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Cleveland Clinic Journal Details Value of Home Health for Patients and the Health Care Delivery System

- Thought leaders in medicine and home health outline advanced models of home care and innovations with significant outcomes -

Washington, DC – The Alliance for Home Health Quality and Innovation (the Alliance) and the *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine* held a Capitol Hill briefing today on a recently released supplement to the *Journal* titled, “Optimizing Home Health Care: Enhanced Value and Improved Outcomes.” The supplement compiles articles on advanced models of delivering care at home including managing condition specific episodes, the role of technological innovation, palliative care treatment at home, and the intersection between the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model and traditional home care.

The supplement also analyzes what steps are needed to enhance the current value of home health care in the nation’s health care delivery system and what regulatory and clinical steps can be taken to improve patient experience and yield improved patient outcomes. As the number of Medicare beneficiaries rises due to an increasingly aged population, home health care offers potential solutions to rising health care costs by offering medically advanced care at a lower cost than inpatient settings.

“This supplement should improve readers’ understanding of a wide range of initiatives and ideas for how home health care might look in the future delivery system, bringing forth opportunities for future study,” stated Steven Landers, MD, CEO of VNA Health Group and Chair of the Alliance’s Board of Directors. “It is important that research and academic enterprises emphasize scholarly efforts to understand and improve home and community care so that the anticipated shift in care to home is informed by the best possible evidence, ultimately ensuring that patients get the best possible care.”

Today’s briefing offered further discussion on the policy implications of the new qualitative research on home health. One key focus on helping patients to succeed in home care involves effective transitions from hospital to community and avoiding costly rehospitalizations during that time. The authors described how new innovations in home health, including technology such as telehealth, can and will play a significant role in streamlining care transitions. The panelists also discussed how home health could assist patients in managing chronic conditions and reduce inpatient hospital days. The briefing builds on an online supplement to the *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine* and a corresponding Continuing Medical Education (CME) program. The supplement can be found online at www.ccjm.org and the CME series at www.clevelandclinicmeded.com.

Additionally, the authors provided an overview of other areas of focus within the supplement:

- The need for effective care transitions through advanced models of care including the hospital at home model and longitudinal in-home primary care;
- Home care following total knee replacement and heart failure through a home based clinical care path that smoothly transitions patients and embraces goals such as shared decision-making and patient and family education;
- How technology, such as telehealth, can and will play a significant role in monitoring chronic conditions and reducing inpatient hospital days;
- Innovative approaches to palliative care administered in the home; and
- The role of home health in managing individuals and populations of patients as our healthcare systems move toward accountable care organizations (ACOs) and the PCMH.

“This supplement covers a wide range of topics that are central to the future of home health care and highlights areas where decision makers must act in order to advance outcomes for patients and improve efficiency in health care delivery,” stated Teresa Lee, Executive Director of the Alliance. “We intend for this resource to be a guide for leaders, including physicians and health care providers, as the health care landscape continues to evolve in the coming years and today’s briefing has been an excellent starting point for that conversation.”

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The Alliance for Home Health Quality and Innovation is a non-profit, national consortium of home health care providers and organizations. The Alliance invests in research and education about home health care and its ability to deliver quality, cost-effective, patient-centered care across the care continuum. The Alliance is committed to conducting and sponsoring research and initiatives that demonstrate and enhance the value proposition that home health care has to offer patients and the entire U.S. health care system. To learn more, visit www.ahhqi.org.