IPRO QIN-QIO — Healthcentric Advisors — Qlarant

QIN–QIO
Quality Innovation Network -
Quality Improvement Organizations
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES
iQUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP

Health Equity

HEALTH EQUITY UPDATES

April 2022

CMS Accepting Applications for ACO REACH Model

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation Center is accepting applications for the ACO Realizing Equity, Access, and Community Health (REACH) Model. CMS redesigned the Global and Professional Direct Contracting Model (GPCD) and renamed it ACO REACH in response to CMS priorities – including a commitment to advancing health equity – stakeholder feedback, and participant experience. ACO REACH will enable CMS to test an ACO model that can inform the Medicare Shared Savings Program and future models by:

- advancing health equity to bring the benefits of accountable care to underserved communities;
- promoting provider leadership and governance;
- protecting beneficiaries and the Model with more participant vetting, monitoring and greater transparency.

Applications are being accepted through April 22, 2022. A new cohort will begin participation in the new model on January 1, 2023, and will include four performance years. Interested providers can find more details in the ACO REACH Model RFA.

HHS Celebrates Affordable Care Act Anniversary

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was enacted on March 23, 2010 and has led to historic advancement in health equity through expansion of health insurance coverage for millions of Americans, expansion of Medicaid eligibility up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level, extension of protection for Americans with disabilities to reduce discrimination, and coordinated efforts to reduce disparities in mental health and substance use. To learn more about this landmark law, read the Fact Sheet: Celebrating the Affordable Care Act or the ASPE Report: The Affordable Care Act and Its Accomplishments.

This Month

NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

Give Your Community A Boost! | April 2022

The HHS Office of Minority Health theme for National Minority Health Month: Give Your Community a Boost! focused on COVID-19 vaccinations.

Every April, the HHS Office of Minority Health (HHS OMH) observes National Minority Health Month to highlight the importance of improving the health of racial and ethnic minorities and reducing health disparities. This year's theme continues the focus on COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters to end the pandemic that has disproportionately affected communities of color.

CDC Resources:

COVID-19 Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities

Recommendations for Additional Boosters

COVID-19 Community Levels & County Check Tool

In the News

Evaluating A Nonemergency Medical Transportation Benefit for ACO Members

An article published in Health Affairs last month examined an ACO transportation benefit in which the authors found that the benefit was associated with a greater number of per person per year outpatient visits and higher outpatient spending but no difference in inpatient admissions or emergency department visits. The program was also not associated with cost savings. Patients were highly satisfied with the benefit suggesting that transportation programs can improve health care access for certain individuals even though they may not help contain health care spending.

Lown Institute Hospital Racial Inclusivity Index

Lown Institute recently released its U.S. hospital racial inclusivity rankings for the third year. Lown assesses how well the demographics of a hospital's Medicare patients matched the demographics of the hospital's surrounding communities. Hospitals underserving communities of color are given lower rankings. One finding is that 15 cities have racially segregated hospital markets with 50% or more of hospitals overserving or underserving communities of color.

Association Between SDOH & COVID-19 Mortality

An article published in JAMA Network Open examined if social determinants of health (SDOH) explained the disproportionate COVID-19 mortality experienced by racial and ethnic minorities. The researchers explored spatial and racial disparities in county-level COVID-19 mortality rates during the first year of the pandemic and found that for Black, Hispanic and non-Hispanic White individuals, different dimensions of SDOH were uniquely associated with the disproportionate burden of COVID-19 mortality for each group. Researchers also found that SDOH operated distinctly across geographic areas to shape COVID-19 mortality. For example, in urban areas, lack of internet access and severe housing issues increased mortality.

Social Deprivation and SDOH Account for 40% of Cardiovascular Mortality Disparities in the U.S.

According to new research published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings, researchers from University Hospitals Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute revealed that areas with higher social deprivation experience higher mortality rates from cardiovascular disease compared to more affluent areas. The authors surmise that a lack of public and social goods and services that help individuals achieve and maintain health contribute to the increase in CVD mortality.

NCQA Health Equity Resource Center

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recently announced the launch of the Health Equity Resource Center, a public website that health plans, health systems, government and employers can use to learn about and improve health equity. The website includes NCQA resource guides, research, videos and programs to advance health equity.

Visit the IPRO Resource Library: https://qi-library.ipro.org/

— Upcoming Events —

IPRO Small Talks Education Series

Small Talks are brief presentations that articulate a specific challenge, offer unambiguous interventions that lead to improvement, and guide providers to specific results or outcomes. Each presentation is repeated the following week to accommodate schedules. Small Talks will be offered through May.

ACO REACH Model Health Equity Webinar

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Date: April 5, 2022

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 PM ET

Quality Conference 2022: New Hope, New Health: Charting a Path Forward

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Dates: April 12 & 13, 2022

Agenda-at-a-Glance