



# NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER

## FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT VIRTUAL KNOWLEDGE GROUP

**Introductory Conference Call**

**June 7, 2011**

**Participants:** Bethany Adams – Mountain States Group, Rhonda Barcus – Mountain States Group, Larry Baronner – Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health, Steve Boline – Nevada Rural Hospital Partners, Terry Hill – Technical Assistance and Services Center (TASC), Mark Holmes – University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (Flex Monitoring Team), Melinda Merrell – South Carolina Office of Rural Health, Tracy Morton – TASC, George Pink – University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (Flex Monitoring Team), Chris Tilden – Mountain States Group, Patsy Whaley – Georgia State Office of Rural Health

### **Action Items**

- TASC to send a group participation list including contact information to group members
- If you are interested in participating in additional Virtual Knowledge Groups, please contact Nicole Clement at [nclement@ruralcenter.org](mailto:nclement@ruralcenter.org)
- If you are interested in being the vice-chair, please contact Tracy Morton at [tmorton@ruralcenter.org](mailto:tmorton@ruralcenter.org)
- TASC to take issue areas identified and develop into a ranking survey for group members to prioritize importance. Survey results will be used to guide group interest in issues to pursue. Results will be shared with the group and discussed in person at the National Flex Conference.
- Participate in Introductory Webinar on Flex Program Forum scheduled for Friday, June 17, 2011 at 2:00pm Central Time. Webinar will be recorded. More information to come via email.

### **Minutes**

#### **Welcome and introduction of call participants**

#### **Review of Virtual Knowledge Group Purpose**

- Provide a vehicle for discussion of Flex-related topics
- Build knowledge through shared experiences and lessons learned
- Contribute to a collection of Flex information, resources, and models
- Serve as key information group to provide input to TASC, the federal Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP), Flex Monitoring Team and policy makers

- Not meant to be redundant with previously established national groups
- Groups should focus on topics in the context of the Flex Program

### **Participants**

- Voluntary participation with active engagement and participant contribution
- Limited to State Office of Rural Health Directors, Flex Coordinators, other key State Flex Program personnel, staff from ORHP, TASC, Flex Monitoring Team, TASC Advisory Committee and other federal grantee partners

### **Function of the Virtual Knowledge Groups**

- Driven by activities and communication from group participants, with support from TASC staff
- Chaired by State Flex Program volunteer. Patsy Whaley has volunteered to chair the group. Looking for a vice-chair. If you are interested, please email Tracy Morton at [tmorton@ruralcenter.org](mailto:tmorton@ruralcenter.org)
- Group will make decisions collectively about work or issues to address and will decide collectively about methods to communicate
  - o TASC can provide support for quarterly conference calls, if desired
  - o Group can also communicate via email and the Flex Program Forum
- Flex Program Forum is a web-based discussion forum, accessible to the same audience as the Virtual Knowledge Groups, where Flex Programs can log in and discuss topics and issues, post and share documents and continue the discussions of the Virtual Knowledge Groups
  - o TASC will host an introductory webinar on the Flex Program Forum on Friday, June 17, 2011 at 2:00pm Central Time. Please look for more information to come via email
- Group will also meet face-to-face at the National Flex Conference on July 12, 2011 in Portland, Maine

### **Important Issues in the area of Financial and Operational Improvement in the Flex Program. Suggestions from call participants included:**

- Financial impact on hospitals from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (policy trends, system affiliations, etc.)
- Appropriate measures for financial benchmarking and improvement (core financial measures)
- Basic financial education on CAH reimbursement, translation of complexity and getting back to the basics
- Indicators from hospital outpatient services (Flex Monitor tin Team project for next year)
- Charge capture
- Revenue cycle management
- Business office redesign
- Lean process improvement

- Clarity on health information technology financial reimbursement
- TASC will compile into a survey for the group to complete via email on ranking the importance of the issues. Survey results will be used to guide group interest in issues to pursue. Results will be shared with the group and discussed in person at the National Flex Conference.