts; and, d) an outline of the implementation plan the State has defined to achieve the workforce development improvements.

I. Planning and Collaboration

On February 26, 2015, Governor Gina Raimondo issued Executive Order 15-08, establishing the "Working Group to Reinvent Medicaid." In July 2015, the Working Group delivered a multi-year plan for the transformation of the Rhode Island Medicaid program, "*towards a system that pays for the outcomes and quality of care Rhode Islanders deserve, and that addresses the complex medical and social needs critical to achieving improved health status.*" Working with partners from the health care sector, the advocacy community, the business community at large, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) laid out a model for a reinvented publicly financed health care system in Rhode Island based on the following principles:

- Pay for value, not for volume
- Coordinate physical, behavioral, and long-term health care
- Rebalance the delivery system away from high-cost settings
- Promote efficiency, transparency, and flexibility

None of these changes in healthcare are possible without a transformed workforce, with the right workers with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. Recognizing this need, RI Medicaid under the Executive Office for Health and Human Services (EOHHS) launched a Healthcare Workforce Transformation ("HWT" also "HWD" (Healthcare Workforce Development) planning process in June, 2016, to assess Rhode Island's current and projected healthcare workforce needs and educational capacity, and to identify priorities and strategies to

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align healthcare workforce education and training programs with the objectives of the State's Health System Transformation Program (HSTP).

The HWT process involved the active participation of more than two-hundred fifty (250) healthcare partners representing providers, educators, policy-makers, payers, community-based organizations, advocates, professional associations and labor organizations. This process included regular meetings of a twenty person Advisory Committee, three large stakeholder meetings, thirty one-on-one interviews, and seven small group discussions on a variety of health focus areas including primary care, behavioral health, social determinants and cultural competence, health information technology, home and community-based care, chronic disease, and oral health. The focus of these efforts was to identify the knowledge, skills, training, and experience that will be needed by the current and future healthcare workforce to support health system transformation.

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II. Strategies

This initial planning phase of the EOHHS HWT initiative culminated in early May, 2017 with the publication of the EOHHS Healthcare Workforce Transformation Report (Report), which includes data (labor market, education, and licensure), best practices (national and local), a compendium of “transformative” occupations, and an inventory of healthcare workforce development resources in RI. Most importantly, the Report identifies the following priorities and strategies to guide the State’s support for, and development of, the healthcare workforce that RI will need to achieve the goals of the Health System Transformation Project.

1. *Healthcare Career Pathways: Skills That Matter For Jobs That Pay

Prepare Rhode Islanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds for existing and emerging good jobs and careers in healthcare through expanded career awareness, job training and education, and advancement opportunities. **Strategies:**

- *Support the Entry-Level Workforce: Improve recruitment, retention, and career advancement.

In order to support RI Medicaid’s goal to rebalance the system away from high-cost settings, skilled and committed in-home care workers (home health aides, personal care aides), that work on the “frontlines” of healthcare become even more essential.

- *Increase Diversity and Cultural Competence: Increase the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of licensed health professionals.

As in much of the United States, Rhode Island’s population has grown more diverse culturally, ethnically, and linguistically. The shift to community-based care, the heightened focus on population health, and the need to reduce health disparities strengthen the case for diversity and cultural competency among healthcare providers. To achieve high quality health outcomes for Medicaid beneficiaries across all populations, a professional workforce that speaks the language and has the trust of multiple communities is critical.

- Develop Youth Initiatives to Expand the Talent Pipeline: Increase healthcare career awareness, experiential learning opportunities, and readiness for health professional education.

In order to increase the diversity needed in the workforce, and to ensure that there is a workforce that is sufficient in size and capacities in the near future, pipelines bringing youth into the health workforce are vital.

- Address Provider Shortages: Remediate shortages among certain health professions.

If there is an undersupply of practitioners that are critical to transforming the RI Medicaid program, the state may realize a significant barrier in achieving

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changes in delivery and payment. Additionally, as the RI Medicaid program transforms, there are roles or occupations in which shortages will emerge if system-changing practices and supporting arrangements depending on these positions and skill sets are implemented. Addressing provider shortages, both current and anticipated, are needed to drive system transformation.

*This goal and strategies are closely aligned with another DSHP Program, the Wavemaker Fellowship Program. The Wavemaker Fellowship provides loan repayment to college/university graduates who are employed by a Rhode Island employer in the health care, medicine, medical device technology, natural or environmental sciences, computer, information or software technology, advanced mathematics, finance; engineering, industrial or other commercial design fields. Although the Wavemaker Fellowship is open to graduates of many academic disciplines, the Wavemaker Fellowship DSHP is restricted to loan repayment to graduates who work in RI in a health care field at a provider which serves the Medicaid population. Funds from the Wavemaker DSHP will be used to support Workforce Development efforts with a primary focus on recruiting graduates to work in RI by increasing enrollment of entry level health professional graduates into the Wavemaker Program. Additional information about the Wavemaker Fellowship DSHP can be found in Attachment Q.

