

The Building Blocks of Million Hearts: An Overview of Public & Private Supports

Million Hearts will promote innovations to identify people now at cardiac risk, ensure that they receive appropriate treatment, reduce the need for blood pressure and cholesterol treatment, promote healthy diet and physical activity, and support smoke-free environments to reduce current and future cardiac risk.

Through communication, clinical measurement, and reporting to tens of thousands of health care providers and thousands of health care facilities for outpatient care, Million Hearts will provide a necessary focus showing that the ABCS (Aspirin for people at risk, Blood pressure control, Cholesterol management, Smoking cessation) are a top priority. Million Hearts will support health IT, connection and adherence to care, and other health system innovations that improve delivery of the ABCS to people who need them.

Partners from across the public and private health sectors, including federal agencies; doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health care professionals; private insurers; businesses; health advocacy groups; and community organizations, will support Million Hearts through a wide range of activities.

The following are some of the current public and private sector supports. Going forward, Million Hearts will be successful through the long-term implementation, ongoing coordination of efforts, and ability to achieve sustained community and clinical innovations.

PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORTS

MULTI-AGENCY SUPPORT

- **Data Harmonization.** Several agencies within the Federal government will work toward ensuring that systems measuring the ABCS are consistent. This will both improve health system performance in delivering these essential services and reduce burden on provider and health care systems.

AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY (AHRQ)

- **Communication and Surveillance.** AHRQ will support Million Hearts through conferences and communications that will speed the identification and diffusion of innovative strategies to improve the delivery of the ABCS in communities and health care systems. AHRQ also has committed to supporting surveillance of cardiovascular events through its annual National Healthcare Quality and National Healthcare Disparities Reports, as well as promoting dissemination of evidence-based materials tailored to consumers and families through the Effective Health Care program..

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

- **Network to Support and Amplify the Reach of Community Transformation Grants.** Concurrent with the Million Hearts release, CDC is awarding \$4.2 million to seven national networks of community-based organizations to support community health

promotion. Later this month, CDC will announce another \$100 million in grants to empower communities to reduce smoking, improve nutrition and promote blood pressure control. By fostering healthy lifestyles and communities, especially among populations experiencing the greatest burden of chronic disease, Community Transformation Grants will help improve health, reduce health disparities and lower health care costs.

- **Coordinated Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.** Also with the Million Hearts release, \$40 million in resources will be granted to states to improve health by targeting nutrition, physical activity, and clinical preventive services, as well as promoting education and management for people diagnosed with or at high risk for chronic diseases.
- **Pharmacy Outreach Project.** CDC and its partners will develop educational tools and resources for neighborhood pharmacists to use to enable public education for at-risk populations to stress the importance of staying on high blood pressure medications to prevent heart attacks and strokes.
- **Programs to reduce health disparities.** Reducing cardiovascular disease will significantly reduce health disparities. Programs such as the *Mississippi Delta Health Intervention*, which promotes heart health in both clinical and community settings across Mississippi's 18-county Delta Region, and *WISEWOMAN*, which helps low-income, uninsured 40 to 64-year-old women reduce their risk for heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases, are pivotal in linking community and clinical practices consistent with the recently released *HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*.

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS)

- **Medicare Advantage 5-Star Rating System.** CMS uses the Medicare Advantage system not only to ensure that private Medicare Advantage plans meet Medicare's quality standards but also to give consumers a tool to compare the quality of plans. Consistent with the Million Hearts goal, the rating system covers cardiovascular care, including cholesterol screening, weight and physical activity monitoring, and medication adherence.
- **Medicaid Incentives for Prevention of Chronic Disease.** CMS is awarding more than \$85 million in grants over 5 years to 10 States (Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York, Nevada, New Hampshire, Montana, Hawaii, Texas, California and Connecticut) to encourage Medicaid beneficiaries of all ages to participate in chronic disease prevention programs and take active steps to improve their health.
- **Physician Quality Reporting System.** The Physician Quality Reporting System provides bonus payments to physicians and other health professionals for reporting quality information to Medicare. Among the measures that physicians and other health professionals may report for 2011 are *Ischemic Vascular Disease: Use of Aspirin or another Antithrombotic*; *Controlling High Blood Pressure*; *Low Density Lipoprotein Control in Diabetes Mellitus*; and *Tobacco Use Assessment and Tobacco Cessation Intervention*.
- **Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs).** A network of 53 Medicare-funded organizations nationwide that improve healthcare quality at the community level, QIOs will work with physician offices, clinics and other providers to create a Learning & Action Network focused on achieving the elements of ABCS, as well as other quality goals.

- **Medicaid Quality Measures Program.** Five quality measures from this program correspond with the aim of Million Hearts, including: medical assistance with smoking and tobacco use cessation; congestive heart failure admission rate; controlling high blood pressure; adult BMI assessment; and comprehensive diabetes care: LDL-C screening.
- **Medicaid EHR Incentive Program.** This program provides incentive payments to eligible professionals, eligible hospitals, and critical access hospitals as they adopt, implement, upgrade or demonstrate meaningful use of certified EHR technology. Measures include both functional and clinical quality measures that address the Million Hearts priorities, including capturing smoking status and blood pressure (functional) and aspirin use and cholesterol screening (clinical quality).

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA)

- **Sodium Intake.** Excess sodium intake is a contributor to high blood pressure, which is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Most of the total sodium intake comes from processed and restaurant foods rather than what people add in cooking or at the table. As part of its ongoing efforts to help Americans control their sodium intake, FDA is seeking input on the opportunities for sodium reduction efforts, building on initiatives already undertaken by the food and restaurant industries.

HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (HRSA)

- **ABCS measures.** HRSA will require all community health centers starting in 2012 to annually report on the ABCS measures to track and improve performance, including new measures for 2012 for aspirin use and cholesterol screening. By 2017, HRSA is committing to increasing by 50% the number of health centers that meet or exceed Healthy People 2020 goals for the ABCS measures.
- **PCHM Recognition.** By 2013, 25% of all health centers will have at least one site recognized as a patient-centered medical home (PCMH), a service delivery model designed to improve the quality of care through enhanced access, planning, management, and monitoring of patient care, especially important for patients at risk for heart attacks and strokes.
- **Implementation of EHRs.** By 2017, all appropriate HRSA sponsored health care sites (Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, Critical Access Hospitals and Ryan White Clinics) will receive targeted technical assistance on implementation of electronic health records and how to improve their use of clinical quality measures related to heart disease and stroke.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, NATIONAL HEART LUNG AND BLOOD INSTITUTE (NIH, NHLBI)

- **Heart Truth® and Million Hearts.** NHLBI is aligning ongoing campaigns and activities like the Heart Truth campaign and continuing medical education materials with Million Hearts.
- **Clinical Practice Guidelines.** NHLBI is supporting a new five-year \$9.85 million contract for a National Program to Reduce Cardiovascular Risk focused on implementation of clinical practice guidelines to reduce CVD risk factors.

NATIONAL PREVENTION STRATEGY

- Million Hearts is aligned with the National Prevention Strategy and Strategy implementation by 17 National Prevention Council Federal Departments, and its public, private and nonprofit partners will advance the Million Hearts' goals. Alignment is demonstrated in the Strategy's Clinical and Community Preventive Services strategic direction and in three of its seven priorities – Tobacco-Free Living, Healthy Eating and Active Living.

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY

- Addressing preventable causes of avoidable mortality, starting with cardiovascular disease, is a top for the National Quality Strategy. Alignment of metrics used to assess treatment of individuals at highest risk across HHS programs as well as promoting patient and family engagement with care are all core components of the Strategy.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

- Cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity are associated with mental illness and treatment of the mental illness can reduce the effects of these disorders. Up to 83 percent of people with serious mental illness are overweight or obese and 44 percent of the US tobacco market is comprised of individuals with a mental or substance use disorder. All too often after overcoming an addiction or mental illness people with these disorders suffer from premature morbidity and mortality as a result of poor diet, lack of exercise and primary prevention services. SAMHSA has committed to aligning all available resources to support improved outreach and provision of comprehensive health care to people with mental and substance use disorders.

PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORTS

Many national associations are committed to engaging their constituents in this important initiative, particularly those involved in the delivery of primary care whose involvement is so central to the reliable delivery of the ABCS.

- **AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION (AHA)** will help monitor progress of the initiative's goals. AHA also is providing consumers with access to their heart health management tools, including Heart 360, My Life Check, and the Heart Attack Risk Calculator. In a critical effort to simplify and improve measurement and standardization of the ABCS, AHA will work with the federal government toward greater harmonization of clinical indicators with measurement standards. Additionally, AHA will educate physicians and disseminate best practices in the ABCS across health systems to improve patient care.
- **AMERICA'S HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS (AHIP)** and its members will amplify their ongoing commitment to reduce cardiovascular disease, which includes community-based collaborations to reduce the burden of obesity and other risk factors for heart disease (UnitedHealthcare), beneficiary fitness programs (WellPoint), initiatives to reduce ethnic and racial disparities in cardiovascular health (Aetna) and programs to better manage chronic disease (Cigna).

- **AMERICAN PHARMACISTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE AMERICAN PHARMACISTS' ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION** will encourage its more than 62,000 members to engage in the Million Hearts Campaign by raising awareness with their patients and their communities through the many activities planned for American Pharmacists Month in October and beyond. In addition, APhA will continue to spread the healthy heart message during *the APhA Annual Meeting & Exposition* in March and via numerous publications and social media channels reaching tens of thousands of pharmacists and consumers nationwide.
- **THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF STATE PHARMACY ASSOCIATIONS (NASPA) AND THE ALLIANCE FOR PATIENT MEDICATION SAFETY (APMS)** will encourage state pharmacy associations and their members to engage in the Million Hearts Campaign throughout the year with many activities planned for American Pharmacists Month in October and beyond. NASPA will focus on heart health by promoting leadership, sharing, learning, and policy exchange among state pharmacy associations and pharmacy leaders nationwide, and support pharmacists, patients, States and communities working together to improve heart health.
- **THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION (NCPA)** enthusiastically supports the Million Hearts Initiative, and will encourage all 23,000 independent community pharmacies to become involved in the Initiative, feature the initiative at its Annual Convention in October, and continue to raise awareness through their publications and social media outlets. Community pharmacists will also offer programs supporting the Million Hearts goal, such as blood pressure and lipid monitoring and smoking cessation services, and the new Simplify My Meds program that improves adherence by reducing the potential for gaps between refills and identifying other possible barriers to adherence.
- **WALGREENS** will engage its more than 26,000 health care providers to support the Million Hearts initiative's prevention goal by providing blood pressure testing at no charge in consultation with a Walgreens pharmacist or Take Care Clinic Nurse Practitioner. In addition, Walgreens also plans to promote diabetes testing in November and heart health in February, and make Million Hearts resources available at their more than 7,760 drugstores nationwide.
- **THE Y** is increasing private sector partnerships to expand coverage for the Y's Diabetes Prevention Program, as well as exploring opportunities to expand the successful National Diabetes Prevention Program and CDC's Healthy Communities Program to better address risks for diabetes, heart attacks, and strokes. The Y also is actively encouraging Ys and other community partners to assess and improve community environments to promote healthy living.

Participation and commitment from private partners are expected to grow in the coming months; major national associations like the American Medical Association and American Nurses Association have already committed their constituencies to this important work.