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Academic Health Centers: Improving the Health of our Communities through Community Engagement

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Abstract

This conference proceeding was presented at the International Association for Research on Service Learning and Community Engagement held September 2016.

Keywords

academic health centers, community engagement, community

Disciplines

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Academic Health Centers: Improving the Health of our Communities through Community Engagement



IARSCLE

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Objectives

- Describe AHCs
- Describe unique opportunities for AHC's to address critical contemporary issues in community health
- Describe innovative AHC initiatives that employ their resources to address community health priorities

What is an academic health center (AHC)?



Education: school of medicine & at least one other health professions program



Research: broad spectrum of biomedical and health services research



Patient Care: comprehensive basic & advanced patient care



Health System: affiliated teaching hospital, health system, or organized care services

Community Engagement in AHCs

Community partnerships have long been part of the education of future health practitioners:

- community-based clinical placements and practicums for health professional students,
- volunteerism of academic practitioners at local clinics, and
- volunteerism of health-centered student departments and organizations.

Growing interest in strategic alignment of resources and community needs

National Opportunities



VCU

Make it real.

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

National Opportunities for Community Engagement in Health Sciences

- National Institutes of Health
- Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute
- Not-for-profit hospital tax exemption
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service
- American Hospital Associations

National Institutes of Health: Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA)

Mission: accelerating discoveries toward better health

- Launched in 2006; about 60 academic medical institutions across country
- Community Engagement—collaborations to advance translation of research
 - Engaging stakeholder communities to contribute meaningfully across the translational sciences spectrum.
 - Enabling team science to become a major academic model.
 - Ensuring that all translational science is performed in the context of collaborative team science and that shared leadership roles are the norm throughout the entire translational science process.

Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

Mission: helps people make informed healthcare decisions, and improves healthcare delivery and outcomes, by producing and promoting high-integrity, evidence-based information that comes from research guided by patients, caregivers, and the broader healthcare community.

- Authorized by Congress in 2010
- **Largest single CEnR research funder**
- Funds research that offers patients and caregivers the information they need to make important healthcare decisions

Not-for-profit Hospital Tax Exemption

With the passage of the 2010 health care reform, require “charitable” hospitals to conduct a community health needs assessment (CHNA) and adopt an implementation strategy which addresses the identified needs.

CHNA

- Shared ownership for community health
- Defining community – jurisdictional issues
- Data collection and analysis
- Community engagement

Implementation Strategy

- Shared ownership for community health
- Defining community – jurisdictional issues
- Data collection and analysis
- Community engagement

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

- Federal agency that administers Medicare/Medicaid
- A primary payer of hospital care in the U.S.
- Currently changing the way that Medicare pays for hospital care by rewarding hospitals for delivering services of higher quality and higher value
 - **Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program**
 - Hospital Value Based Purchasing
 - Hospital Acquired Infection Reduction Program
 - **Accountable Health Communities**

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program

Goal: reduce readmission to hospital within 30 days of discharge for following diagnoses:

- Heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, hip/knee replacement, and COPD
- Reduces Medicare payments for hospitals with excess readmissions (greater than reasonable number of “predicted” admissions for a given hospital)
- Hospital organizational structure is fairly ill-equipped to manage patients **after** discharge
- Great opportunity here for community-engaged research, teaching, learning, and service!

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Accountable Health Communities

Goal: address critical gap between clinical care and community services in the current health care delivery system through social determinants of health

- Address unmet health-related social needs (e.g. food insecurity; inadequate housing, etc) to reduce avoidable health care utilization

Track 1

Screen patients for social determinants + refer to community service providers

Track 2

Track 1 + “**intensive community service-navigation**”

Track 3

Track 2 + **continuous quality improvement**

Researchers, get excited! This is an evaluation project.

American Hospital Association (AHA): National Call to Eliminate Health Care Disparities

Goal: frontline caregivers and health care leaders pledge to eliminate health care disparities and promote diversity within health care organizations

- Choose a quality measure to stratify by race, ethnicity or language preference or other sociodemographic variables;
- Determine if a health care disparity exists in this quality measure;
- Implement **interventions** that are reflected in strategic plan and supported by board; and
- Provide quarterly updates on progress to AHA

Impact evaluators, rejoice!

Innovate Initiatives

Innovative Initiatives: Interprofessional Student Hotspotting Learning Collaborative

National program that trains interdisciplinary teams of students to work with “high-utilizing” patients in their own communities

- Teams participate in online curriculum, monthly case conferencing, mentoring, and a curriculum learning guide
- Each team, 5-6 students, variety of disciplines, engage 3-4 patients over 6 months through **home-based** intervention
- Direct benefit to patients (transportation, referrals, etc.)
- Prepares students to meet complex needs of patients
- Some schools have added components of research

Innovative Initiatives: VCU Bridging the Gap: Youth Violence Prevention Program

Goal: reduce rate of re-injury and subsequent health care demands (and costs) by providing services to break the cycle of violence

- Hospital-based intervention—review incident, review conflict-resolution strategies, increase awareness of risk factors for recidivism, explore coping skills, develop a safety plan, and connect with community agencies
- Home-based intervention—continued case management
- Research—support the development of evidence based programs for the prevention, intervention, and suppression of injury related mechanisms and risk factors
- Strategic component—utilization of surveillance data to monitor the prevalence of injuries within the VCU healthcare system

We hope you will ask . . .

What pressing community health need could benefit from a collaboration with your health system?

- Could your work align with any national opportunities mentioned today?
- Could your work directly align with local health systems' performance and financial goals?
- Could your work support the population health efforts of your local health system?
- Could your local health system's data help evaluate your impact?

Resources & References

- Clinical and Translational Science Awards: www.ctsacentral.org
- Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute: www.pcori.org
- Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services:
<https://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/linking-quality-to-payment.html>
- Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program:
<https://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/readmission-reduction-program.html>
- Accountable Health Communities:
<https://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2016-Fact-sheets-items/2016-01-05.html>
- AHA: National Call to Action to Eliminate Health Disparities:
<http://www.equityofcare.org/pledge/index.shtml>
- Interprofessional Student Hotspotting Learning Collaborative:
<https://www.camdenhealth.org/programs/student-hotspotting/>
- Bridging the Gap Youth Violence Reduction Program:
<http://www.ivpp.vcu.edu/btg/index.html>