

Arkansas Flex Program

Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Significant Accomplishments, Best Practices, and Lessons Learned

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Program Area 1: CAH Quality Improvement

The Arkansas Flex Program and their contracted vendor, Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care (AFMC), worked with Arkansas' 28 CAHs to provide education and technical assistance in increasing Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP) reporting and how their data can enhance quality improvement (QI). All Arkansas' 28 CAHs received education and technical assistance via one-on-one training sessions, workshops, conferences, regional meetings, and collaboration efforts with other quality organizations. Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care (AFMC) worked with all of 28 CAHs to:

- 1) Increase reporting to hospital compare,
- 2) Increase dedication to QI, and
- 3) Ensure CAHs prepare for future quality legislation.

Arkansas receives technical assistance with MBQIP measures such as patient experience, care transition, and patient safety/inpatient and outpatient. The 2020 Annual Rural Health Conference was a success. With strong collaboration between AFMC and the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), the conference was a virtual event with relative topics. AFMC coordinated continuing education credits through UAMS. State and national level presentations included antibiotic stewardship, COVID-19, telehealth, MBQIP, and financial operations.

Lessons learned during this project include:

Arkansas CAHs are constantly experiencing staff turnover, and as a result, they provide education and technical assistance to all incoming quality improvement staff members. The Arkansas Flex Program, along with AFMC, implemented a new plan in communicating with CAHs and their quality improvement staff due to COVID-19.

Program Area 2: CAH Operational and Financial Improvement

The Arkansas Flex, along with their contracted vendor Wipfli, worked with six CAHs that are "high risk" and "mid-risk" in providing financial and operational education and technical assistance. During January and February, Wipfli traveled to several CAHs providing financial & operational services. Afterward, work had to be completed remotely because of COVID-19. Wipfli's work with these hospitals include:

- Mid-cycle revenue reviews of hospitals, outpatient, and clinics.
- Rural health clinic operational on-site assessments.
- Mid-cycle denial assessment on-site reviews of hospital's denial management activities.
- One high-level Medicare reimbursement on-site review of "high risk" Critical Access Hospitals Medicare cost report.

On April 15, 2020, the Arkansas Flex Program and Wipfli held a COVID-19 related funding opportunities webinar to all 28 CAHs.