

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Whole-Person Care in California's Safety Net



THE ISSUE

Medicaid patients often have unmet needs for health, mental health, and substance use services, as well as socioeconomic challenges that influence access to care and health outcomes, such as housing instability, unemployment, and food access. Yet fragmented financing and systems for social services, behavioral health, and health services often result in uncoordinated services at the patient level. Providers and payers alike have recognized the need for new approaches to meeting the Triple Aim for an expanding Medicaid population that often interacts with multiple publicly-financed systems.

THE PROJECT

Blue Shield of California Foundation supported JSI and its partners, the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH) and Safety Net Institute, to conduct a research study examining the opportunities and challenges of providing whole-person care. We defined whole-person care as “the coordination of health, behavioral health, and social services in a patient-centered manner with the goals of improved health outcomes and more efficient and effective use of resources.”

From June 2013 to August 2014, JSI completed:

- A literature review on approaches to care coordination across systems
- Key informant interviews with stakeholders from public hospitals, health centers, health departments, managed care plans, behavioral health, and county-based social services in diverse California counties representing 43% of the state population
- Primary and secondary research on opportunities and barriers for collaboration between sectors
- A conceptual framework of six elements of whole-person care
- Identification of actions and policy opportunities at the county, state and federal levels
- Recommendations for advancing whole-person care in California's 1115 waiver

THE RESULTS

JSI has authored four deliverables based on this research:

- *National Approaches to Whole-Person Care in the Safety Net*
- *Opportunities for Whole-Person Care in California*
- *California's 1115 Waiver: An Opportunity to Move from Coverage to Whole-Person Care*
- *Integrating Housing Strategies with Health: An Opportunity to Advance Whole-Person Care in California*

Other results included a day-long CAPH 2014 conference session exploring county-level strategies and whole-person care pilots in California's 1115 waiver proposal, *Medi-Cal 2020*. The framework continues to shape conversations at the county level and has been used to analyze policy options designed to meet the Triple Aim in Medicaid.



Dimensions of Whole-Person Care

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