

Health system goal: Improve and integrate behavioral health services

Problem statement: For many Rhode Islanders, access to behavioral health services is extremely limited. Furthermore, behavioral health is often treated as separate from physical health even though we know that behavioral health directly affects physical health, and vice versa.

Example of a relevant workforce strategy: Efforts are underway in Rhode Island and elsewhere to train primary care practitioners, emergency room personnel, and others to have the skills to assess behavioral health needs of their patients, and to treat or refer as appropriate. Mental health and substance use staff can similarly be supported to more closely align with primary care providers. One RI workforce strategy would be to help practices integrate these approaches in the practice workflow.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

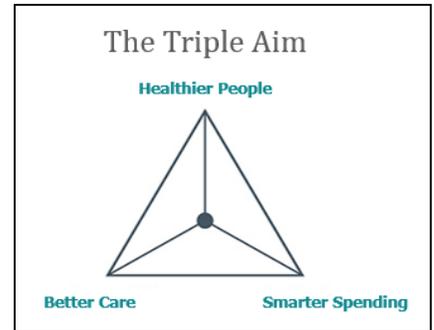
(Please consider new skills, new roles, new occupations, and/or new settings for the current or future healthcare workforce.)

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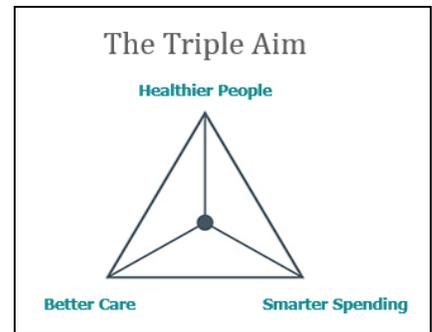
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Health system goal: Improve access and coordination of primary care

Problem statement: It is widely accepted that primary care is a cost-effective, patient-centric means of screening, diagnosing, educating, and treating patients. However, the demands on primary care practices have increased dramatically while resources have not -- resulting in a need to reorganize primary care practice models to maximize the abilities of all members of the care team, increase access and support for patients, and reduce provider burnout.



Example of a relevant workforce strategy: Evolving approaches to primary care are resulting in new staff roles (e.g., care coordination) and new team members (e.g., behavioral health professionals) to provide coordinated, value-based primary care services. One RI workforce strategy would be to develop and deliver trainings to effectively integrate these new team members.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

(Please consider new skills, new roles, new occupations, and/or new settings for the current or future healthcare workforce.)

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Health system goal: Address prevalent chronic diseases

Problem statement: Diabetes, heart disease, and stroke and other chronic diseases impose substantial emotional, physical, and financial costs on all of us. Many of the causes and symptoms of these diseases can be mitigated through a combination of supports and services.

Example of a relevant workforce strategy: Some health professionals have obtained the additional training, experience, and credentials necessary to become a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE). A CDE educates and supports individuals affected by diabetes to be better able to understand and manage their condition. One RI workforce strategy would be to help make these trainings more accessible for incumbent workers.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

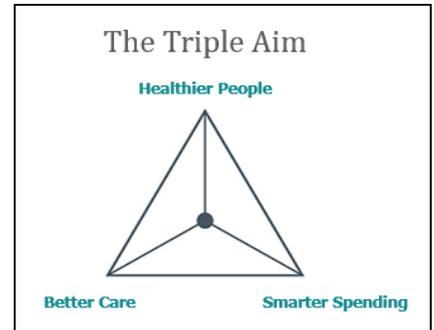
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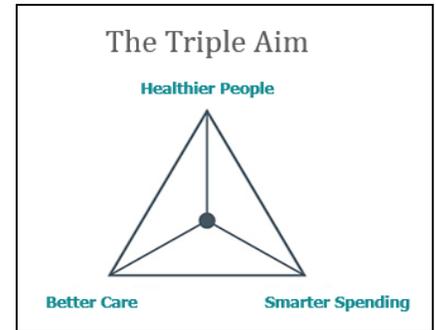
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Health system goal: Expand access to dental care

Problem statement: For many Rhode Islanders, access to oral health services is extremely limited. Furthermore, oral health is generally treated separately from other healthcare, even though we know that oral health can have a direct effect on an individual's physical or emotional well-being.



Example of a relevant workforce strategy: In order to expand access to dental services among low-income and uninsured residents, the State of Minnesota established a new category of dental professional in 2009 known as a Dental Therapist, which is a Masters-level practitioner who can perform certain services that were previously limited to Dentists. Evidence suggests that access has been expanded with no adverse impact on outcomes, quality, or patient experience. One RI workforce strategy would be to explore the steps necessary to create this level of practitioner in our state.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

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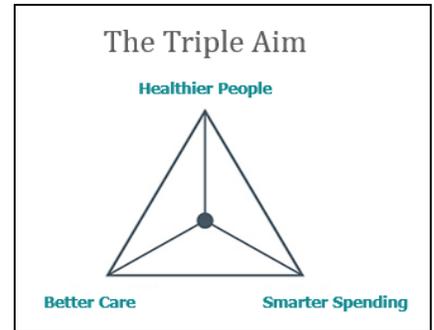
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Health system goal: Improve performance data quality and reporting

Problem statement: As Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial health insurance all move towards paying for “value-based” care in which providers experience financial gains (or losses) based on the health outcomes of their patients, our health system is challenged to develop and maintain data systems that can accurately track and report results. Increasing reliance on health information technology has placed stress on the time and abilities of the healthcare workforce.



