

# Expanding the Use of Team-Based Care in Monterey County

## SUMMARY

As part of their 1305 grant work, Monterey County Health Department (MCHD) has partnered with the Institute of Community Collaborative Studies (ICCS) at California State University Monterey Bay to evaluate the status of team-based care (TBC) in clinics throughout the county. The county's medical clinics have been working on implementing TBC since 2012, and have the potential to serve as a model for other local providers.

## CHALLENGE

TBC will help address the quadruple aim by reducing physicians' administrative duties and increasing job satisfaction, complement the Patient Centered Medical Home model, and better suit the shift to value-based payments. Additionally, it is hoped that the TBC model will change patient attitudes about their health to encourage better engagement with providers and increase patients' sense of self-efficacy. However, shifting to TBC requires a significant investment of providers' time and a large degree of financial risk as many aspects of TBC are not currently reimbursable.

## SOLUTION

As part of their 1305 work, the Monterey County Health Department and ICCS conducted environmental scans to establish a baseline of what the current care delivery landscape is within the county. Surveys were used to collection information and also as an opportunity to strengthen relationships with providers. Most provider were contacted before the surveys were sent out, many site visits were conducted, and staff followed-up after surveys were sent to ensure completion. ICCS staff also offered to meet with providers in person to assist them in completing the survey. This extra assistance helped ensure that all of the safety net providers (100%) and many other providers responded to the survey.

Respondents were asked if they would be interested in receiving more information or technical assistance (TA) regarding team-based care, and this information was used to identify organizations that would be interested in future interventions.

Due to the rural nature of the county, outreach and providing TA to providers can be challenging. MCHD and ICCS staff are currently strategizing the most effective ways to reach providers. Webinars, video briefs, and robust executive summaries in reports are helpful in providing short, dense bursts of information for time-constrained providers. Much of the relationship-building between the public health staff and local providers has occurred in-person to date and has proven to be very effective. Going forward, MCHD and ICCS staff are making strong efforts to meet with providers in the communities they serve whenever possible.

## RESULTS

In an effort to spread awareness of the latest TBC information, MCHD's bi-monthly Provider Bulletin now includes information on chronic disease management and other related TBC topics in addition to updates on communicable diseases.

ICCS has developed a Prevention First website for both providers and patients in Monterey County that are interested in TBC, electronic health records, diabetes, and hypertension information. The website serves a central location that hosts wealth of resources in a user-friendly format, and most materials are available in both Spanish and English formats.

ICCS staff have also been comparing best practices in TBC and what is currently being done in the county. They are identifying areas where there is room for improvement and developing ideas for TA in these areas. Future training ideas will be posed to a working group of select providers who are currently using or very interested in implementing TBC.

## SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

Over the next two years, the Monterey County Health Department will be working with ICCS to help expand the use of TBC within the county. The county clinic system will continue to advance its use of TBC and is expected to serve as a model for other providers in the county.

Future TA sessions are planned to allow local providers to discuss their successes, challenges, and to learn more about the county clinic system's progress.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

The TBC model can allow clinics and providers to deliver more coordinated, patient-centered care. For resources and information about TBC in Monterey, visit the county's prevention first website at [www.preventionfirstmontereycounty.org](http://www.preventionfirstmontereycounty.org)

## Clinical Tips

If you are looking for help on implementing TBC into a practice setting, Monterey County clinics have found the following strategies to be helpful:

- **Change is hard**, and new ideas don't always work smoothly the first time. Keep trying!
- There are many **external resources** and funding opportunities. Look for organizations that can help you fund and implement changes. Monterey County has partnered with Qualis Health, Blue Shield Foundation of California, and the California Primary Care Association, among others.
- **Work with staff titles that you have available.** It is particularly difficult to recruit and retain nurses in Monterey, so when forming the clinic teams, Medical Assistants (MA's) were identified as key members of the teams. Additionally, since MA's are already a recognized position within the county, it allowed for quicker hiring of additional staff.
- **Creating provider buy-in** to the program is essential. In their TBC model, providers are given the opportunity to host group visits that are centered on a topic that the provider is enthusiastic about.
- **Making these changes is risky.** Make sure you understand and can articulate to stakeholders what the risks of making the changes are, the potential benefits, and also what you risk by not taking any action.