

L.A. Care Strengthens the Safety Net



Since its inception, Los Angeles County stakeholders envisioned L.A. Care as being more than a health plan driven by profit margin. To this end, L.A. Care has launched a variety of initiatives designed to improve community health and help health care safety net providers make infrastructure improvements, become more competitive and provide higher quality of care. The safety net includes county facilities, community-based clinics (Federally Qualified Health Centers and look-alikes) and public and private Disproportionate Share Hospitals (DSH). Approximately 58 percent of L.A. Care members see a safety net primary care provider. Over the past 19 years, L.A. Care has strived to strengthen the health care safety net in numerous ways.

Administrative and Financial Support – Collaboration with County agencies

- L.A. Care has supported the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) through enabling Intergovernmental Transfers (IGT) and other pass-through arrangements
- We have also taken on the administration of the County's Community Health Plan, allowing DHS to focus on medical care rather than health plan functions

Performance Improvement – Capacity building for community clinics and private provider groups

- L.A. Care has supported learning collaboratives such as Advanced Access and Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMH) that help providers improve their clinic operations and performance
- Of the **17** practices that participated in the learning collaboratives, **nine** have received NCQA PCMH recognition
- In addition, since 2005, L.A. Care has given \$10.4 million through the Robert E. Tranquada Awards, intended to help small community clinics in Los Angeles County strengthen their revenue streams and clinical, operational and health information technology infrastructure for long-term impact

HITEC-LA – Helping doctors adopt electronic health records (EHRs)

- In 2010, the federal government awarded L.A. Care a **\$16.4 million** grant to launch HITEC-LA, the only Health IT Regional Extension Center in Los Angeles County
- Physicians that meet "meaningful use" requirements for certified EHRs can expand the capabilities of their practices, leading to improved clinical quality, lowered costs and an enhanced patient experience.
- To date, HITEC-LA has worked with more than **5,800** L.A. County health care providers in pursuit of its goal of helping **3,000** of those reach meaningful use of EHRs and qualify for federal incentives.

eConsult Program – Providing patients with faster access to specialty care

- L.A. Care invested **\$1.5 million** to expand a pilot program in 2011 to develop a web-based physician-to-specialist consultation system that enables them to quickly and securely share health information electronically, discuss patient care and make referrals
- DHS leveraged L.A. Care's initial investment and the County has committed \$7 million over the next four years to continue and expand this project
- eConsult reflects L.A. Care's commitment to improving access to quality health care for low-income and vulnerable residents throughout the county. The safety net is overwhelmed with the volume of patients needing access to specialty care and eConsult aims to help ease this situation using new online technologies
- Program benefits include enhanced patient experience and outcomes with faster access to specialty care, improved patient quality of care through better collaboration between primary care providers and specialists and reduced costs by eliminating unnecessary referrals and unneeded visits to specialists