

Question & Answer (Q&A) - Building Partnerships: Health Plans and Community-based Organizations Webinar

Webinar participants asked these questions during the Q&A portion of the Building Partnerships: Health Plans and Community-based Organizations webinar held on April 4, 2018. Please note, the responses in this document have been edited for clarity. The webinar recording, slides, and transcript can be found on the Resources for Integrated Care website: https://www.resourcesforintegratedcare.com/DisabilityCompetentCare/2018_DCC_Webinar_Series/Building_Partnerships

Featured Webinar Speakers:

- Christopher Duff, Disability Practice and Policy Consultant
- Lori Peterson, MA, Collaborative Consulting
- Patricia Yeager, PhD., CEO, The Independence Center, Colorado Springs, CO
- Paul Castro, JD, Former CEO, Jewish Family Services of LA

Q1: How does a community-based organization initiate working with local health plans?

Patricia Yeager: At the Independence Center in Colorado, we brought an additional staff member, the Independence Center's Director of Rehabilitation, onto our board. The Director of Rehabilitation was tasked with keeping the organization visible with hospital discharge planners. Since coming on, the Director has helped us to understand hospital culture which has helped us to improve our working relationship with area hospitals. This has gone a long way to get buy-in from health plans to work with our agency and see the value of our services in terms of enhancing participant experience. They have been able to see how our agency can be a better steward of their medical dollars.

Lori Peterson: What works in one particular market could look different in other areas or with other organizations. There are multiple possibilities for relationship development within any system, from physicians, to the board, to case managers, who are involved in the day-to-day work. It is also very important to understand their world. Understanding the challenges faced by local health plans can shed light on opportunities to work with them or a means to open up conversation about something that will truly resonate with them.

Paul Castro: It is important to find out what would make a health plan or hospital representative take the time to sit down with you. From our experience, it is important to focus the conversation on how you can save them money or improve their outcomes. Because of our contract with CMS, we were able to show how our innovative work could reduce readmissions. Beyond this

information, we leveraged relationships that our board members had with representatives in health plans and hospitals. Through these relationships, we were able to get in the door and have the opportunity to speak with them. We also maximized California's legislative mandates that require collaboration between health plans and community-based organizations.

Q2: How do you go about delivering prescriptions to the home?

Patricia Yeager: We have a longstanding relationship with a pharmacy in our area that allows participants to sign up for prescription deliveries. If we are able to get the prescription from the doctor and run it over to this pharmacy, they will deliver the prescription for a two dollar charge. They are able to deliver it that day, or as soon as possible. The goal is to make sure that we are able to get the prescription as soon as possible to be able to make this happen seamlessly.

Q3: How would a health plan identify local community-based organizations that meet the needs of the target population?

Patricia Yeager: You could host a focus group with participants who have disabilities, seniors, or any group in your community for which you are trying to improve services. During these focus groups, you can ask them, "What are the barriers? What do you need? What would be helpful?" With that information, you can invite agencies in your area to come together to have a dialogue about improving care. If they have not worked with a health plan before, you can provide training to help them figure out how to establish the relationship. Providing reimbursement to these community agencies or establishing a financial arrangement can also help generate interest for establishing a working collaboration.

Lori Peterson: To identify potential partners, you could conduct market research or look through resource guides or requests for proposals (RFPs) to get a sense of who the players are in the market and what services they are offering. The [organizational readiness assessment](#) developed by the Aging and Disability Business Institute (and mentioned during the [webinar](#)) will help you identify who is in the market, the services they offer, their skills and capabilities for service delivery, and how they can work with you to deliver services as you start to form a partnership. These three steps should be considered when forming partnerships: (1) identifying organizations, which can be done with some market research; (2) outlining criteria for partnerships, and; (3) assessing if the partner's capabilities align with the health plan's initiatives and goals.