

***Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Quality Improvement Annual Evaluation
2008***

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I. Executive Summary

Introduction

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island's (Neighborhood's) Quality Improvement (QI) Program strives to ensure that its members have access to high quality health care services that result in positive health outcomes. The QI Program extends to all departments within the organization, at all levels, in recognition that teamwork and collaboration are essential for quality improvement.

During 2008, the program comprised 43 initiatives covering the broad performance areas of Clinical Quality Improvement (27 initiatives), Service Quality Improvement (12 initiatives), and Improvement of Patient Safety and Coordination of Care (4 initiatives). For each initiative, this evaluation summarizes the progress and achievements during the year, including:

- A description of the quality improvement activities undertaken;
- Measurable performance achievements, with trended data when available;
- Identification of those issues and barriers preventing achievement of the goals;
- Interventions adopted or identified to overcome these barriers;
- Goals identified for the upcoming year;
- Proposed interventions for goal achievement in the upcoming year; and
- Summary of the overall effectiveness of the program.

The Quality Improvement Program Annual Evaluation is reviewed by the Clinical Affairs Committee, which serves as Neighborhood's Quality Improvement Committee, prior to being submitted for review and approval by the Board of Directors. The Committee and the Board likewise review and approve the Quality Improvement Program Description and Workplan for the upcoming year.

Overview of Our Work in 2008

Recognition and Accolades

- Ranked 4th best among America's Medicaid Health Plans in the national ranking performed by *U.S. News & World Report* and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).
- Maintained the highest accreditation ranking of "Excellent" held since 2001 based on the health plan's submission to NCQA, including annual HEDIS[®] rates and CAHPS[®] performance. This year was Neighborhood's scheduled year to be surveyed for accreditation by NCQA; the Plan's next accreditation survey will be in the Fall of 2011.

Organizational Initiatives

Established the Department of Evaluation and Improvement with leadership responsibility for evaluations of clinical interventions; organization-wide quality improvement; collection and analysis of HEDIS data; NCQA accreditation; and support for the investigation of complaints relating to clinical quality of care.

The Department's charter is as follows:

"The Department of Evaluation and Improvement will use data to drive improvement at Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island and to demonstrate our value to members and stakeholders by:

- Producing data-driven evaluation for operational, service, and clinical performance improvement across Neighborhood's organization;
- Working collaboratively with all of Neighborhood's departments to initiate, support and complete improvement activities; and
- Serving as a resource and providing tools for continuous improvement in Neighborhood's work."

Preventive Health

- Achieved performance above the HEDIS[®] 2008 Quality Compass 90th percentile in the following measures:
 - Well Child Visits in the First 15 Months of Life.
 - Cervical Cancer Screening.
 - Breast Cancer Screening.
 - Adolescent Well Care Visits.
 - Children's Access to Primary Care Practitioners (12-24 months and 7 to 11 years.).
- Continued collaboration and partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Health's KIDSNET Program for the exchange of lead screening encounter and immunization data.
- Worked with Televox[™] to transmit automated voicemail reminders to families with children of 8 months and 17 months who missed recommended vaccines.
- Offered performance based incentives to selected high-volume primary care sites for specified effectiveness of care and access and availability of care measures.
- Participated in the Teen Pregnancy Coalition and the Prematurity Task Force.
- Collaborated with the Rhode Island Hospital Refugee Clinic workgroup to assist in identifying and assessing the clinical needs of African refugees enrolled in the plan.

Health Management

- Implemented the new case management software, Acuity, in early 2008.
- Promoted continuity of care and provided site specific member reports to both eye care specialists and primary care practitioners regarding dilated retinal eye exams for members with diabetes.
- Enhanced the identification, risk stratification, and associated outreach / interventions for members in Neighborhood's existing disease management programs for Asthma and Diabetes.
- Collaborated and continued to fund the Rhode Island Chronic Care Collaborative in support of its efforts to improve diabetes care.
- Continued member education initiatives and high-risk outreach to members who frequently access the hospital emergency department.
- Offered and provided incentives to providers for prenatal health risk assessments submitted to Neighborhood in the first or second trimester.
- Hired practicing physicians/specialists from the RI medical community as "Physician Champions" to assist in the design or re-design, development and evaluation of our clinical programs, including asthma, diabetes, CHF, COPD and Bright Start. Contributions included advice and support in population identification, stratification and interventions for new and existing Disease Management (DM) Programs. In addition, Physician Champions provided guidance, research and feedback in development and review of condition-specific clinical practice guidelines.
- Recruited specialty physician reviewers and consultants to work with the Medical Management Department for selected case consults and peer review as necessary.

Behavioral Health

- Improved the communication process with the behavioral health residential treatment system by completing and distributing educational packages for group homes and residential facilities.
- Created and implemented a service continuum tool to educate behavioral health providers about the enhanced behavioral health continuum of care.
- Continued medical/behavioral health case management internal case rounds for all lines of business.
- Implemented quarterly internal medical/behavioral health case management in-service trainings.
- Developed a standardized orientation model to educate new Neighborhood/Beacon medical/behavioral health case managers on the roles and responsibilities.

