

**ISDH Long Term Care
Newsletter Issue 2014-04
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In Today's Issue:

- Regional Healthcare Quality Improvement Collaborative Project

Announcing the ISDH Regional Healthcare Quality Improvement Collaborative Project

A couple of weeks ago the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) announced a new project to provide advanced education opportunities throughout the state on wound care, healthcare associated infections, Alzheimer's and dementia care, and process improvement. The ISDH is pleased to announce another healthcare quality improvement project. The Regional Healthcare Quality Improvement Collaborative Project is designed to assist nursing homes in implementing quality assurance and performance improvement projects. The project was designed as a sister project to the Advanced Education Project.

OUR PARTNER

The ISDH is pleased to partner with the University of Indianapolis Center for Aging & Community on this healthcare quality improvement project. The University of Indianapolis will be leading the project. A Healthcare Quality Advisory Group has been established consisting of healthcare partners to assist in developing, implementing, and focusing this project as well as other quality improvement projects.

WHAT IS A "COLLABORATIVE"?

A "collaborative" is a group that works together on healthcare quality improvement projects. The "collaborative" may include health care facilities, healthcare quality improvement organizations, provider associations, consumer organizations, and community organizations. The primary purpose of a collaborative is to bring together key partners to address common healthcare issues and challenges. A collaborative frequently facilitates educational programs for participants. A collaborative may be able to obtain more expertise and resources thus improving the efficiency and quality of continuing education and training programs. A collaborative also serves as an important opportunity to bring together partners to address care coordination challenges.

The participants determine the direction of the collaborative. Each facility initially designates a few staff to participate in the collaborative. As projects are developed, the participants from a facility will likely change based on the facility's needs and the subject matter of projects undertaken by the collaborative.

The collaborative will conduct needs assessments of participating facilities and develop regional projects consistent with identified needs. Each collaborative will then conduct regional quality improvement projects consistent with Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) principles and standards. Each collaborative is expected to include participation by nursing homes in that region, providers associations, quality improvement organizations, consumer advocate organizations, and community organizations.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In recent years several regional healthcare collaborative projects have been created by a variety of associations and organizations. One of the challenges has been continuity of the collaborative resulting from loss of funding. The ISDH was requested to consider funding collaborative projects through the CMS Civil Money Penalty Fund. The ISDH developed a proposal which was approved by CMS. The project is approved for two years.

The project is intended to assist in the development of regional healthcare quality improvement collaborative projects for nursing homes. The ISDH will be providing funding to support continuation of existing collaborative projects and development of additional collaborative projects. Our goal is to eventually have regional quality improvement collaborative groups available to nursing homes throughout the state within a reasonable distance of participating facilities. The number of nursing homes in a collaborative may vary depending on the number of facilities in the region but the intent is to create small regional collaborative projects (perhaps 20 - 40 facilities per collaborative) in order to facilitate interaction and coordination.

The project is intended to establish an infrastructure for implementing quality improvement projects at nursing homes and facilitate communication and care coordination between healthcare providers. The project is designed to provide nursing homes with training and support for development and implementation of quality improvement projects. The ultimate goal is to improve quality of care for nursing home residents.

The ISDH believes that small regional collaborative projects are vital to implementing healthcare quality improvements. A regional collaborative is more cost and time effective for facilities than a project that requires significant travel. One facility cannot be expected to have expertise in all areas of care so a collaborative can better facilitate access to experts on a topic. A small collaborative provides the opportunity for participation by more staff than just the "usual suspects" of key administrative staff thus increasing its chance of success. A smaller group provides for increased opportunity for discussion and interaction among participants and encourages participation of community organizations.

HISTORY OF REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Many Indiana nursing homes have participated in past regional collaborative projects such as the Indiana Pressure Ulcer Initiative that began in 2007 and the Indiana Healthcare Associated Infection Initiative that began in 2010. Each of these collaborative projects were designed around one issue and ended at the conclusion of the project. Each initiative included regional meetings that brought together partners needed to address care coordination issues. Many participants indicated that the regional meetings were one of the first opportunities for facilities in the area to directly communicate about healthcare quality improvement.

