

Thirteen Minnesota Health Systems Come Together to Address Opioid Overuse and Mental Health in New Collaborative

THURSDAY, JAN. 4, 2018 - Thirteen of the largest health systems in Minnesota have come together to address major health issues in a new effort called the Minnesota Health Collaborative. These systems provide care and coverage for 80 percent of the patients in Minnesota. Together they are tackling major health topics that affect all communities, starting with the opioid epidemic and mental health crisis.

Convened by the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI), this unique collaborative approach creates the opportunity to rapidly test best practices and develop new approaches to implement shared standards for care.

"Minnesota has a rich history of health care organizations collaborating to address some of the greatest challenges faced by our patients and members," said Andrea Walsh, President and CEO of HealthPartners, one of the participating organizations. "Together we can make a meaningful impact on issues such as curbing opioids and increasing access to mental health care."

Minnesota Health Collaborative's first call to action is for these systems to implement shared community standards for first opioid prescriptions related to acute and postoperative pain. The objective is to decrease the population at risk for developing substance use disorder by assuring the smallest needed quantity of opioid medication is prescribed to manage pain. Efforts also focus on identifying and improving access to essential services to improve treatment for patients with chronic pain and those at high risk of overdose.

"As a health care community, we need to attack the opioid epidemic on a number of levels. What excites me most about the collaborative approach is being able to learn from others and scale solutions at a much quicker pace. This is about working across systems to prioritize patients above all else," said Penny Wheeler, M.D., CEO of Allina Health.

The Minnesota Health Collaborative is also working to improve care for patients with mental health needs in emergency departments (EDs) and in primary care. The work is focused on how to better initiate care for those who present in acute crisis in EDs and can face long delays in accessing inpatient or community-based care. More upstream, the collaborative is also exploring initiatives in primary care settings to better address a patient's mental health needs earlier before a crisis occurs.

Since January 2017, the CEOs of all 13 systems have been collaborating to outline the roadmap for this effort and to ensure progress is attained.

"I am proud that we continue to work together with these important issues," said David C. Herman, M.D., CEO of Essentia Health. "Only by using our collective skill and commitment can

we hope to be successful in addressing challenges with the broad scope and impact of behavioral health and opioid overuse. I am optimistic that solutions will be discovered and implemented to advance the care and healing of our patients and communities.”

Health systems in the Minnesota Health Collaborative include Allina Health, CentraCare Health, Children’s Minnesota, Essentia Health, Fairview Health Services, HealthPartners, Hennepin County Medical Center, Hutchinson Health, Mayo Clinic, North Memorial Health, Ridgeview Medical Center, UCare, and University of Minnesota Health/University of Minnesota Physicians.

Learn more at www.icsi.org.

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The Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI) is an independent, nonprofit health care improvement organization based in Minnesota with 25 years of experience in convening medical groups, hospitals, non-profit health plans, employers, and consumers working to bring innovation and urgency to improve health, the patient experience and quality, and affordability of care (the Triple Aim).

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