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News

CHC receives grant from Aetna

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MIDDLETOWN — Health insurer Aetna awarded a \$250,000 grant to the Community Health Center, Inc. to conduct a two-year study aimed at improving the coordination of health care for low-income and under-insured patients at community health care clinics and other health care providers, CHC has announced.

The study's goal is to develop a method to evaluate the levels of care coordination at primary care practices providing outpatient care for under-served populations, the company said in a prepared statement.

Care coordination is a central component to many health care reform efforts to improve patients' health, experience of care and lower costs.

"According to a study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, primary care physicians for Medicare patients typically share patient care for their case load with 299 other physicians with whom they should coordinate care," said Dr. Daren Anderson, vice president and chief quality officer of CHC and a member of the team that will develop the assessment of care coordination in a prepared. "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," Anderson said.

Anderson went on to say that there a few tools available to health care providers to assess coordination and there are none that are specific to clinics like Community Health Center.

"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," he said.

Anderson and his team will test the care coordination measures they develop at a cross-section of CHC sites. CHC has primary care sites in 13 Connecticut communities, 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.

"The results of CHC's study have implications for similar safety-net settings in the United States," said Gillian Barclay, vice president of the Aetna Foundation, which will provide ongoing support for the study. "The more precisely we can envision what coordinated care looks like and how best to weave it into the everyday delivery of health care, the closer we can get to an optimal delivery of care that produces the best outcomes at the lowest cost."

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