

Six Health Plans Pay \$1.5 Million in Incentives to Create Medical Homes for Nearly Half a Million Hudson Valley Residents

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FISHKILL, N.Y., March 9, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Nearly half a million patients in New York's Hudson Valley can now call their primary care physician offices patient-centered medical homes, thanks to a Taconic Health Information Network and Community (THINC) project that garnered participation from six health plans to improve the quality of care in the region.

The health plans--Aetna, CDPHP, Hudson Health Plan, MVP Health Care, UnitedHealthcare and Empire BlueCross Blue Shield --represent some 65 percent of the commercial insurance market in the Hudson Valley and 43 percent of Medicaid managed care. Setting aside competition in favor of cooperation with THINC, the health plans paid \$1.5 million to 236 primary care physicians in 11 practices that achieved patient-centered medical home (PCMH) recognition from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), which served as an objective measure of medical home-ness. The incentives were paid to providers for transformation to a PCMH and for the enhanced, more robust services patients receive in a medical home.

The PCMH transformation project was managed over a one-year period by THINC, the not-for-profit organization that convenes providers, payers, employers, public health agencies, quality organizations, consumers and local leaders to improve the quality, safety and efficiency of health care for the community. The work was managed in collaboration with Taconic IPA.

"This success of this project means we've reached critical mass for the medical home in the Hudson Valley," said Susan Stuard, THINC's executive director. "A majority of the commercial and public program insurance plans serving the Hudson Valley worked together to support the foundation of primary care--bring better preventive care, improved chronic condition care, and better access to coordinated care. Ultimately, this project shows that those caring for the people of the Hudson Valley can move beyond competition

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