

Hillsborough County Health Care Plan

Hillsborough County (Tampa), FL

Community Size: Approx. 1.2 million

Program Started: 1991, first member enrolled 1992

Overview & Structure:

Hillsborough County, Florida was faced with state mandates that obligated local taxpayers to cover hospitalization for indigent patients - and with costs skyrocketing at 17% per year at that time - county commissioners in Tampa took matters into their own hands. The award-winning program they created in 1991 actually expanded coverage at that time from 15,000 to more than 25,000 residents annually. Since its inception, the Hillsborough County Health Care Plan (HCHCP) has saved property taxpayers millions of dollars in indigent care payments, as funding for indigent care was moved to a ½ cent sales tax. From inception through 2009, the HCHCP has expended over \$1 billion dollars in payments to area hospitals and providers for care for HCHCP members.

The Hillsborough County Health Care Plan is a comprehensive managed care plan for indigent residents with incomes up to 100% of the federal poverty level who do not qualify for other coverage. Services are delivered by four regional networks that consist of network-employed primary care physicians, contracted community-based specialists, and 7 hospitals with 9 locations. Ancillary services are provided through contracts with private providers.

The HCHCP emphasizes primary and preventative services, early intervention, health education, and the coordination of health and social services. Through competitive contracts with providers in four regional networks, enrollees are “mainstreamed” into the system and provided access to the same providers available to other insured residents. The Plan is administered by the Hillsborough County Health & Social Services Division with oversight from a community advisory board.

Features:

- Comprehensive program offering 5 plans with access to primary care, specialists, inpatient and outpatient hospital services, diagnostic and rehabilitative care and prescriptions. Dispels the notion that there has to be a special place for dispensing “charity care” by delivering services through broad network of mainstream providers.
- Program does not cover mental health or substance abuse treatments, only prescriptions and medication management visits for these diagnoses. Routine dental and vision are also non-covered services.
- Sustainable source of funding via sales tax.
- Channels patients from expensive emergency care settings to primary care medical homes.
- Holistic approach merges medical and social services.

Outcomes:

- By participating in the HCHCP in the 2009-2010 year, participating hospitals and networks shared an additional \$112 million dollars in state Low Income Pool funds.
- Kept medical expense trends in the low single digits for the past several years.
- The holistic approach of treating health care as a component to client self-sufficiency assists clients in moving out of poverty.
- Improved health and quality of life of more than 27,000 residents in the past year.

Eligibility/Number Served:

Low-income individuals with incomes up to 100% of the federal poverty level and limited assets.

Program serves an average of 27,000 individuals per year, approximately 40% of the eligible population. Since 1992, it has served over 160,000 non-duplicated residents.

Financing/Costs:

The HCHCP is financed through a state authorized statute allowing a ½ cent sales tax approved by the County Commission. The ½ cent also pays for a statutory required match for the Level 1 Trauma Center, Health Care Responsibility Act (HCRA) payments, and the required county Medicaid match.

Lessons Learned:

- Proved that dramatic cost savings can be achieved by redirecting indigent care funds from hospital emergency rooms, placing the uninsured into a managed care environment, and creating new opportunities to leverage resources.
- Demonstrated that a community plan to care for the uninsured – backed by tax support -- not only was politically viable, it can be an economic advantage.
- Established that managed care contracts through the County could be marketable.

For More Information:

<http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/hss/healthcare/>

(please see our annual report at this site)

For Enrollment:

<http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/hss/healthcare/members/enrollment.cfm>

options to enroll on-line or use paper.

Customer Service:

(813) 272-5040

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