

Beacon Community of the Inland Northwest (Spokane, WA)



Overview and Goals

The [Beacon Community of the Inland Northwest \(BCIN\)](#) is one of 17 Beacon Communities building and strengthening local health IT infrastructure and testing innovative approaches to make measurable improvements in health, care and cost.



[Meaningful Use](#) of electronic health records (EHR) is the foundation of the exciting work in each community. Funded by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, BCIN focuses on clinical practice transformation through a robust technology framework, clinical decision support tools, and care coordination to improve care for patients with type 2 diabetes in eastern Washington and north Idaho, the hospital referral region around Spokane, Washington. Patients in this largely rural region receive care at many different locations and from many different providers. BCIN is focused on:

- Improving regional outcomes for the type 2 diabetes population by integrating and coordinating care across clinical settings
- Implementing a comprehensive, regional approach to disease management, with standardized metrics and evidence-based clinical decision support tools
- Achieving optimal outcomes by leveraging IT applications that support information exchange, patient referrals, and coordinated care for patients with type 2 diabetes across a large geographical area
- Implementing a sustainable reimbursement model, linked in part to programs that reward community-level performance

Partners

BCIN's major partners include: Community Choice, Eastern Washington Critical Access Hospital Network, Washington State Department of Health, and the Washington Academy of Family Physicians.

Beacon Community of the Inland Northwest Background	
Total grant award	\$15,702,479 over 3 years
Lead grantee	Inland Northwest Health Services
Geography	14 counties across eastern and north central Washington and northern Idaho
# of lives affected by Beacon interventions	27,000
# of providers involved in Beacon interventions	900
# of hospital partners	13
# of insurance partners	N/A
# of FQHCs and community health clinics	5

“Beacon Community of Inland Northwest has provided us the ability to keep our primary care physicians involved in the overall care, and that provides better care-more coordinated care. And the patient has a better chance for a good outcome.”

- Tom Martin, Lincoln Hospital Administrator

Strategies and Achievements

Building and Strengthening Health IT Infrastructure

Approach: BCIN is strengthening an existing health information exchange infrastructure to connect health care providers on multiple EHR platforms, increase efficiencies, and decrease duplication of services. A clinical data repository aggregates data from disparate systems using an enterprise level master patient index that ensures the records for the same patients are brought together into a longitudinal record. Data is then made available to care providers via a secure web-based portal where clinical staff can view the full continuum of care for the patient in a single view. This architecture also supports an evidence-based decision-support tool that enables care coordinators to determine the best care approach for each patient and facilitates rapid translation of new knowledge from research into practice across organizations, which enables consistent care across the health care system. Analytics that measure progress by individual providers toward best practices, as well as overall changes in key health outcomes will also be driven by data captured in the clinical data repository.

Progress:

- BCIN has developed interface standards which can be used by any facility sending any type of data to the data repository.

- Interfaces have been established and data are flowing among three electronic medical record systems. Interfaces are in development for four more electronic medical record systems.
- Seven clinics and ten hospitals are connected and sharing data today, with several additional clinics in the final testing process prior to going live. A total of 50 organizations have committed to participate and are in various stages of implementation.

Improving Health, Care and Costs

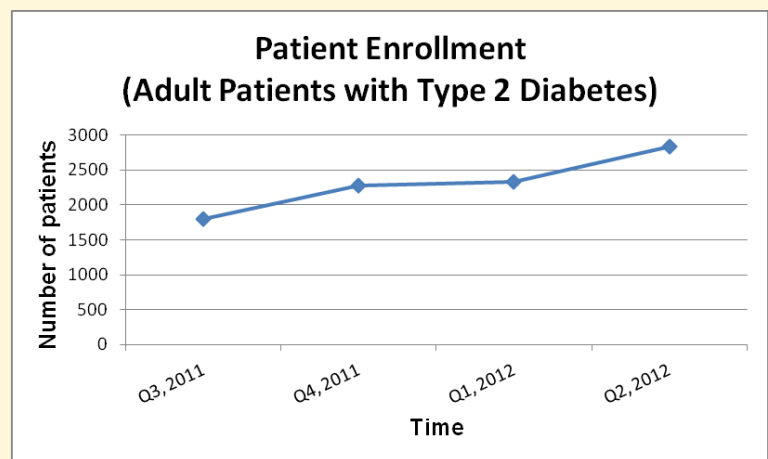
Approach: BCIN is providing over 500 health care providers (including mid-level providers) with training in care coordination, disease management, and quality improvement, with a focus on small physician groups and sole practitioners who lack the resources to invest in IT tools or hire care coordinators to support their practices. Each practice starts with an assessment of its care coordination readiness and current processes related to diabetes care. Gaps are identified and addressed through programs such as access to a network of care coordinators supporting patient interactions with providers across the continuum of care, diabetes educators, and training focused on having every member of the care team to practice at the top of his or her license. Participating providers receive access to advanced IT tools through BCIN's comprehensive technology solution.

Progress:

- Eight hospitals and 31 clinics have completed Care Coordination Readiness Assessments.
- More than 140 staff members from 22 clinics have participated in BCIN educational programs, including 22 staff in medical assistant education.
- Fifteen clinics have implemented workflow redesign and are receiving practice transformation coaching.
- BCIN has enrolled more than 2,800 patients.

Early Results: By the Numbers

Since January 2011, BCIN has steadily increased patient enrollment.



*Patient enrollment reflects the number of adult patients with type 2 diabetes whose provider's office is live on the BCIN technology.

Testing Innovative Approaches

Approach:

BCIN is developing a small scale pilot to provide a stand-alone community pharmacy with a tool to access information about patient medications within the HIE in order to simplify communication between pharmacists and PCPs. Pharmacists will be able to use the tool to resolve a variety of issues, e.g. when certain prescriptions are not covered by the patient's insurance. BCIN hopes to eventually deploy the tool to multiple pharmacies in other settings such as big retail pharmacies. BCIN is also developing a portal that will allow patients to view their records in the HIE, allowing patients to become more involved in their care.

Progress:

- BCIN has convened a working group to begin planning this work.

For more information on the Beacon Community of the Inland Northwest, visit: www.beaconcommunity.org.

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