Ely Area Community Care Team

Accountable Community for Health

The Ely Area Community Care Team (CCT) was created to identify and address gaps in care in Minnesota’s Northeast Iron Range communities. The partnership of community members and 20 organizations representing health care, behavioral health, education, social service and non-profit organizations serves the entire population of this remote, rural geographic region, with special emphasis on individuals and families in poverty or experiencing mental illness.

The CCT has been in continuous collaboration since 2011; it focuses on successful engagement of professional community partners with community members, and providing services to underserved populations. Professional partners and community members are involved at all levels of CCT planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Care Model

The CCT provides collaborative care and targeted care coordination to ensure:

- Adequate resources are available for physical health, mental health, and psychosocial challenges;
- Professionals are trained in recognizing challenges and are prepared respond to the full spectrum of a person’s needs;
- Patients have the tools and resources to be a partner in their wellness, treatment and recovery goals.

The CCT works as a team, collaborating to improve overall care in the community by insure there is “No Wrong Door” to meeting individual health and wellness needs. CCT funded community health workers are employed at the Essentia Health Ely Clinic and the Ely schools. The CCT has worked to develop a tiered approach to ensure that needs are identified and addressed in a timely, comprehensive manner that includes referral, collaborative care, and follow up.

Location and Target Population

The CCT is headquartered in Ely, Minnesota and serves the population in the geographic area of Babbitt, Ely, Embarrass, Soudan, Tower, Winton, and surrounding townships, approximately 12,000 permanent residents.

Key Partners

- Boundary Waters Care Center
- Carefree Living Ely
- Community Health Council
- Ely Area Food Shelf
- Ely Bloomenson Community Hospital
- Ely Community Health Center
- Ely Community Resource
- Ely Public Schools
- Essentia Health*
- Essentia Health Ely Clinic†
- Greater MN Family Services
- Head Start
- Northern Habilitative Services
- Northern Lights Clubhouse
- Northwoods Partners
- Range Mental Health Center
- St. Louis County Schools
- St. Louis Co. Public Health & Human Services
- Vermillion Community College
- Community Members

*Accountable Care Organization  
†Lead organization

April 2016
Success Story

‘Bill’ was referred to a CCT partner agency Northwoods Partners (NWP) by the Essentia Health Ely Clinic, also a CCT agency. He was overweight, did not exercise, had uncontrolled diabetes, struggled with depression, and lacked the will to care for himself or monitor his blood sugars. NWP connected Bill with an exercise buddy to begin working one-on-one in his home. He later joined NWP’s Memories and Movement class, which includes 60 minutes of reflection and sharing followed by 30 minutes of exercise, and Tai Ji Quan.

After several months of participation, Bill’s provider indicated the patient’s blood sugars were the best they had ever seen and he was losing weight. Bill reports he is enjoying life and has developed a community, which includes a close friendship with his exercise buddy. He now gives back to the community by volunteering for NWP. He epitomizes NWP’s vision of people shifting from growing old to aging well together.

Measurement

The Ely CCT conducts an annual evaluation of the ACH. Care coordination evaluation data include the number, characteristics and needs of people served, services provided, satisfaction with care coordination, wellness measures, and care coordination outcomes including utilization and costs. The ACH evaluates the partnership process for factors that contribute to the CCT’s success as well as barriers to participation and conducts a social network analysis. Evaluation results are presented to the team; the CCT uses results to keep the CCT relevant, revise the strategic plan, identify activities for objectives, and assess needs.

Care Coordination Outcome Evaluation: Hospital and Emergency Department Data retrieved from patient records.

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<th>No Change</th>
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<tr>
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Population Health

The Ely CCT values population health and sponsored multiple efforts in 2015 including a You’ll Never Walk A-Loon summer walking program, a heart health fair, school flu shot clinic, and a senior-guided socialization and exercise program.

The population health goal for 2016 focuses on increasing walk-ability and bike-ability resources for the target population, aligning with the county’s Statewide Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). The CCT will add 46 bike racks throughout the community, complementing safe routes to school and local business efforts, and will be collaborating with a newly hired St. Louis County public health educator.

Sustainability

The Ely CCT has several promising options and avenues for sustaining its work:

- Essentia Health, the ACO partner, has demonstrated improved outcomes and decreased costs for CCT patients and is expanding the CCT model at other Essentia clinics.
- The CCT has a four-year history of committed community partnerships and efficient and well-organized staffing and administration. Team member satisfaction is reflected in annual evaluation results.
- The CCT has invested in community infrastructure through the mini-grant program, and grant-funded activities will be sustained by funded agencies.

Minnesota Accountable Health Model – SIM Minnesota

This project is part of a $45 million State Innovation Model (SIM) cooperative agreement awarded to the Minnesota Departments of Health and Human Services in 2013 by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to help implement the Minnesota Accountable Health Model.

About $5.5 million of SIM funds are dedicated to 15 Accountable Communities for Health (ACH) grant projects. ACHs meet the clinical and social needs of a defined population through person-centered, coordinated care across a range of providers.

ACH grantees were selected through a competitive process. Awards were for $370,000 over a two-year period, 2015-16. Minnesota is evaluating if community-led ACH models result in improvements in quality, cost, and experience of care.

Information: www.mn.gov/sim
Contact: sim@state.mn.us