Collaborative projects already exist for other provider types. The Indiana Hospital Association reports that almost all general hospitals are now participating in a regional collaborative and reports that these collaborative efforts have been successful in addressing quality of care issues.

For nursing homes, there have been a few regional healthcare collaborative projects but there is limited current participation. Regional projects have tended to come and go as there has been a lack of a champion to drive the collaborative and often a lack of funding needed to facilitate activities.

Some collaborative projects have revolved around a specific event. After widespread flooding hit the state in 2008 impacting well over 100 facilities, there was an effort to bring facilities together for the purpose of emergency preparedness planning. The outcome of that effort was the development of nursing home preparedness plans.

CMS and the state Quality Improvement Organization (QIO), Health Care Excel, conducted a pilot project in Lake County on at-risk nursing homes. The collaborative project was an effort to improve performance at facilities with a history of poor performance. The project focused on bringing together a number of partners to address quality issues. The project included six nursing homes. The project began in September 2010 and concluded in August 2011.

There are several existing nursing home collaborative projects that have been active to varying degrees for the past few years. For example, the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County developed a Nursing

Home Collaborative Project involving all nursing homes in the St. Joseph County (South Bend area). The Central Indiana Senior Fund funded an Indianapolis Nursing Home Collaborative. Both of these collaborative projects have focused primarily on leadership and staffing issues.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT (QAPI)

In recent years, CMS implemented Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) requirements for several health care providers. In 2013 CMS announced plans to extend QAPI requirements to nursing homes. On June 7, 2013, CMS released Survey and Certification Letter 13-37-NH discussing the rollout of QAPI materials for nursing homes. The materials detail the five elements of QAPI.

One of the goals of the regional collaborative projects is to assist facilities in development of QAPI planning and projects. The ISDH Advanced Education Project will be providing process improvement training. The Regional Healthcare Quality Improvement Collaborative Project is designed to assist facilities in developing QAPI projects based on process improvement principles. All nursing homes will soon be required by CMS to demonstrate that the facility has implemented a QAPI program. A regional collaborative has the potential to serve as a foundation for that QAPI program.

WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

The University of Indianapolis has released a funding opportunity for regional collaborative projects. There will be funding available for up to seven regional collaborative projects. Each project needs a lead organization or "champion" to serve as a project facilitator. The ISDH encourages facilities to work with organizations in their region to identify a collaborative project champion. The champion may then submit a letter of intent to the University of Indianapolis requesting funding.

Letters of Intent from interested lead agencies are due by September 22, 2014 and should include:

- Intent to apply (without obligation) from lead agency/fiscal agent leadership
- Description of proposed geographic region
- List of potential collaborative members (nursing homes plus community stakeholders)
- Current level of coordination and collaboration in the region (provide examples, if possible)
- Potential and need for quality improvement in the region

University of Indianapolis Collaborative Project Notice



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September 2, 2014



Indiana State
Department of Health

**NOTICE OF FUNDING
AVAILABILITY**

This is a notice of funding availability for the creation of Quality Improvement Regional Collaboratives focused on Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) projects for nursing homes across the state of Indiana. The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and University of Indianapolis Center for Aging & Community (CAC) are requesting a Letter of Intent from interested organizations and/or fiscal agents to establish one of up to seven regional collaboratives, for which funding will be provided.

ISDH and CAC intend to offer grants of up to \$30,000 per regional collaborative to support 18 months of quality improvement activities, including a regional needs assessment and mapping of community assets and two formal QAPI projects. In addition, CAC will provide extensive guidance, training and technical support regarding the QAPI projects that will be executed as part of the initiative.

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A formal RFA will be released on September 26, 2014, with a question and answer period to follow. The final proposal from interested fiscal agents will be due November 21, 2014.

For more information on the organization of Regional Collaboratives, the funding opportunity, and QAPI projects, visit [Quality Improvement Regional Collaboratives](#) on the CAC website or contact Lidia Dubicki at ldubicki@uindy.edu or (317) 791-5926.

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