

2020 Issue Brief

Support the Formation and Development of the Multispecialty Medical Group and Other High Performing Health Systems

Issue

Multispecialty medical groups and other high-performing health systems (HPHS) are the most effective and efficient integrated delivery systems (IDS) to provide the highest quality of medical services to Americans, while at the same time, bending the cost curve. Coordinated care has become especially important during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Currently, the U.S. spends more on health care than any other developed nation in the world¹. The most effective way to lower these overall costs is to continue moving the system toward a value-based approach, and away from the fee-for-service system. AMGA members are leading this transition, by investing in health information technology, practicing team-based care, collecting and analyzing data, and providing direct provider feedback on clinical care. Aligning payments with goals to reduce cost and improve care coordination is the best way to both ensure lower healthcare spending and successful care coordination.

Policymakers should consider the following objectives to achieve those goals.

Formulating Multispecialty Medical Groups and High-Performing Health Systems

As the healthcare delivery system continues to move towards rewarding value instead of volume, supporting legislative and regulatory strategies to incentivize the creation, growth, and development of multispecialty medical groups and other integrated delivery systems should be a priority. These groups and systems are distinguished by certain core attributes that contribute to the delivery of high-quality, patient-centered, and efficient care. These attributes include:

Organized System of Care

A multispecialty medical group, IDS, or HPHS is an organized healthcare system that provides the continuum of care for patient populations; is an integrated system, either internally or through partnerships with other care sites; and includes physicians as the principal leaders of all clinical programs. An organized system of care will also assume accountability for coordination across care settings.

Quality Measurement and Improvement Activities

Quality measurement and improvement activities are essential to the provision of a patient-centered, value-based approach to healthcare delivery. Activities such as preventive care and

¹ Anderson F. Gerald, Hussey Peter, Petrosyan Varduhi. It's Still The Prices, Stupid: Why The US Spends So Much On Health Care, And A Tribute To Uwe Reinhardt. Health Aff. 1991

chronic disease management, patient outreach programs, continuous learning, benchmarking activities, use of data analytics to validate clinical processes, and external and transparent internal reporting on clinical outcomes, are crucial to ensuring the best patient experience and continuous coordinated care.

Care Coordination

The group practice model utilizes a team-based approach that supports collaboration and communication among the patient, physician, and the licensed or certified medical professionals who are working at the top of their license to improve their patients' well-being. A single plan of care across healthcare settings and providers, as well as shared decision-making, creates a true collaboration between the patient and the healthcare provider.

Use of Information Technology and Evidence-Based Medicine

Group practice models and HPHS's meaningfully use interoperable information technology, scientific evidence where it exists, and comparative analytics to aid in clinical decision-making and improve patient safety; help monitor patients and track preventive services; and aid in the prescribing of prescription drugs in order to improve safety. Health information technology provides the foundation for other delivery system improvements.

Accountability

Ultimately, these high performing systems agree to be accountable for successfully managing the per-capita cost of health care, improving the overall patient experience, and improving the health of their respective populations. Patient engagement and accountability also play a role in bending the healthcare cost curve. In addition, patients must have an active role in their healthcare choices, and thus should have access to their medical record, as well as prices for pharmaceuticals and services.

AMGA Asks Congress to:

Incentivize the creation, growth, and development of multispecialty medical groups and other integrated delivery systems, as well as the core attributes that distinguish them.