In February 2013 the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) awarded Minnesota a State Innovation Model (SIM) testing grant of over $45 million to use across a three-year period. The goal is to help its providers and communities work together to create healthier futures for Minnesotans. Minnesota’s SIM initiative is a joint effort between the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Health (MDH) with support from Governor Mark Dayton’s office.

Minnesota is using the grant money to test new ways of delivering and paying for health care using the Minnesota Accountable Health Model framework. Thanks to SIM funding, dedicated programs are now in place to improve health in Minnesota communities, provide better care to our state’s residents, and lower health care costs by expanding patient-centered, team-based care through service delivery and payment models that support integration of medical care, behavioral health, long-term care and community prevention services.

If you met Marilyn* in her Rochester home, you would quickly realize that she loves computers and HAM radio, scale model ships and, (even in her late 50s), fresh water scuba diving. What you may not realize is that Marilyn struggles to manage layering diagnoses of diabetes, vertigo, bipolar disorder with anxiety and depression. Although she has always been active in her health care and manages her chronic diseases well, she recently sustained a neck fracture from a fall that made it more challenging to juggle the tasks of day-to-day life on her own.

With financial support and assistance from the State Innovation Model (SIM) Grant, Mayo Clinic’s and Olmsted Medical Center’s Health Care Homes, Olmsted County Public Health, the Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association and Elder Network have partnered to create a Community Care Team. This collaborative care team set out to assist community dwelling adults with multiple chronic health conditions connect with and utilize community services to help them meet their priority needs.

After enrolling for assistance with the Mayo Clinic/Olmsted Medical Center Community Care Team, Marilyn revealed that she was having a hard time managing her outstanding medical bills, obtaining different insurance and finding reliable transportation. Because of these challenges, Marilyn often had to limit or skip medical appointments—even when they were medically necessary. She also shared

*Not her real name to protect her privacy
that she needed help with day-to-day tasks, such as performing yard-work and getting a haircut.

In order to combat these challenges, the Community Care Team first connected Marilyn to Medical Assistance (MA), Minnesota’s Medicaid program for people with low income. The Medical Assistance program helped Marilyn successfully budget for her past and present medical expenses and covered medical transportation fees. After making this connection, Marilyn can now afford to access and attend all of her necessary medical appointments.

Next, the Community Care Team contacted Family Services Rochester and formed a team of chore-services staff who can mow Marilyn’s lawn during the summer and assist with snow-removal during the winter. They also reached out to the Elder Network to partner Marilyn with a Companion Volunteer—someone who provides non-medical support and companionship to older, homebound adults. Marilyn’s Companion Volunteer provides her with consistent socialization and is able to drive her to errands throughout the week, such as going to the grocery store or getting a haircut.

Lastly, in order to address Marilyn’s ongoing health conditions, the Community Care Team encouraged her to sign up for Living Well with Chronic Conditions classes. These classes help to empower older adults who are living with chronic conditions and provide strategies for living happily and healthily. Prior to meeting with the Community Care Team, Marilyn had not heard of these classes. Within a few months, Marilyn graduated from the course after attending 5 out of the 6 possible classes.

**Comprehensive Community Care**

By relying on a diverse range of partnerships and support systems, the Mayo Clinic/Olmsted Medical Center Community Care Team puts older adults with multiple chronic health conditions at the center of their health care and addresses them as whole people. As one patient describes, enrolling for assistance in the Community Care Team “was like having several caregivers listening very carefully and giving several perspectives on the problem and sorting it out with us.” And as the family member of another patient commented, “This is a smart use of resources that helps avoid more complex, difficult problems down the line. It is saving a lot of headaches for a lot of people.”