

CHOICE

Regional
Health Network



Better Health for Everyone at Less Cost

CHOICE Regional Health Network

Serving Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston Counties in Southwest Washington State.

OVERVIEW

CHOICE formed in 1995 to enable the hospitals and patients in the region to have a leveraged voice in discussions around improving the community health care delivery system. As these discussions have ebbed and surged through the years, CHOICE has continued to grow and evolve to meet the needs of our members and the people who live in the community.

FEATURES

The CHOICE region includes some of the smallest hospitals and sickest and poorest people in Washington State. One of the first goals that CHOICE targeted was connecting the many people in our region without insurance or care to the services they need. This meant not only navigating the application processes for programs such as Medicaid and Basic Health (State sponsored low-cost health plan), but also connecting patients with providers who will accept this coverage. In addition to accessing health insurance, we help our clients learn about and connect to other services in the community that might benefit them, whether it's food banks or job training or volunteer opportunities. A lot of programs for low income people are by body part or condition; they don't consider the whole person. At CHOICE, we piece together those programs in a way that serves the whole person and their families.

Today, CHOICE is a \$1.5 million-a-year organization that provides direct services to 3,000 patients annually, drives regional health system improvements, and continues to ensure that the community voice is heard in health system discussions.

Within the last five years, CHOICE began to focus on the need for quality improvement initiatives to address problems that exist within the health system. Working together with our diverse members and partners, we developed a comprehensive picture of the challenges we face and coordinated approaches to address them. Currently, CHOICE has three quality improvement initiatives operating within the region:

- ❖ CHOICE is expanding the Emergency Department Consistent Care (EDCC) program to four out of the five counties we serve. EDCC works with patients referred from area hospitals who are high-frequency users of the emergency departments to develop a comprehensive plan of care with their primary care physician, which reduces unnecessary hospital costs and improves quality of life. On average, clients enrolled in EDCC have experience a 50% reduction in ED visits, and hospital charges dropped by 40%. Over the course of five years, about 400 individuals have been served with an approximate reduction in charges of \$3.6 million.
- ❖ Brain Attack, a regional response to stroke initiative, has just completed its pilot phase and is ready to be launched and eventually expanded throughout the region. The vision of the Brain Attack initiative is to provide evidence based, coordinated care for stroke and Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA) patients and families to ensure optimal outcomes in collaboration with established regional partners. Brain Attack was developed with the ultimate goal to complete evaluation and decide treatment for at-risk stroke/TIA patients within 60 minutes from door to disposition. During the pilot phase, those goals were achieved.
- ❖ A "medical home pilot" is in the process of being launched in East Grays Harbor by Mark Reed Hospital, Mark Reed Health Care Clinic, and CHOICE to provide a structured process for wrap around services to MRHCC patients needing referral to resources, system navigation, and intensive client support.

CHOICE has recently become the administrative home for Thurston County Project Access (TCPA) - a program designed to connect eligible uninsured patients with a medical need to donated health care services in the area - as well as taken on the administrative capacity for the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program for Thurston County.

CHOICE has a vision of *Better Health for Everyone at Less Cost*. A broad goal, CHOICE has focused efforts at the local, state, and national levels to influence and advance community-based health care efforts aimed at reducing disparities and improving quality.

We do this through the aforementioned activities, through our membership and staffing of a number of health care task forces throughout the region, and by being actively engaged with *Communities Connect (CC)*, a Washington State coalition of community-based organizations, and *Communities Joined in Action (CJA)*, a national advocacy group of community coalitions.

CHOICE receives funding through institutional membership, grants, and contracts.

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