The Monday Dose is a professional development newsletter brought to you by the Department of Health Services Management and Policy. For this edition, we are focusing on the emerging topic of Population Health Management. “Population health management” urges health care facilities to create better health outcomes at much lower costs. Population health management encourages more collaboration between healthcare providers for a holistic and patient-centric approach to health care. We hope you enjoy this edition and have a wonderful spring semester!

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Readying EHR Technology for Population Health Management

We have come a long way in capturing health data. Ultimately, population health management works to improve care and lower costs through medical intervention that is patient-centered and comprehensive. Now that the adoption of electronic health records and clinical archiving systems are widespread throughout the U.S., population health management is attainable in the future. This is because the streamlining of EHR’s encourages better coordination of care between health care practitioners, which in turn creates better health outcomes for patients. Unfortunately, all EHR systems are not created equal. Click the link above to learn more.

Initiatives to Improve Population Health Face Numerous Hurdles

The ACA has encouraged health care organizations to find better ways to provide comprehensive care that improves overall health while cutting costs. This has come in the form of Accountable Care Organizations and new payment reforms that shift the paradigm from fee-for-service to pay-for-performance. This shift emphasizes the overall health outcomes of patients as opposed to the amount of services provided. Check out this article to learn more about these models.
**WHAT IS POPULATION HEALTH?**

Population Health can be defined many ways. First, define the “population.” The way in which the population is defined helps define “population health.” For example, a physician would consider his/her population as only their patient base, and WHO may define the population as that of the entire world.

The way the population is defined would create vast differences in the way that “health” is approached. However, a common birds-eye definition is: “Population health is the comprehensive care provided to an entire population from birth to death that uses and continuously improves best practice delivery of care to improve the current health and future wellbeing of that population. Population health is the health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group.”

Being that the U.S. spends *far more* than other leading countries on health care and has *far worse* outcomes, it is important to find different approaches to health care. The ACA has encouraged health care organizations to find ways to better health outcomes while reducing costs. They have done this through policy changes, payment reforms, Accountable Care Organizations and State Innovation Models as a way to create new and innovative comprehensive patient care.
Population Health Management (PHM) aims to:

- Reduce the frequency of health crises and costly emergency department visits and hospitalizations.
- Lower the cost per service through an integrated delivery of care team approach.
- Improve the overall patient experience, in part by providing improved access to care.
- Promote patient engagement and empower patients to better self-manage their health and participate in the decision making process.

**Three Key elements for Successful Population Health Management**

- **Information-powered clinical decision making**
  
  The health care industry is building toward a vision of complete data integration, getting the right systems in place to work with each other.

- **Primary care-led clinical workforce**
  
  Technology will allow providers to extend the reach of the workforce. And within care management, technology will play a supporting role as PCPs manage larger clinical teams and patient panels to help improve overall population health.

- **Patient engagement and community Integration**
  
  The challenge of becoming a patient-centered enterprise is that people do not want to be patients; providers are outside of the sphere of their day-to-day activities. If you are going to partner with patients in managing their health, you must integrate into their daily lives.
January 2017 Dates to Remember

♦ Jan. 30th: Last day to add with a departmental permit. Last day to drop a course without a ‘W’ grade

♦ Feb. 1st: Last day for graduate students to file intent to graduate forms

♦ March 6-10th: Spring Break

♦ April 27th: Last day of classes

♦ April 29th– May 4th: Final exams

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