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## **Aetna gives \$250,000 to health center**

The Community Health Center, which has local clinics in New London and Groton, has been awarded a \$250,000 grant from health care benefits company Aetna, the center announced Friday.

With the grant, the center will launch a two-year study to examine ways to improve the coordination of health care for low-income and underinsured patients at community health care clinics and similar safety-net health care providers, the center said in a news release.

The study will create a measurement toolkit to evaluate the levels of care coordination at primary care practices providing outpatient care for underserved populations.

“Clearly, closely coordinated care is an important strategy to make sure patients have all their health needs addressed and don’t receive conflicting instructions, duplicated tests or unnecessary treatments,” Dr. Daren Anderson, vice president and chief quality officer at CHC.

“Currently, there are very few tools available to assess the quality of care coordination in various settings, and there are none that are specific to our setting. Aetna’s grant will enable us to address these issues and provide tools to health centers nationwide that are working to improve health outcomes, enhance patient experience and reduce costs.”

Anderson and his research team will test the care coordination measures they develop at a cross-section of CHC sites, the state’s largest network of federally qualified health centers. CHC has primary care sites in 13 communities in the state, as well as school-based clinics and mobile dental units. CHC serves 130,000 patients, nearly all living at or below 200 percent of the poverty level.

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