Maimonides Medical Center

Overview
Maimonides Medical Center is a nonprofit academic hospital in Brooklyn, New York, serving more than 2.6 million patients each year. Founded in 1911, Maimonides is responsible for many medical innovations and has pioneered and performed groundbreaking surgeries. It is one of the largest independent teaching hospitals in the country, and maintains one of the country's lowest mortality rates for common illnesses. Nearly 50 percent of its patients are foreign-born.

Maimonides established Community Care of Brooklyn (CCB) to meet the goals of the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program, the main mechanism of New York State's efforts to restructure its health-care delivery system by reinvesting in the Medicaid program. CCB collaborates with primary-care practices to recruit high-performing medical assistants and patient care technicians and train them as health coaches.

Training and Employee Engagement
Health coaches support health-care professionals in assisting patients with chronic conditions. They also act as liaisons in care coordination activities, serving as conduits between transitional nurses, doctors, and hospital emergency departments. This improved communication between the acute-care, inpatient, and outpatient sectors results in more streamlined care.

Since health coaches often live in the communities they serve, they are usually able to understand and meet the cultural and linguistic needs of patients. While doctors frequently have only limited time with patients, health coaches can spend as much time as needed working to identify and resolve issues that prevent patients from taking care of themselves. “The health-care worker of the future looks more like a social worker,” insists Curtis Dann-Messier, assistant director of community education for Maimonides.

CCB collaborated with the New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (NYACH) and Kingsborough Community College (KCC) to develop a 75-hour training course for health coaches. The curriculum is free and available to the public, as required by all organizations delivering training through the City University of New York (CUNY). Graduates receive a certificate in health coaching and six transferrable credits within the CUNY system. Incumbent worker graduates often receive a title change and a wage increase.

Funding
Each participating partner in the state DSRIP program is required to develop, fund, and implement a workforce development plan, including a training strategy. CCB was awarded approximately $450 million over five years to manage an initial attribution of more than 400,000 patients. Though the number of patients has increased to more than 650,000, no additional monies were allocated; CCB uses funds from its original award to pay for health coach training.
The $450 million grant is milestone-based. Participating partners were given two and a half years to implement the program, and the last two and a half years of funding are contingent upon the partners preventing avoidable admissions and readmissions to hospitals, as well as achieving many other measures.

**Goals, Achievements, and Lessons Learned**

Partnerships with NYACH and KCC have been critical to ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the field and that participants receive college credit. Jenny Tsang-Quinn, chief of clinical programs and network development at Maimonides, explains: “Some community-based doctors spend enormous time trying to get authorization for diabetic shoes, for example, because that is valuable to the patient. However, their time would be better spent managing medications or providing clinical management. The health coach can take on some tasks that are important to patient health while freeing up doctors to work to the top of their license.”