Established in 1976, Valley-Wide Health Systems (VWHS) has thirteen primary health care delivery sites strategically located throughout multiple rural counties in Southern Colorado. These full-service clinics are complemented by eight dental clinics, four physical therapy clinics, and numerous ancillary health services to address the routine and complex needs of the patient populations and communities served. Along with multiple outreach programs, VWHS also oversees an Agricultural Worker Health Service Program that provides vouchers to patients in areas of the state that do not have migrant/seasonal farmworker programs. VWHS focuses on assisting the patient by addressing barriers such as cost, culture, language, literacy, and transportation that may hinder the use of appropriate health care services. VWHS implemented PRAPARE to help them better identify and track non-clinical needs to further inform their enabling services work.

Valley Wide Health Systems’ Enabling Services Tracking Tool

Back in 2011, VWHS built an Enabling Services Home template set to replace some legacy spreadsheets and access databases around both Care Coordination and Financial Eligibility. Over the years, the Enabling Services department worked with the Business Intelligence department to expand and refine this system to better capture usable data. At VWHS, the Enabling Services department always had a unique culture focused on data and worked with the Business Intelligence department to custom-build and refine over 90% of their workflow in-house so that data entry could be broken out across staff depending on their specific focus. Combining the Business Intelligence staff’s proficiency with EHR development, data reporting, and lifecycle development with the Enabling Services staff’s knowledge of program data needs, application and grant requirements, and patient needs allowed them to build robust and useful tools. Once the initial prototypes were worked through and the design of Enabling Services Home started to stabilize, the Enabling Services staff themselves then worked on ways to refine their own workflows and suggest ways to refine the processes needed.

After building the original Enabling Services Home template, VWHS built a registry system that would query patient charts overnight and look for ‘actionable’ items for real-time data. While many of these items were clinical in nature, others (e.g., self-management goal setting) were more non-clinical. The Enabling Services staff were some of the highest utilizers of the registries, often using the registries to outreach to patients and proactively assist them with their healthcare and social needs.

Recently, the Enabling Services department focused on incorporating PRAPARE into their current workflow to better inform their work and help identify those most in need. Based on feedback from staff, VWHS incorporated the PRAPARE template into their EHR (NextGen) in a way that allowed individual data points to be queried to give a single summary review of a patient’s socioeconomic circumstances while limiting changes to staff’s workflow. After viewing PRAPARE data in their dashboards, managers and staff were quickly able to see both strengths and weaknesses of their individual service lines, such as where they might be understaffed based on needs identified or where they could make their service lines more efficient.
After implementing PRAPARE, VWHS was able to better identify frequently impactful social determinants of health and create workflows and resource lists specific to individual regions and/or clinics that guide Enabling Services staff in assisting patients with overcoming barriers to care. This has led to the development of Care Team templates that have searchable lists of community resources that can be filtered by city. This helps make VWHS’ enabling services staff more efficient in helping more patients more quickly. This data is also reportable so VWHS can see which community partners they are referring to the most and if they need to have discussions with these partners in regards to capacity.

Valley-Wide Health Systems combined their original Enabling Services Home template with PRAPARE and their modified Care Team template along with data from the Medicaid Regional Accountable Entity (RAE) to create Admit/Discharge/Transfer (ADT) tracking reports as well as Client Over Utilization Program (COUP) reports. These assist their care coordinators in reaching out to patients who are potentially at risk to help them establish a medical home and address their needs in hopes of improving their health and lowering healthcare costs. This has become increasingly important as their State Medicaid RAE requires more discreetly documented outreach, care coordination, and overall improved connectivity with patients.
Valley-Wide plans to continue to work with the RAE to use PRAPARE as the identified method to evaluate social determinants of health as it will provide a depth of reporting that the State of Colorado would like to see for population health management.

Valley-Wide will also continue to analyze the data and drill further into what social determinants are having the largest impacts on patients. VWHS has been working with NextGen Analytics to integrate population health data directly into the EHR, creating Risk Scores onto the patient information bar, along with Clinical Quality Measure markers.

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