- Successfully facilitated a partnership with a behavioral health provider with a community health center to expand co-location.
- Implemented Beacon's automated appointment reminder system, Silverlink, in third quarter.
- Shared site-specific results from the annual depression screening chart reviews.
- Developed pre, post and six months post partum depression member mailings.
- Achieved performance above the HEDIS[®] 2008 Quality Compass 90th percentile for *Follow Up Hospitalization for Mental Illness within 30 Days*.
- Demonstrated improvement in the *Effective Acute Phase and Effective Continuation Phase* components of the *Antidepressant Medication* measure.
- Adopted the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI) Clinical Practice Guidelines, Seventh Addition, March 2007 for the Diagnosis and Management of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity (ADHD) in Primary Care for School-Age Children and Adolescents.

Patient Safety

- Educated members on reading prescription drug labels and taking medication safely.
- Conducted site assessments at forty-nine (49) practices in accordance with Neighborhood's standards for safety, cleanliness, medical record keeping, patient education, access to care and patient satisfaction.
- Provided timely notification to patients and their practitioners of voluntary and/or FDA safety mandated drug recalls/withdrawals.
- Completed drug utilization review on Rhody Health Partners members with high volume and/or complex prescription drug therapy.
- Successfully identified and outreached to patients impacted by pharmaceutical recalls and withdrawals and their prescribing practitioners.

Improvements in Service to Members and Providers

- Ranked first in the nation compared to other Medicaid health plans in the area of *Rating of Health Plan* by members, according to Quality Compass Medicaid.
- Improved percentile rankings for CAHPS measures, *Ratings of Specialist, How Well Doctors Communicate, Getting Care Quickly* and *Getting Needed Care*.
- Provided performance-based incentives to community health centers to improve patient satisfaction relative to wait time and overall satisfaction.
- Administered the Visit-based Member Satisfaction Survey for the sixth year and provided site-specific results to providers, allowing for actionable quality improvement efforts to increase members' satisfaction.
- Conducted member focus groups to gain better insight on members' knowledge of their benefits, and general recommendations for the Plan.
- Administered the first Diabetes Disease Management Program Satisfaction Survey to members.

Quality Improvement Program Infrastructure

- Recruited Physician Reviewers and Consultants with varying specialties to be available to the Medical Management Department for consultation and peer review as necessary.
- Established the Department of Evaluation and Improvement to support and coordinate quality improvement efforts and initiatives throughout the organization (See page 4.)

Challenges and Barriers to Improvement

Neighborhood identifies the challenges and barriers to improvement encountered within each specific quality improvement activity undertaken; these are reflected in the text of each activity / area of focus

described in the Annual Evaluation. Recommended activities and interventions for the upcoming year consider these challenges and barriers in working towards success and achievement of the Plan's goals. Some of the challenges encountered across two or more of the quality improvement activities undertaken throughout 2008 included, but were not limited to:

- Quality improvements competed with the organization-wide reallocation of resources for State requirements of quick turnaround timing for the successful implementation of Rhody Health Partners, a new line of business.
- Significant reliance on HEDIS for outcome measurement and performance improvement activities is disadvantageous for rapid and strategic PDSA cycles. Quarterly collection of data according to HEDIS specifications would allow for more timely improvement.
- Limited / incomplete demographic information, including contact information and race / ethnicity data, makes targeted outreach, education and case/disease management difficult or not possible for some members. Neighborhood's members are transient and do not always contact the Plan to inform us of with address changes.

Overall Program Effectiveness

Neighborhood's improvement efforts strive to impact the quality of care and service provided to our members and practitioners. Review of Neighborhood's quality improvement activities as described herein demonstrates that Neighborhood was successfully able to achieve the following:

- Expanded and created a deeper integration of the medical and behavioral health case and disease management programs available to members.
- Maintained the health plan's focus on the importance of preventive care, health management, and accessing appropriate care in our initiatives to educate and connect with members, work with providers, and enhance our internal operations.
- Demonstrated our continued commitment to and appreciation of collaborative partnership with both members and providers by seeking new members for our quality improvement and Board-level committees.
- Promoted the awareness and concepts of inter-departmental organizational quality improvement to create greater operational efficiency and capacity.
- Exhibited improvements in our HEDIS[®] and CAHPS[®] performance, leading us to earn the distinction of being recognized as the #1 Medicaid health plan in Rhode Island according to the national ranking developed by *U.S. News & World Report* and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).
- Contracted a new HEDIS vendor to increase efficiencies and obtain quarterly access to data, in accordance with HEDIS specification, which will create the opportunity for more timely strategies for performance improvement in outcome measures.
- Further developed Neighborhood's quality improvement infrastructure to define and align the roles and responsibilities of existing committees, including the Clinical Affairs Committee, the Operations and Service Improvement Committee, the Clinical Management Committee, and the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee; and the organization's leadership entities, including the Senior Leadership Team, the Senior Management Team, the Chief Medical Officer, and the Department of Evaluation and Improvement. (See the Quality Improvement Program Description.)