2. Home and Community-Based Care

Increase the capacity of community-based providers to offer culturally-competent care and services in the home and community and reduce unnecessary utilization of high-cost institutional or specialty care.

Strategies:

- Expand Community-based Health Professional Education: Educate and train health professional students to work in home and community-based settings.
As RI Medicaid begins work to rebalance the delivery system away from high-cost settings, health professional education has been identified as an area of need. There is a growing consensus among the practitioners, policy experts, and educators that candidates for health professions are not fully prepared by their classroom training, residencies, or clinicals for community-based practice. To support the goals of Reinventing Medicaid, it is essential that the state educate and train health professional students to work in home and community-based settings.
- Prepare Healthcare Support Occupations for New and Emerging Roles: Prepare healthcare support occupations to work in home and community-based settings.

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Creating a workforce prepared for the shift to home and community-based care goes beyond changes in professional education. It also depends on tapping new roles for existing occupations, as well as for new or emerging occupations.

3. Core Concepts of Health System and Practice Transformation

Increase the capacity of the current and future workforce to understand and apply core concepts of health system and practice transformation.

Strategies:

- Prepare Current and Future Health Professionals to Practice Integrated, Team-Based Care: Increase the capacity of health professionals to integrate physical, behavioral, oral health, and long-term care.

To support RI Medicaid's goal of providing care that coordinates physical, behavioral, and long-term health care, it is necessary to educate the workforce on practice transformation—teaching team members to work collaboratively, apply metrics to monitor outcomes, and improve workflow, among other skills, to improve the quality of care and patient satisfaction.

- Teach Health System Transformation Core Concepts: Educate the healthcare workforce about the significance of value-based payments, care management, social determinants of health, health equity, population health, and data analytics. *Just as learning the skills of integrated, team-based care is a departure from current health professional education, teaching core concepts of transforming health requires new curricula and new lenses for thinking critically and innovatively about health and healthcare. In order to realize the potential of health systems transformation, the healthcare workforce will require new knowledge as well as renewed skills, including an understanding of the “drivers” of system and practice transformation.*

III. Implementation

In June, 2017, EOHHS will convene a HWT Summit which is expected to be attended by over two-hundred (200) healthcare partners. The Summit will feature presentations and workshops that will focus on transformative healthcare workforce innovations from throughout the U.S. and Rhode Island that are related to the priorities and strategies outlined in the HWT Report in support of the Health System Transformation Project. The Summit will also serve to launch the implementation phase of EOHHS's HWT initiative.

Following the Summit, EOHHS will focus on engaging healthcare educators and healthcare providers to address healthcare workforce transformation priorities and health system transformation goals. The HWT development places particular emphasis on partnerships with the Rhode Island Public Institutions of Higher Education – Rhode Island College, Community College of Rhode Island, and the University of Rhode Island (the “IHES”) as well as the

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Accountable Entities in Rhode Island (AEs) both of which are referenced in the STCs and critical to the State's Health System Transformation Project.

Additionally, EOHHS has structured an IHE Steering Committee under the Interagency Service Agreements with each IHE. The Steering Committee will serve to facilitate the linkage between the:

- a) HWT innovative healthcare workforce development strategies and initiatives identified in the HWT Report;
- b) Parties that are poised with readiness and capabilities to carry out the initiatives; and,
- c) Allocation of the IHE DSHP funding for the efforts to implement the innovative healthcare workforce development programs.

The Interagency Service Agreements (ISAs) with the IHEs provide the structure to link the above: a) planning and strategies; b) capabilities and delivery; and, c) funding. The ISAs include defined templates that require written documentation of the proposed initiative(s) with specific goals and deliverables, a project plan and a budget. The procedures established in the ISAs require these templates be submitted to the Steering Committee when the proposal is first presented, updated during the period of the effort, as warranted, and updated when the effort is complete. The Steering Committee meets at least quarterly, reviews all proposals and vets them against the Health Workforce Transformation Priorities and Strategies, makes recommendations to EOHHS for approval, monitors progress and spending on the initiatives, reviews the deliverables against the proposal and recommends EOHHS disburse funding once the initiative is successfully completed.

The clear strategies and direction of the well-vetted and broadly developed HWT Report - in conjunction with the structure, templates, monitoring, and oversight processes of the Steering Committee (as established by the Interagency Service Agreements) - establish a foundation for the successful implementation of innovative HWT activities to support the HSTP.