Accessing Behavioral Health Services in Rural Communities

Presentation in Discussion Group 3A: Addressing Quality and Access: Promoting Behavioral Health in Rural Communities

Workshop on Achieving Health Equity: Promoting Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Health Equity for Children, Families, and Communities

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TAKEAWAY MESSAGES

- Access is a function of affordability and availability
- Affordability is a function of cost of care and insurance policies (including public programs)
- Availability is a function of provider capacity, transportation, and use of technology
- An important principle: form follows finance
AFFORDABILITY FOR RURAL RESIDENTS

- Recognizing variability in health plan offerings, including premiums, cost-sharing, and networks
- Consumer education to understand those differences when making choices
- Public policies that influence the choices
- Specifics: covering conditions (beware riders), including providers, medication formularies, benefit design (copayment, deductible, co-insurance)
AFFORDABILITY FOR RURAL RESIDENTS

• Eligibility requirements for public programs
• Provider networks
• Benefit design
AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Scarcity of high level professionals (maps to follow)
- True for nearly all health professions, including primary care
- Especially true for behavioral health professionals
Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

Source: HRSA Data Warehouse “Quick Maps” - Mental Health Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)
Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

HHS Region 10
(Alaska not to scale)

HHS Region 9

Source: HRSA Data Warehouse "Quick Maps"
Mental Health Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)
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HHS Region 5

HHS Region 2

HHS Region 3

HHS Region 1

Source: HRSA Data Warehouse “Quick Maps”
Mental Health Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)
AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Institutional care: state decisions to rely on community-based care, closing regional facilities
- Hospital-based care when rural hospitals are closing
FORM FOLLOWS FINANCE

• Redesign underway in anticipation of, and response to, changes in payment structures

• Examples: Care management payment codes, Global budgets, Pay for performance, shared savings models

• Push: toward payment linked to value, defined as outcomes per dollar spent, including sustaining well-being (from episode-based to person-based)
EXAMPLE IN EVOLUTION OF ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS

• Model attracts those interested in rethinking how health care dollars are spent
• Strategies include care management and extending beyond traditional medical models
• Spread of this model includes rural places, seen in two maps
NEXT STAGE: ACCOUNTABLE HEALTH COMMUNITIES

• Broadening network of participating local organizations to include social services
• In turn broadens focus of organizations approaching care management one patient population at a time
• Specific CMMI program that includes limited rural participants
WILL CHANGES REACH RURAL COMMUNITIES?

• Patient-centered medical homes have arrived
• ACOs have proliferated
• Role of technology to consider: use of telehealth in consultation and service delivery
• AHCs in some rural places
• New models *can* work in rural places
AND THE FUTURE IS …

• Person centered health homes
• Holistic approach to health and well-being
• Incorporating behavioral health services, clinical and social
• Financial incentives driving desirable system change
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The RUPRI Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis
http://cph.uiowa.edu/rupri

The RUPRI Health Panel
http://www.rupri.org

Rural Telehealth Research Center
http://ruraltelehealth.org/

The Rural Health Value Program
http://www.ruralhealthvalue.org
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COLLABORATIONS TO SHARE AND SPREAD INNOVATION

✓ The National Rural Health Resource Center
  https://www.ruralcenter.org/

✓ The Rural Health Information Hub
  https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/

✓ The National Rural Health Association
  https://www.ruralhealthweb.org/

✓ The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health
  https://nosorh.org/

✓ The American Hospital Association
  http://www.aha.org/