

The Hartford Care Coordination Collaborative
An Example of a Hub to Promote a System of Collaboration and Improved Outcomes
April 2012

“ Young children often fall through the cracks between pediatric primary care providers and providers of mental health, early intervention, child welfare and early care and education services. Currently, there is a call for better linkages that support families in securing appropriate care services.” Source: *Improving Care Coordination, Case Management, and Linkages to Service for Young Children: Opportunities for States*, National Academy for State Health Policy, April 2009

Rationale for the Establishing the Collaborative

The Collaborative was established in June 2010, with support of the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI), as a vehicle for bringing Hartford area care coordination providers together in order to:

- learn about the services available from each organization that offers care coordination;
- identify barriers that prevent maximizing the coordination of resources for the range of services that families need;
- develop an ongoing process for more communication, better coordination and timeliness of services/care offered to families;
- address on both a direct service and systems' level the obstacles confronting families in securing appropriate services in a timely manner; and
- create a collaborative process that can be replicated in other regions of the state. .

Background Information on the Collaborative

The Collaborative has been meeting, approximately every 6 weeks, since June 2010. It is based at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center Special Kids Support Center, which holds the DPH Care Coordination contract for the North Central region for the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCNs) program. Child Development Infoline's Director and MCH Consultant staff the Collaborative.

Organizations represented on the Collaborative are:

- Charter Oak at Connecticut Children's Medical Center
- Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI)
- Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs (CYSHCN) Program, Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Community Health Network (CHN) – the ASO
- CT Behavioral Health Partnership
- Connecticut Children's Medical Center - Education and Rehabilitation Services
- Connecticut Children's Medical Center - Special Kids Support Center
- CT Dental Health Partnership
- CT United Way/2-1-1 – Child Development Infoline (CDI)
- CT United Way/2-1-1 – Health and Human Services
- CT United Way/2-1-1 – HUSKY Infoline
- Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- The Family Support Network
- The Medical/Legal Partnership Project Center for Children's Advocacy

In order to better understand what each organization offers via their care coordination services and what they hoped to accomplish through this collaborative, prior to the first meeting, each group completed a survey instrument. The compiled results were shared at the first meeting and laid the foundation for the Collaborative's work. The well-attended meetings include case presentations by Collaborative members. These presentations are a critical component to the work of the Collaborative as they offer concrete opportunities for members to work together in addressing the challenges in the presented cases. Over the year, the process has evolved from addressing the needs identified in case presentations on an informal basis to formalizing what has been found to be effective. This ensures that successful collaborative efforts are not solely dependent on relationships but can sustain changes in personnel and become an embedded process within the organizations represented on the Collaborative.

Examples of Collaborative Care Coordination Efforts

- Based on case presentations, Collaborative members coordinate efforts in meeting families' needs, demonstrating the efficiency and cost effectiveness of collaboration.
- A care coordinator from CDI has been embedded in the Special Kids Support Center for a ½ day a week.
- A managed care organization and the Charter Oak Primary Care Center at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, with facilitation by the Special Kids Support Center, developed, formalized and implemented a protocol for addressing patients' care coordination needs.
- The Special Kids Support Center is in the process of developing protocols with Department of Children and Families on DCF- involved cases.
- In response to ongoing questions on when and how best to use the resources and services available through DCF, the Department has been working with the Collaborative in designing a training session specific to the needs/questions of members. DCF will present the training this summer.
- An attorney from the Medical Legal Partnership Project of the Center for Children's Advocacy is assisting the Collaborative in identifying how care coordination needs might be reflected in health information exchanges without violating families' privacy.

Lessons Learned and Options for Expansion and Sustainability

Based on a year of meetings, the Collaborative has proven to be an effective "hub" for maximizing care coordination, both medical and community-based, for children and their families. It is an efficient vehicle for communication and collaboration among organizations providing care coordination to many of the same children and families while reducing fragmented, duplicative and expensive services that often ignore families' needs.

Working together now and in the future the members of this collaborative continue to:

- support, in an efficient and cost effective manner, pediatric medical homes;
- integrate the Collaborative's work into Medicaid's Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) initiative;
- contribute to the new delivery system of Medicaid-covered services by ensuring efficient and effective connection of families to services;
- collaborate with the ASO in serving children and families as well as child health providers; and
- encourage the replication of additional Collaboratives in other regions of the state.

This write-up is approved and endorsed by the following members of the Collaborative:

*Charter Oak at Connecticut Children's Medical Center,
Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs (CYSHCN) Program -Department of Public Health (DPH),
Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI),
Connecticut Children's Medical Center - Education and Rehabilitation Services,
Connecticut Children's Medical Center - Special Kids Support Center,
Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership
Connecticut Dental Health Partnership,
Connecticut United Way/2-1-1 - Child Development Infoline (CDI),
Connecticut United Way/2-1-1 - Health and Human Services,
Connecticut United Way/2-1-1 - HUSKY Infoline , and
The Family Support Network.
Medical/Legal Partnership Project Center for Children's Advocacy*

For more information about the Hartford Care Coordination Collaborative, contact Kareena DuPlessis, CDI Director at kareena.duplessis@ctunitedway.org or by phone at 860 571-7530 or Marijane Carey, MCH Consultant at mjcarey95@aol.com or by phone at 203 287-8953.