

An Employer Guide to the Ideal Missouri Practice

The Ideal Micro Practice Comes to Missouri

The St. Louis Area Business Health Coalition, Primaris (Missouri's Quality Improvement Organization), Dartmouth Medical School, and the Commonwealth Fund have joined together to introduce this innovative and patient centric practice style to Missouri physicians, employers, health plans, and consumers.

Why the Ideal Missouri Practice?

Improving care coordination and self-management/health literacy have been identified as critical areas for attention in improving health care quality by the IOM in its recent report *Priority Areas for National Action: Transforming Health Care Quality*. Improvements in these areas are "cross-cutting" in that they impact care across all diagnoses and therefore, all patients. Further, it has been shown that excellent care depends on the effectiveness of the interaction between an informed engaged patient and a prepared practice team. The "new rules" as set forth by the IOM in *A New Health System for the 21st Century* are¹:

- Care is based on continuous healing relationships
- Care is customized according to patient needs and values
- The patient is the source of control
- Knowledge is shared and information flows freely
- Decision making is evidence-based
- Safety is a system property
- Transparency is necessary
- Needs are anticipated
- Waste is continuously decreased
- Cooperation among clinicians is a priority

Components of the Ideal Missouri Practice support these rules by promoting patient-centered care.

What can the physician gain through IMP?

The physician can reduce overhead, streamline services, minimize and monitor handoffs, and increase patient engagement. Cost reductions in overhead and waste are realized by the practices. Also, as the pay for performance initiatives grow, IMP can set up physicians for payment and recognition linked to attainment of ideal care.

What is the Ideal Missouri Practice?

An Ideal Missouri Practice (IMP) - the basis for the project - is a patient-centered, efficient, accountable, and accessible practice style with low overhead. It has demonstrated improvement in chronic condition management through enhanced patient education and self management about prevention and chronic care; follow-up support; and the opportunity for "group visits" with other patients with similar problems. IMP technology components include a patient self assessment, a patient registry, and other tools to facilitate the change process. www.idealmissouripractice.org

¹ Committee on Quality of Health Care in America, Institute of Medicine. 2001 National Academy Press, Washington, DC. Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century. P 71

How's Your Health? (HYH) is IMP's patient assessment tool designed to help physicians and patients cross the quality chasm by communicating more fully. Completed by consumers, it identifies potential health problems, the patient's level of functioning, clinical symptoms, and patient satisfaction with care. It can be used by physicians for their patients or across any employer group, health plan, or community. The data output stimulates improvements in the processes of care in the office, health system, and in the community. The community based HYH approach has been used in Long Beach, Mobile, and Chicago^{2 3}, Milwaukee, New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Montana. HYH also provides the individual participant with their own results with online access to educational information specific to those results---immediate feedback. **Go to howsyourhealth.org and compare it to the other tools you currently use or have evaluated.**

Automated Patient Registry - Docsite

When used in the physician practice, HYH automatically populates a registry for the physician of their patients' health needs and concerns. The tools summarize the patients' needs and assists physicians in understanding and supporting patients with problem solving for common problems and better self-management. Docsite also tracks interventions, results and changing patient needs over time. **HYH is a significant care coordination and quality improvement tool – it is also a low overhead solution for physicians.**

Implications for Employers

IMP supports employers' goal to achieve dramatic improvements in health care value by making care more patient-centered and consumers more engaged in their care. It aligns with the principles of value-based purchasing by addressing both quality and affordability. **Employers have an important role to play in improving the patient centeredness of health care and overall health care value:**

- 1. Become knowledgeable about IMP and share this information with your employees, friends and family.**
- 2. Help your employees, friends, and family reframe their expectations of their physician, the health care system, and their responsibility in maintaining their own health.**
- 3. Find ways to recognize those physicians who have adopted the Ideal Missouri Practice.**
- 4. Consider using HYH as a vehicle to better understand the health care needs of your employees and to evaluate your health plan(s) in meeting employee needs.**

For more information call the BHC at 314-721-7800 or contact Suzanne Mercure at mercuresuz@aol.com, IMP Consultant to the National Business Coalition on Health.

² Luce P, Phillips J, Benjamin R, Wasson JH. Technology to Support Community Health Alliances. J. Amb. Care Management. 2004;27: 399-407

³ Wasson JH, James C. Implementation of a web-based interaction technology to improve the quality of a city's health care. J Amb Care Mgmt 24: 1-12, 2001.