



Community Health Center Inc., Featured as a Best Practice in Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Whitepaper on “Interprofessional Collaboration”

Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) was recently featured in a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report highlighting how the country's top health systems utilize interprofessional collaboration (IPC) to achieve better health outcomes for their patients. The report, [Lessons from the Field: Promising Interprofessional Collaboration Practices](#), explores the experiences and best practices of more than 20 hospitals, academic health centers, and community health centers, and delves into case studies from seven organizations that are leading the way in adopting a culture that embraces interprofessional collaboration.

CHC is pleased to be listed among these seven organizations, which also include Intermountain Healthcare, Salt Lake City, Utah; Aurora Health Care, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and University of Pennsylvania Health System, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The report details the experiences of health care organizations in advancing cooperation among physicians, nurses, nutritionists, psychologists, and other appropriate health professionals, from the planning stages through various phases of a patient's treatment. The patient and the patient's family are also considered part of the treatment team.

CHC was noted in the report for a variety of approaches taken by the organization to establish a culture of interprofessional collaboration across all aspects of the practice, including effective team communication, and organization structure, starting with the commitment to establish a partnership among clinical and administrative leadership.

As quoted in the report, CHC's Senior Vice President and Clinical Director Margaret Flinter explained, “Interdisciplinary has to be embedded from day one. It's in our interview process. Candidates are asked about their experience and comfort level providing care this way. It's embedded in our flow of work. You don't stop your day to be interdisciplinary that's how it becomes a part of the culture.”

Communication is a key driver of IPC, and in the report CHC was profiled for its utilization of shared electronic health records (EHR), which allows providers across all services (medical, dental and behavioral health) to see their patient's entire chart, allowing for truly integrated care, and increasing awareness of what every clinician on the patient's care team is providing. CHC was also noted for the successful virtual collaboration with Project ECHO, which links primary care providers with specialists via video conferencing, to manage patients with complex chronic conditions. The EHR plays an important role in this program, enabling the specialists to see all aspects of the patient's medical record.

The report explored how organizational structure can affect the way professionals work together. At CHC, primary care providers sit and work together in “pods” with their team members (medical assistants, nurses, behavioral health providers and specialists like podiatrists, dietitians, diabetes educators, and others). Each pod shares a patient panel and works together to provide comprehensive care for its patients. Benefits of sitting in a pod include being able to actively engage in conversations about the patients, resulting in a culture of interprofessional collaboration.

CHC's President and CEO Mark Masselli commented on the report saying, “We are honored to be included in this report and look forward to constantly improving our interprofessional collaboration as we continue to train the next generation of primary care providers to the highest level of care and our model of care.”

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for uninsured and underinsured populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 130,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Recognized as both a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and a Primary Care Medical Home by The Joint Commission, CHC delivers service in 201 locations statewide, offering primary care in medicine, dentistry and behavioral health services. For more information, visit www.chc1.com.