

ACO Resilience: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Trinity Health's COVID-19 Efforts: Ensuring Safe Patient Care Transitions

Trinity Health ACO is one of Trinity Health's two national, collaborative Medicare ACOs. It includes three physician-led, clinically integrated networks in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and one independent multi-specialty medical group in New Jersey.

During the pandemic, Trinity reexamined its processes for transitioning patients across sites of care, cutting down on exposure to the virus wherever possible. Trinity Health ACOs partnered with network skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) by offering support for infection control education, personal protective equipment (PPE), and testing to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 within the SNF and to support care-in-place for SNF patients, reducing unnecessary and disruptive ED visits.

Once patients are safely home, Trinity Health care management nurses, social workers, and home health staff work together to develop truly comprehensive, patient-centered care plans.

For all patients at risk for COVID-19, Trinity's population health teams conduct outreach and wellness checks to confirm these patients can receive any necessary care at home. This includes ensuring that patients have access to medications, support for mental health needs associated with home isolation, and are connected to local community services.

Next Gen ACO Network Model Strengthens COVID-19 Response

The majority of Trinity Health's ACO physicians are independent providers in their own community practice. Trinity Health's network infrastructure enabled and accelerated enhanced access to rapidly developing COVID-19 clinical care guidance, regulatory and payment waivers to support treatment, discounts for PPE and supplies, access to telehealth tools and resources, and materials to support patient engagement and patient safety. Participation in the Next Gen ACO gives these independent providers access to data, information, and resources that they would not otherwise have. This has facilitated a swift response to COVID-19 and will continue to enable Trinity Health to respond to future public health challenges.

Lessons for the Future

Alternative Payment Models (APMs) like the Next Gen ACO create and support resilience of the health system and improve population health. Next Gen ACOs demonstrate that population-based APMs are well-positioned to respond to critical public health needs. Congress and the Administration should continue to incentivize participation in the total cost of care, population-based models.

ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION

Trinity Health ACO

<http://www.trinityhealthaco.org/default-aco.cfm?id=545&fr=true>

Location

Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio

Number of Clinicians

1314 participating clinicians across 68 provider groups

Aligned Beneficiaries

78,000 aligned beneficiaries

Years in Next Gen

2017 - 2020

Payment Track

Fee-for-Service Payment + Monthly Infrastructure Payment
Extensive use of the SNF
3-day waiver