

Rhode Island Quality Institute Receives Federal Grant to Address Need for Better Patient Care Coordination Between Medical and Behavioral Health Care Providers

Initiative will connect Butler Hospital and additional behavioral health providers to CurrentCare to improve care for those with mental health needs

PROVIDENCE, RI, SEPTEMBER 25, 2015 – The Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI) today announced that it has been awarded a Community Interoperability and Health Information Exchange grant from the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC).

The one-year, \$100,000 grant will support the Rhode Island Behavioral and Medical Information Exchange project, an initiative that will connect Butler Hospital and behavioral health providers who are ineligible for federal health IT incentives to CurrentCare to expand and improve their ability to electronically send, receive, find and use health information in a manner that is appropriate, standardized, secure, timely, and reliable.

“RIQI will engage non-eligible providers at Butler Hospital and Rhode Island’s eight community mental health organizations to close information gaps,” said Laura Adams, President & CEO, RIQI. “The goal is to advance care coordination for patients and smooth transitions of care by extending collaboration and health IT interoperability between medical and behavioral health providers. The project will leverage the existing capabilities of CurrentCare and the expertise of RIQI’s Regional Extension Center to achieve this goal.”

The project will make Butler Hospital’s admission, discharge and transfer notifications (ADTs), lab results, and summary of care information available to providers through CurrentCare. This includes implementing CurrentCare’s Hospital Alerts, which provides real-time clinical notifications of ADTs, and Viewer, an online portal which enables authorized users to query for patients and view a more complete health record.

“With Butler Hospital a founding partner of the Care New England Health System, we have long recognized the importance of integrating behavioral health services into the full continuum of care,” said Dennis D. Keefe, president and CEO of Care New England. “Particularly as we work to pioneer new approaches to care that will result in an enhanced patient experience, improved outcomes and better value, coordination among providers will be critical. This is a giant step forward in acknowledging the place of mental health and addiction services and creating a more seamless network of care for our community.”

Currently, 90 percent of both lab results and approaching 90 percent medications are available to authorized users along with care summaries, allergies, medication history, diagnostic imaging reports, EKGs, immunizations and ADTs from all RI acute care hospitals. Later this year, discharge summaries will be added, and in 2016, CurrentCare will include continuity of care documents (CCDs) from the Veteran’s Administration. Data from nine electronic health record (EHR) platforms, telehealth data, and diagnostic imaging reports from five of the state’s largest medical imaging providers flow into CurrentCare. This data is available to practices with or without an EHR via Viewer and Hospital Alerts.

“This project is a priority in Rhode Island due to the high prevalence of substance use disorders and the behavioral health care needs of its communities,” said Maria Montanaro, Director, Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals. “There is a tremendous need for an integrated approach, one that emphasizes overall health, to treat and care for people who are using substances or living with mental illness or disability.”

Rhode Island has one of the highest opioid overdose rates in the country with 239 confirmed unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2014 and was named in a March 2015 U.S. Department of Drug Enforcement Administration Nationwide Alert as an example of the surge in fentanyl abuse.

This project has the potential to improve health outcomes through the increased availability and use of health data by both primary care and behavioral health care providers who make treatment decisions based on the information at hand. The increased availability of prescription data may contribute to a reduction in the number of unintentional drug overdose deaths that result from multiple (same or similar) controlled substance prescriptions issued to the same patient when a complete pharmacy history is lacking.

"For years I've been advocating to include mental health providers in the federal program that supports the purchase and use of electronic health records. Leaving them out is a missed opportunity to improve care for patients with mental health conditions and to lower costs in our health care system," said U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. "This funding will allow the Rhode Island Quality Institute to continue to build connections between CurrentCare and Rhode Island's behavioral health community, which is an important step forward for health information exchange."

RIQI was the first statewide HIE in the nation to incorporate substance abuse and alcohol treatment data, garnering an Impact Excellence Award in 2013 from the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare.

Located within the Office of the Secretary for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), ONC is at the forefront of the US government's health IT efforts and is a resource to the entire health system to support the adoption of health information technology and the promotion of nationwide health information exchange to improve health care. ONC ranked CurrentCare in the Top 10 in the nation for rapidly expanding use of health information exchange.

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About Rhode Island Quality Institute (RIQI)

RIQI is a center of collaborative innovation that advances health and healthcare transformation. Our mission is to improve the quality, safety and value of healthcare and share knowledge that advances the field of healthcare improvement. RIQI is a 501c3 non-profit organization founded in 2001 and overseen by a Board of Directors comprised of senior health industry leaders from our community, including CEOs of hospitals, health insurers and health-related businesses, along with leaders of consumer groups, academia and government agencies. For more information, visit www.riqi.org.