

The Cardiac Population Health Learning and Action Network: An Invitation

Jay A. Gold, MD, JD, MPH; Carrie Finley, RN, BSN

MetaStar is pleased to announce that as part of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' national quality improvement program, we are partnering with WHITEC, the Wisconsin Health Information Technology Extension Center, to support a Cardiac Population Health Learning and Action Network (Cardiac LAN). Network activities support the national "Million Hearts" initiative. We are inviting primary care practices in Wisconsin to join us in this initiative.

In order to reduce the prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors, the federal Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with nonprofit and private organizations, is launching Million Hearts, a multifaceted combination of evidence-based interventions designed to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over the next 5 years.

The Cardiac LAN is engaged in a 3-year collaborative initiative to standardize, sustain, and spread improvements in the delivery of cardiovascular health services. Participating practices benefit from free assistance on measures they can take to prevent heart



Doctor Gold is Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, MetaStar; Ms Finley is a Quality Consultant at MetaStar. This material was prepared by MetaStar, the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Wisconsin, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. 10SOW-WI-MISC-12-07

disease and stroke in their patients, and at the same time fulfill the public health requirement for the EHR Meaningful Use incentive. We also provide targeted assistance to medical practices in using their EHRs to track and report cardiac measure data.

While the concept is not new, Learning and Action Networks are a way to foster, study, adapt, and spread large-scale improvement around a given aim. Such a network creates opportunities for in-depth learning and problem solving; it accepts all offers of support seeking to catalyze interested parties; it is transparent, flexible, interchangeable, and purposeful.

Goals of the Cardiac LAN are ambitious. We currently are working to bring together primary care practices, cardiologists, and local and national stakeholders as a sustainable network aimed at improving health in populations at risk for ischemic vascular disease and other vascular diseases. We have been doing this through monthly webinars, e-newsletters, and face-to-face meetings. Our overarching goal is to connect stakeholders and physician offices to implement evidence-based interventions aimed at reducing risk factors and addressing disparities that contribute to heart disease and stroke. In addition, we support physician offices in implementing and measuring interventions to improve delivery of evidence-based care to patients at risk and to draw on experiences of cardiac patients to keep the "patient" at the center of care improvement.

Participation Benefits

Benefits for participating practices include

the following:

- Assistance with qualifying for Physicians Quality Reporting System (PQRS) incentive payments
- Free consulting services, technical assistance, continuing medical education, tools, resources, and support
- Assistance with using EHRs for care coordination, monitoring, patient engagement, spread of best practices, and identification in disparities of care
- Quality of care improvement with emphasis on cardiovascular disease
- Participation in a collaborative, statewide LAN
- Exposure to state and national clinical experts
- Opportunities to provide mentoring to other Wisconsin practices

In addition to convening a sustainable Learning and Action Network, MetaStar is working to assist practices that have reached Stage I Meaningful Use to provide a forum for health care professionals, community stakeholders, and patients to come together to address the common goal of improving more general preventive care for adult patients. The Network focuses on specific clinical topics—flu and pneumococcal vaccinations, mammograms, colorectal cancer screening, hypertension, and tobacco counseling — and educates clinicians on integrating health information technology into their everyday practice.

If you are interested in learning more about these activities, contact Carrie Finley, RN, BSN, at cfinley@metastar.com.

advancing the art & science of medicine in the midwest

WMJ

WMJ (ISSN 1098-1861) is published through a collaboration between The Medical College of Wisconsin and The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. The mission of *WMJ* is to provide an opportunity to publish original research, case reports, review articles, and essays about current medical and public health issues.

© 2012 Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System and The Medical College of Wisconsin, Inc.

Visit www.wmjonline.org to learn more.