State Affiliate Mobilizes to Educate Members and Providers About New Models of Providing Care: Patient-Centered Medical Home, Accountable Care Organizations, and Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative


Background
This project explored the opportunities and challenges RDNs face when integrating RDN services under the new models of care of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Learning Objectives
Describe the comprehensive strategy used by a state affiliate to educate members on the role of RDNs in primary care.

Describe strategies used to educate stakeholders and providers on the role of RDNs in new models of care under the ACA.

Methods
Member Survey: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT); Analysis Meetings with Stakeholders; Structured In-depth Interviews with Insurance Companies and Medical Providers.

Idaho Academy Member Survey
- 82 members (22%) completed the survey.
- 9 currently working in primary care.
- 72 agreed there was a need for RDNs in primary care.
- 27 interested in finding employment in primary care.
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Questions posed to physicians:
- What medical conditions would benefit from a referral to an RDN in your practice?
- Is there a particular combination of skills the physician is looking for in an RDN that would be exceptionally beneficial to his/her patients?
- Given the changing climate around prevention, the Accountable Care Organizations, the patient centered medical home and focus on prevention, does this increase your interest in having an RDN work in your practice?

Insurance Providers Told Us:
- They had not thought of nutrition as a component of prevention services.
- They wanted a list of effective nutrition programs.
- They wanted data on return on investment for services provided by an RDN.

All physicians interviewed indicated that they:
- Were interested in the services of a dietitian if reimbursement was available.
- Did not have the time or the expertise to provide intensive medical nutrition therapy or education.
- Would use RDNs in case management.

Recommendations
Continue to educate affiliate members, stakeholders, and providers on the role of the RDN in primary care under the ACA.

- Incorporate RDN in primary care in our affiliate strategic plan.
- Provide training for members in billing, coding, and marketing of RDN services in primary care.
- Work with educators and internship directors to include primary care experiences in their programs.
- Assist members in documenting their services as a member of the health care team using the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Informatics Infrastructure (ANDII).
- Partner with primary care physicians, hospitals, and clinics to integrate RDN services into their models of care.