

## Spotlight: Evaluation Results from the Nursing Facility Avoidable Hospitalizations Initiative

In the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) [Initiative to Reduce Avoidable Hospitalizations Among Nursing Facility Residents](#), nursing facility sites in seven states (AL, IN, MO, NE, NV, NY, and PA) are testing ways to reduce avoidable hospitalizations among long-stay Medicaid nursing facility residents. For each site, a lead entity organization provides education and clinical support to a nursing facility partner.

CMS recently released an [evaluation report](#) for the second year of the Initiative, in which all seven sites generally showed a decline in all-cause hospitalizations and potentially avoidable hospitalizations, with four sites showing statistically significant reductions in at least one of the hospitalization measures. During this period, all sites also generally showed reductions in Medicare expenditures relative to a comparison group, with statistically significant declines in total Medicare expenditures at two sites.

The Initiative focuses primarily on individuals with fee-for-service Medicare and/or Medicaid and does not involve payments to nursing facilities. Following are early lessons from the Initiative that states and health plans developing and operating managed care plans for Medicare-Medicaid enrollees should find useful:

- More "hands-on" clinical interventions seem to be showing greater effects than the purely educational interventions, though at greater cost.
- Nursing facilities reported strong appreciation for extra staff on-site, especially registered nurses and nurse practitioners who provide clinical support.
- Relationships between the Initiative nurses and facility staff were pivotal in affecting culture change and developing best practices.
- Early and continuing engagement across all levels of nursing facility staff, leadership, and ownership was critical in successful deployment of any intervention.
- Use of several [INTERACT tools](#) -- medication review with a focus on reducing antipsychotic medications, quality improvement efforts to reduce avoidable hospital admissions, and advance care planning -- appears to be solidly established in many sites and nursing facilities.

A second stage of the Initiative, starting in October 2016, will test different payment models aimed at reducing avoidable hospitalizations.

### Related Resources:

- [Reducing Avoidable Hospitalizations Among Nursing Facility Residents: Three Perspectives](#) (Integrated Care Resource Center/June 2015) This webinar features perspectives and lessons learned from two Fully Integrated Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans (FIDE SNPs) – HealthPartners in Minnesota and Bridgeway Health Solutions in Arizona – and from The Curators of the University of Missouri, one of seven organizations participating in the CMS Initiative to Reduce Avoidable Hospitalizations Among Nursing Facility Residents. [Recording](#)

- [Reducing Avoidable Hospitalizations for Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees in Nursing Facilities: Issues and Options for States](#) (Integrated Care Resource Center/April 2015) This brief outlines the options available to states in both capitated and fee-for-service arrangements to reduce avoidable hospitalizations from nursing facilities.
- [Medicare and Medicaid Nursing Facility Benefits and Integrated Care](#) (Integrated Care Resource Center/April 2015) This presentation provides an overview of: (1) similarities and differences between Medicare and Medicaid nursing facility benefits; (2) nursing facility quality and performance measurement; (3) Medicare and Medicaid payment methods, amounts, and incentives; and (4) opportunities for quality and care improvement through integrated care. [Recording](#)

#### **ABOUT THE INTEGRATED CARE RESOURCE CENTER**

The *Integrated Care Resource Center* is a national initiative of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to help states improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of care for individuals dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. The state technical assistance activities are coordinated by Mathematica Policy Research and the Center for Health Care Strategies. For more information, visit <http://www.integratedcareresourcecenter.com>.

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