

In the Journals

Team-based health care improves patient outcomes, physician well-being

Smith CD, et al. NAM Perspectives. 2018;doi:10.31478/201809c.

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Implementing optimal team-based health care is associated with improvements in patient outcomes, the efficiency of care and the well-being and satisfaction of clinicians, according to a discussion paper published in the National Academy of Medicine Perspectives.

“Team-based care is becoming increasingly important as the health care delivery system moves from fee-for-service payments to value-based payment models and care itself becomes more complex,” Cynthia D. Smith, MD, vice president for clinical programs for ACP, said in a press release. “Studies that include a variety of clinical team types show an association with improved patient outcomes and clinician well-being.”

According to the authors, team-based health care is when at least two health professionals who work collaboratively with patients and their caregivers promote health services to individuals, families and/or their communities to achieve coordinated, high quality care and shared goals within and across settings.

Smith and colleagues reviewed multiple studies and found that team-based care is associated with improved patient outcomes in several settings, including ambulatory, ED, nursing home and hospital-based care, in terms of commonly used markers of health care quality, including clinical quality measures, ED utilization and hospital readmissions.

High performing teams also improved physician well-being; however, more research is required to fully understand the relationship, according to the authors. Factors such as mutual trust, clear roles, shared measurable goals and effective communication contributed to high performing team-based care.

Poor EHR usability, workforce and training issues and payment models impede team-based health care and must be addressed, according to the authors.

“The evidence is clear that health care organizations that don't invest in training and sustaining their clinical teams will be at a significant financial disadvantage in the long term,” the authors concluded. “High-functioning teams have tremendous potential to promote clinician well-being, which is foundational to effective and efficient health care.”

ACP has also released related initiatives to put patients before paperwork and improve physician well-being and professional satisfaction. – by Alaina Tedesco

Disclosure:

Smith reports being employed by ACP, receiving grants from CMMI and that her spouse is employed by Merck & Co.

Please see paper for all other authors' relevant financial disclosures.