Background and overview

• The healthcare environment is changing due to a number of factors (e.g., reform legislation, aging population, cost pressures, changing technologies). While no one can predict all the changes with complete accuracy, Intermountain is working to shed light and find the best way forward.

  o The rate of healthcare expenditure in our nation is rising at an unsustainable rate. Intermountain believes we have to do our part to help address the issue. We seek to be a leader locally and nationally.

  o Doing nothing is not an option because eventually rising costs will force cuts that are likely to result in some form of reduced access to care, especially in view of federal and state budget pressures.

• Intermountain is taking positive actions to help position Intermountain for these changes; our plan is called “Shared Accountability” and includes changes in many areas.

  o Our goal is to provide better care and help patients achieve better health at more affordable costs. In healthcare, higher quality not only improves patient outcomes; it also often results in lower costs, because there are fewer complications and readmissions.

  o As the name suggests, every participant in healthcare has a role to play in making healthcare the best that it can be, including patients or health plan members, physicians, hospitals, payers, and the community. We can work together—proactively—to take healthcare to a higher level of quality even as we slow the rise of costs.

  o Shared Accountability will help Intermountain continue to fulfill our mission and our vision of being a model healthcare system, providing extraordinary care in all its dimensions.

Strategies and details

Shared Accountability is based on three strategies. We are implementing these strategies now through 2016 and beyond:

• Redesigning care, including quality improvement, will help us improve our already high quality healthcare. It includes supporting providers in their efforts to determine and provide the right care personalized for each patient. “Right care” means:

  o Encouraging care and treatment likely to be most effective based on the latest studies and evidence.

  o Avoiding three types of substandard care identified by the Institute of Medicine: over-treatment (doing too much); under-treatment (doing too little); and medical errors.

  o This builds on the foundation Intermountain has already laid with its Clinical Programs and Services and focus on best practices.

• Engaging patients, including:

  o Emphasizing wellness and prevention.

  o Providing care managers and resources to help patients stay healthy and manage chronic health problems (like diabetes and asthma).

  o Providing greater transparency about treatment options (potential benefits, risks, and costs) so patients and physicians can make more informed decisions together.

• Aligning financial incentives and appropriately managing costs, including:

  o Developing a payment system that rewards hospitals and physicians for providing the right care rather than just more care. These models should compensate hospitals and physicians based on a combination of productivity, quality, service, and total cost of care.

More information

For more information and resources about Intermountain Healthcare’s Shared Accountability approach, including a resource center with stories, timeline, glossary, and other tools, visit: my.intermountain.net/sharedaccountability

or call Intermountain Healthcare Shared Accountability Department at 801.662.6237.