

TITLE: COACHing for COVID: A Qualitative Assessment of Incorporating Community Health Workers into Primary Care-Based COVID-19 Outreach

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: Yes

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: FQHC, clinical social work, primary care program developers, community health workers, social determinants of health

ABSTRACT: Background: In July 2020, OHSU Family Medicine at Richmond developed a workflow to support patients with social and medical needs who test positive for COVID-19. Patients were connected with clinical social workers (CSWs) to identify social and medical needs to reduce barriers to maintaining isolation. Objective: Understand the design, implementation, and maintenance of the workflow to guide other primary care practices. Methods: Semi-structured key informant interviews were conducted with six personnel involved in the workflow. Evaluators asked about processes, barriers, and facilitators involved with design, implementation, and maintenance. Interviews were analyzed using an immersion-crystallization approach. Results: Across all project phases, adaptability and content expertise were reported to be essential for success. The main barrier across project phases was lack of coordination across the system. Delivery of whole-person care was felt to be the primary benefit to both patients and the healthcare system. Implications: The success of this program was founded on patient-centeredness, adaptability, and the unique content expertise of CHWs. Across all project phases, adaptability was a prominent facilitator while lack of system coordination was a barrier. Other primary care practices can implement these findings in programs aimed at identifying and addressing patient social determinants of health.

OBJECTIVE(S): Identify facilitators and barriers to developing a program designed to identify and address patient social determinants of health in a primary care setting. Discuss ways in which a program to address social determinants of health in primary care can benefit the clinic, the patient, and society. Assess the feasibility of implementing a program to address social determinants of health in your primary care setting. Identify the resources that can aid in the success of a program to identify and address social determinants of health in a primary care setting.
