

Crain's Health PulseTuesday, November 20, 2012

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Examining Medical Homes

The number of Patient-Centered Medical Homes has risen sharply in New York state as policy makers embrace the model as a way to improve the delivery of health care services. But while medical homes have better health outcomes, it's unclear whether the homes save money. A pair of reports, from the United Hospital Fund and the Primary Care Development Corp., highlight medical homes' rapid growth and future challenges. The UHF report, online [here](#), documents how the number of medical homes, which emphasize team-based, coordinated primary care, grew by 42% in just over a year, to 5,312 by September. Slightly more than half, or 2,768, are in New York City, with high concentrations in Syracuse and Rochester. The PCDC report, online [here](#), looks at eight medical home initiatives in the state. Among the lessons learned: Access to accurate, complete and timely health data is necessary in order for medical homes to be more effective, particularly with larger and more complex initiatives.

HHS in \$60 million NJ Dispute

Auditors from HHS' Office of the Inspector General recommend that New Jersey repay nearly \$60 million in federal Medicaid funds it improperly claimed as Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital payments. The claims were for care at five hospitals from 2003 through 2007. The audit, released Nov. 19, found that Hudson County Meadowview Psychiatric Hospital in Secaucus, Barnabas Behavioral Health in Toms River, and Mount Carmel Guild Hospital in Newark were among the hospitals that had not documented their eligibility for DSH funds. The state disagreed with some of the findings. A spokeswoman for the inspector general said the matter will be referred to CMS for a final determination on how much the state owes.

Bellevue Reopens Outpatient Services

Limited ambulatory primary care services for adult and pediatric patients reopened yesterday at HHC's Bellevue Hospital. Outpatient primary care clinics shut by Sandy will offer treatment and routine OB-GYN services between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on weekdays. The hospital has also started offering walk-in non-emergency services around the clock. Limited emergency care services are expected to open in December, with Bellevue fully operational in February.

Health centers seek millions in aid

Hospitals weren't the only facilities to sustain significant damage from Sandy. An assessment by the Community Health Care Association of New York State identified at least 41 health centers whose operations were at least partially disrupted due to the storm, including 24 service sites that had power outages.

Some facilities had severe damage, either to equipment or infrastructure. Others closed or cut their hours because they lost power, water or telephone and Internet service. Some centers closed because providers and staff were unable to report to work.

All three of the Addabbo Family Health Center's sites, for example, sustained severe damage during the storm. Its health center in Red Hook, Brooklyn, sustained the most damage, with three feet of water covering the first floor.

CHCANYS is seeking funding to cover lost revenue for health centers and the costs to repair facilities and replace equipment. The state Health Department's \$427 million request for emergency funding from CMS (Pulse, Nov. 19) includes \$31.8 million for clinics.

"The capacity that New York's health centers provide is a vital source of primary care for our state," said Elizabeth Swain, CEO of CHCANYS, in a statement. "But I am concerned about the impact of the storm on that capacity, including the tremendous financial hardship that the closures and costs related to the storm have had on many health centers."

WHO'S NEWS: Dr. Jean Ford is the new chair of the Department of Medicine at Brooklyn Hospital Center. He previously was an associate professor in the Departments of Medicine and Epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

CORRECTION: Coler-Goldwater Hospital will start vacating the Goldwater facility on Roosevelt Island by December 2013 to make way for Cornell NYC Tech. The date was misstated in an earlier version of Pulse, published Nov. 19, 2012.

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