Example of a relevant workforce strategy: The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology has funded seven colleges and universities across the U.S. to develop curriculum materials and training programs, which are available on-line and in-person for healthcare workers and students. One RI workforce strategy would be to create venues for incumbent workers and others to take these trainings.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

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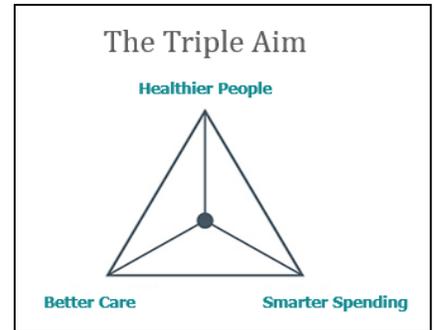
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Health system goal: Address social and environmental determinants of health

Problem statement: Research tells us that only 10% of our health is determined by the medical care that we receive. Rather, our health risks and outcomes are largely determined by where and how we live, learn, work, and play. This includes such factors as nutrition, air and water quality, housing, violence, substance abuse, and more. Increasingly, health policy-makers are noting the importance of addressing social and environmental determinants of health as the most effective way to improve population health, particularly in economically disadvantaged communities.



Example of a relevant workforce strategy: Community Health Workers (CHW) are typically “peers” who share common culture, language, and/or experience with the population that they serve. CHWs are increasingly recognized as members of the health workforce that are uniquely positioned to work with individuals and communities to mitigate negative social and environmental determinants of health. CHWs encompass a variety of job titles and may be employed by healthcare providers, social service agencies, or community organizations. One RI workforce strategy is to create two new SIM-funded Community Health Teams that employ CHWs.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

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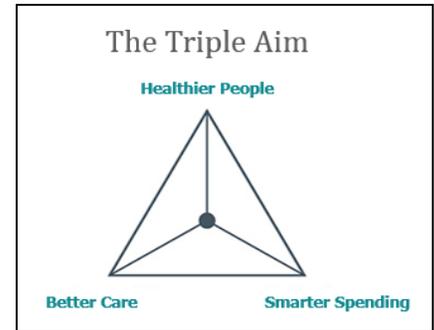
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Health system goal: increase cultural competence and diversity

Problem statement: Racial and ethnic minorities are significantly under-represented in RI's health professional workforce, which diminishes our capacity to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care to diverse communities, while simultaneously depriving these communities of their share of well-paid health professional careers.



Example of a relevant workforce strategy: The federal Nursing Workforce Diversity program was established to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, including racial and ethnic minorities who are underrepresented among registered nurses. The program supports projects that provide student stipends or scholarships, stipends for diploma or associate degree nurses to enter a bridge or degree completion program, student scholarships or stipends for accelerated nursing degree programs, pre-entry preparation, advanced education preparation, and retention activities. One RI workforce strategy would be to explore how to implement this program for students at one or more of our nursing schools.

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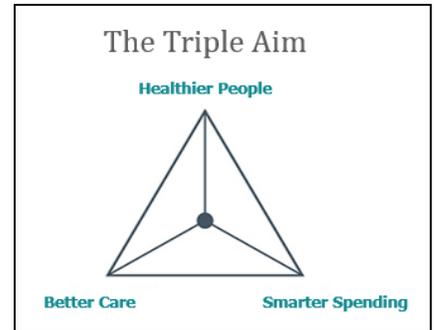
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Health system goal: Expand community and home-based options

Problem statement: Currently, roughly 80 percent of long-term care dollars spent on elders and adults with disabilities in Rhode Island goes to nursing homes, a third above the national average. Furthermore, unnecessary or preventable Emergency Room visits, hospitalizations, and readmissions further drive healthcare costs. As was noted in the *Report of the Working Group to Reinvent Medicaid*, “The most direct way to reduce expenditures and improve patient experience is to...avoid inappropriate or unnecessary use of high-cost institutional care.”



Example of a relevant workforce strategy: Throughout the U.S., home care aides and professionals, community health workers, EMS, and family caregivers are being trained and deployed to provide support and services for elderly, disabled, and other medically-vulnerable individuals in their homes and communities. One RI strategy would be to determine whether and how these traditional and non-traditional workforce options can expand access to community and home-based care and services.

Other workforce strategies to help achieve this goal

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