VBP/VBC Domain – CHC Access

DESCRIPTION

NACHC's Closing the Primary Care Gap Report highlights the primary care crisis we are facing – nearly 1/3 of Americans (over 100 million) face barriers to accessing primary care. Research shows that access to primary care is associated with positive health outcomes and plays an important role in improving health equity. Healthy People 2030 considers access to primary care as a social driver of health (SDoH). Healthy People defines 4 components of access to care - 1) The lack of health insurance decreases the use of preventive and primary care services and is associated with poor health outcomes. 2) Having a usual source of care is associated with adults receiving recommended screening and prevention services. 3) Timeliness of care is critical to supporting better health outcomes (i.e., providing care when the need is recognized). 4) Having an adequate workforce is important to meet the needs of a population (i.e., sufficient number of capable, qualified, culturally competent providers).

Timeliness of care is important to improving health outcomes, particularly when working with vulnerable populations. Health centers have understood this and focused their models of care to provide access to appointments when their patients need it through open access models. "Open access, also known as advanced access and same-day scheduling, is a method of scheduling in which all patients can receive an appointment slot on the day they call, almost always with their personal physician," AHRQ. However, as health centers experience workforce shortages that were exacerbated during the pandemic, maintaining an open access model or expanded hours of operation can be challenging. Alternative forms of access are a potential solution to not only provide access to patients when and where they need it, but also address the decreasing availability of traditional provider appointments in the community. Health centers are increasingly offering telehealth services, e-visits, remote patient monitoring, visits with non-billable staff, and group visits. The challenge for VBP models will be to adequately reimburse for these alternative forms of access.

Capabilities in the CHC Access domain include:

- Providing access to patients when and where they need it.
- Extended hours of operations (e.g., after hours appointments and weekend appointments).
- Alternative forms of access, including telehealth, e-visits, remote patient monitoring, AI options, group visits, and visits with non-billable providers.
- Open access/same day scheduling.

RATING YOUR HC LOW, MEDIUM, OR HIGH FOR THIS DOMAIN

Attributes of HCs that are rated low, medium, or high for capabilities in this domain.

1. The health center promotes advanced patient access (scheduling, portal, digital health, etc.), utilizes telehealth and on-line treatment options, and engages in outreach activities to assist consumers to access services (*from CHCANYS APM Assessment tool*).
    a. Low – There is limited use of online patient engagement, including telehealth. A secure patient portal exists but has limited capabilities, or limited use from patient population. Telehealth is limited in use.
    b. Medium – A regular workflow exists for encouraging patients to use an online patient portal and some assistance is available to patients. Telehealth is used in some circumstances.
    c. High – Patients are actively encouraged to use a patient portal, which offers advanced features such as scheduling and digital health. The health center has robust infrastructure for offering telehealth and a workflow to ensure telehealth is used appropriately.

2. The health center provides outpatient clinical services during times and at locations that ensure accessibility and meet the needs of the consumer populations to be served, including some nights and weekend hours (*from Delta Center's MAHP 2.0 Assessment*).
   a. Low – Serious challenge or quite a bit of concern
   b. Medium – Moderate concern
   c. High – small concern or not a challenge
3. The health center provides open access/same-day scheduling.
   a. Low – Serious challenge or quite a bit of concern
   b. Medium – Moderate concern
   c. High – small concern or not a challenge

If you are interested in your HC taking a more comprehensive VBP assessment, below are some options:
- Delta Center's MAHP 2.0 Assessment Tool https://deltacenter.jsi.com/resources/road-ahead-model-advancing-high-performance-primary-care-and-behavioral-health-under
- NACHC Payment Reform Readiness Assessment Tool https://www.nachc.org/resource/payment-reform-readiness-assessment-tool/

RESOURCES FOR CHCS TO IMPROVE THIS CAPABILITY

LPCA, HCCN and/or LPCACO programs/support:

- LPCA provides education on CMS VBP initiatives focused on value-based transformation of team-based care.
- LPCA will support HCs in completing VBP/VBC self-assessments through these Domain communication tools and by informing HCs of other tools and resources.
- List other LPCA, LPCACO, or HCCN programs to support patient access: LPCA Assist, Remote Patient Monitoring, and Telehealth programs, EHR patient portal training

Other partners that can help CHCs improve this capability:

- *PCA Value-Based Care Collaborative and Online Resources*
- *NACHC Workforce Online Resources and Conferences (CHI, FOM/IT, Peer Learning, etc.)*
- *NACHC Elevate program*
- *JSI/Delta Center For A Thriving Safety Net*
- *IHI tools and resources*
- *AHRQ tools and resources*
- *SNMHI tools and resources*
- *The Commonwealth Fund tools and resources*

Links to resources for this capability:

- Closing the Primary Care Gap, NACHC https://www.nachc.org/resource/closing-the-primary-care-gap-how-community-health-centers-can-address-the-nations-primary-care-crisis/
- NACHC Value Transformation Framework Action Guides https://www.nachc.org/clinical-matters/value-transformation-framework/
- NACHC Value Transformation Framework Action Guide for patient engagement https://www.nachc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Patient-Engagement-AG-Jan-2022.pdf
- Open Access Scheduling for Routine and Urgent Appointments tool, AHRQ https://www.ahrq.gov/cahps/quality-improvement/improvement-guide/6-strategies-for-improving/access/strategy6a-openaccess.html
- Enhanced Access Implementation Guides, SNMHI https://www.safetynetmedicalhome.org/change-concepts/enhanced-access

- Primary Care Access as a SDoH, Healthy People 2030 https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/access-primary-care
- Elements of Access to Health Care, AHRQ https://www.ahrq.gov/research/findings/nhqrdr/chartbooks/access/elements.html
- Improving Primary Care tools, IHI https://www.ihi.org/Topics/PrimaryCareAccess/Pages/default.aspx
- Joint Commission Enhanced Access & Patient Language/Communication Needs questions https://www.jointcommission.org/what-we-offer/certification/certifications-by-setting/hospital-certifications/primary-care-medical-home-certification/
- NASEM implementing high quality primary care https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/implementing-high-quality-primary-care
- US Approach to Primary Care Access Struggles Is Disjointed, Patient Engagement HIT https://patientengagementhit.com/news/us-approach-to-primary-care-access-struggles-is-disjointed
- Access to Care, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/county-health-rankings-model/health-factors/clinical-care/access-to-care
- 8 Priorities for Improving Primary Care Access https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7018673/
- Expanding Access to Primary Care While Maintaining Quality, The Commonwealth Fund https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2021/jul/more-is-more-expanding-access-primary-care-maintaining-quality
- Healthcare Access in Rural Communities, RHIhub https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/healthcare-access
- See You Now: Primary Care Access, ANA https://www.nursingworld.org/continuing-education/see-you-now-primary-care-access-free/
- Race, Medical Mistrust, and Segregation in Primary Care as Usual Source of Care https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4899337/
- Addressing Access to Primary Care for Latinos in the US, University of Chicago https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/708616
- Children and Adolescent Access to PCPs, NCQA https://www.ncqa.org/hedis/measures/children-and-adolescents-access-to-primary-care-practitioners-cap/