

The Safety Net Medical Home Initiative

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Transforming Safety Net Clinics into Patient-Centered Medical Homes

In May 2008, The Commonwealth Fund, Qualis Health and the MacColl Institute for Healthcare Innovation at the Group Health Research Institute initiated a demonstration project to help safety net primary care clinics become high-performing patient-centered medical homes (PCMHs) and achieve benchmark levels of quality, efficiency and patient experience. The goal of the Safety Net Medical Home Initiative (“the Initiative”) is to develop and demonstrate a replicable and sustainable implementation model for medical home transformation.



The Initiative calls for partnerships between safety net providers and community stakeholders to work together towards a new model of primary care delivery that is recognized and rewarded for its holistic approach to patient care. Policy activation is critical in this transformation, and all partners in this Initiative are expected to participate in Medicaid and other policy reform efforts in their respective regions.

Five Regional Coordinating Centers were selected to participate in the demonstration project, and each partnered with 12-15 safety net clinics in their state. These collaboratives will receive technical assistance on practice re-design topics such as enhanced access, care coordination, and patient experience. They will also receive funding to support a Medical Home Facilitator (who will lead clinic-based quality improvement projects) and other activities. The work of the Regional Coordinating Centers began in April 2009 and the Initiative will continue through April 2013. [Learn more about the Regional Coordinating Centers.](#)

The Project Team

The Commonwealth Fund

The Commonwealth Fund is a private foundation that aims to promote a high-performing healthcare system that achieves better access, improved quality and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including low-income people, the uninsured, minority

Americans, young children and elderly adults. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent research on healthcare issues and making grants to improve healthcare practice and policy. An international program in health policy is designed to stimulate innovative policies and practices in the United States and other industrialized countries. [Learn more about The Commonwealth Fund.](#)

Project Staff:

- [Melinda K. Abrams, MS](#), Assistant Vice President, Patient-Centered Primary Care

Qualis Health

Qualis Health is a private, nonprofit healthcare quality improvement organization (QIO) whose mission is to generate, apply and disseminate knowledge to improve the quality of healthcare delivery and health outcomes. Founded in 1974, Qualis Health has grown to become a nationally-recognized leader in the areas of clinical quality assessment and quality improvement, process improvement and care management. [Learn more about Qualis Health.](#)

Project Staff:

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- Nimi Sandhu, Senior Programmer Analyst

The MacColl Institute for Healthcare Innovation at the Group Health Research Institute

The mission of the MacColl Institute is to develop, evaluate and disseminate innovations in healthcare delivery. Since the mid-1990s, the Institute has focused on research and quality improvement efforts to improve the quality of care for the chronically ill, with the goal of bridging the gap between patients' needs for comprehensive chronic care and healthcare delivery systems originally designed mainly to treat acute illness. The MacColl Institute is the National Program Office for Robert Wood Johnson's Improving Chronic Illness Care Program. The MacColl Institute developed and tested the Chronic Care Model. [Learn more about the MacColl Institute for Healthcare Innovation at the Group Health Research Institute](#) and [Improving Chronic Illness Care.](#)

Project Staff:

- [Brian Austin](#), Deputy Director
- [Katie Coleman, MSPH](#), Research Associate

- [Ed Wagner, MD, MPH, FACP](#), Director
- [Judith Schaefer, MPH](#), Senior Research Associate

Technical Expert Panel

A Technical Expert Panel has been established to provide guidance on project activities. Experts include representatives from the nation's leading medical associations, community health centers, academic institutions, quality improvement organizations and others.

Co-Funders

In addition to The Commonwealth Fund, the following organizations are generously supporting the Safety Net Medical Home Initiative:

- [Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center](#) (Boston, MA)
- [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](#)
- [Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health](#)
- [The Boston Foundation](#)
- [Colorado Health Foundation](#)
- [Jewish Healthcare Foundation](#) (Pittsburgh, PA)
- [Northwest Health Foundation](#) (Portland, OR)
- [Partners HealthCare](#) (Boston, MA)