Sacramento Region Health Care Partnership

Sierra Health Foundation has a long history of partnership and support for the health safety net in the Sacramento Region, with a particular emphasis on the underserved. This focus is consistent with the foundation’s mission to invest in and serve as a catalyst for ideas, partnerships and programs that improve health and quality of life in Northern California.

In 2009, the California Health Care Foundation issued a regional market report of the Sacramento Region. A key finding underscores a longstanding challenge for Sacramento, “The safety net is characterized by a fragmented group of small and financially fragile clinics that together offer limited outpatient capacity.”¹ In a separate report, the challenges facing the region’s safety net were detailed to include underdeveloped administrative and service delivery capacity; limited access to medical specialists and dental care; insufficient linguistic and cultural resources and transportation barriers.² Recent health care budget cuts to Sacramento County’s Department of Health and Human Services of more than 50 percent have resulted in fewer clinic facilities and providers.

Implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2014 represents an unprecedented opportunity to extend health insurance coverage to those currently uninsured. The ACA also brings renewed attention to enrollment in a health care home to improve efficiency and coordination of care. Current estimates project between 150,000 and 227,000 non-elderly adults and children in the region will be eligible for coverage through expanded Medi-Cal benefits or subsidized private insurance.³ In order to realize the opportunity of the ACA, leaders in the region’s health care community must work collaboratively to expand and stabilize its primary care safety net.

In preparation for full implementation of the ACA, in 2011 Sierra Health Foundation launched the Sacramento Region Health Care Partnership, a coordinated philanthropic, nonprofit provider and community clinic initiative to strengthen the health care safety net in the Sacramento Region. The initiative grew out of conversations with health care leaders, including policymakers, health systems and community clinics, who approached the foundation to determine its interest in playing a key intermediary role in the building of a 21st century patient care and coordination system for the medically underserved.

² July 2008 report, “Toward an Improved Health Care System for Sacramento County’s Underserved Residents,” authored by the Sacramento Health Improvement Project
³ More than 150,000 in Sacramento County alone. 2009 California Health Interview Survey, www.askchis.org
The goal of the Health Care Partnership is to find ways to improve access, care coordination and quality of the region’s primary care system, with a specific focus on community health centers. The ultimate vision is to increase and improve primary care access and quality for low-income adults and children in El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties.

**Partners**

Sierra Health Foundation is developing partnerships with health and civic leaders, and building on the Health Care Working Group convenings held in 2011 by Congresswoman Doris Matsui. Initiative partners include leaders from community clinics, health systems, health plans, associations and counties, as well as physicians, policymakers and others. The California Endowment and Sacramento Region Community Foundation are funding partners for the market analysis and strategic planning process.

**Expected Initiative Outcomes**

1) Establish a more sustainable and financially viable community health center (CHC) system by increasing the number of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) in the region and strengthening existing FQHCs.
2) Improve community clinic administrative and service delivery capacity in preparation for the increased number of insured residents under the Affordable Care Act.
3) Facilitate an integrated health care delivery system model that efficiently links CHCs to regional providers to expand access to high-quality and culturally sensitive services for residents across the Sacramento Region.

**Initiative Phases**

**Phase I:**
- Conduct an updated market analysis to obtain a baseline of the current service capacity within the primary care safety net and forecast of clinic capacity needs, and create a strategic plan to develop an integrated health care delivery system model that efficiently links CHCs to regional providers to expand access to high-quality and culturally sensitive services for low-income adults and children in El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties.
- Provide resources for existing and new community clinics to assess their capacity and needs for increasing and improving primary health care services.

**Phase II:**
- Operationalize a capacity building program for clinics
- Continue partnership and regional health network development
- Assess progress

**Learn More**

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