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Topic

Accountable Care Organization

Comment

I write in support of OneCare, Vermont's program to streamline the current multiple approaches to healthcare. It deserves continued support because – one patient at a time – it is starting the improvement at the beginning, with the patient. In 2021, more than 288,000 Vermonters are projected to be treated using a new system of care. A system that pulls together the myriad points of care that follow a patient's health: economic, mental, social, transportation, nutrition. Through programs like Care Coordination and using care coordination tools like Care Navigator, individual physicians and clinics can securely share patient information, lifting the silos that have previously prevented treatment of the whole patient. Here's an example: patient Fred (not his real name) has multiple health problems. Like many Vermonters, he was making multiple trips to the ER. Eight times with no plan going forward. He agreed to join the Care Coordination program. Now his team is his primary care doctor, a cardiologist, a counselor and a social worker. Result? His visits to his doctors went from ten to twenty. His trips to the ER went from eight to zero. His health care costs went down 97.4% - from \$293 thousand to \$7 thousand!

In an age of immediate gratification, improving health care delivery and reducing costs cannot and will not be accomplished overnight. OneCare is using a formula of value over volume. It will take time. The Green Mountain Care Board is aware of the positive cost-benefits that will come, with time. OneCare is one of several attempts nationally to cure the pain of healthcare cost. They are showing slow, if not pronounced, improvement. OneCare has seen results in both quality and savings in the system, and money saved is reinvested back into preventative care. That money was then reinvested back into preventative care under OneCare. As a patient family advisor to OneCare I have seen graphic proof of the improvements to individual patients that resulted in significant cost savings.

It can work. It will work, given further budget approval and patience.

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