

October 11, 2013

Stuart Altman, Ph.D.
Board Chair
Health Policy Commission
Two Boylston Street, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Massachusetts Health Quality Partners' response to 2013 Cost Trend Hearings

Dear Dr. Altman,

We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on behalf of Massachusetts Health Quality Partners (MHQP) in response to the recent Health Policy Commission (HPC) cost trend hearings. HPC's cost trend hearings provided an excellent forum for members across the health care community to share challenges and best practices around efforts to achieve more cost-effective, patient-centered care in the Commonwealth.

As you know, MHQP is a broad-based coalition of physicians, hospitals, health plans, purchasers, patient and public representatives, academics, and government agencies working together to promote improvement in the quality of health care services in Massachusetts. For over 18 years MHQP has been dedicated to driving measurable improvements in health care quality, patients' experiences of care, and use of resources in Massachusetts through patient and public engagement and broad-based collaboration among health care stakeholders. Some of the areas that were identified by hearing participants as priorities for achieving a cost effective, high performing health care system are areas where MHQP has extensive expertise. We welcome the opportunity to support HPC's goals through MHQP's work in the following areas:

- Ongoing development of patient attribution and provider assignment models to reflect existing and new configurations of care, e.g. attribution of PPO patients to physicians and provider assignments to practice sites, ACOs and patient centered medical homes.
- Implementation and spread of new models of care delivery focused on at-risk populations including models to help the primary care delivery system improve behavioral health integration.
- Engagement of primary care physicians and specialists with a model of practice-based quality improvement that uses multi-payer practice pattern variation data to significantly reduce unnecessary practice pattern variation and improve quality of patient care and outcomes.
- Development, evaluation and testing of new measures focused on outcomes for the pediatric population.

- Monitoring the structure of ambulatory care in a changing provider market to support quality analytics and provider reporting.
- Publicly reporting physician practice quality information.
- Testing models of consumer and community engagement in partnership with Consumer Reports and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Successful implementation of the current health care reforms will require a multi-stakeholder approach that builds new tools and incentives on existing capacity for performance improvement. We hope that MHQP's work will be leveraged to support Chapter 224 of the Acts toward improving the quality of health care and reducing costs through increased transparency, efficiency and innovation. We look forward to working with HPC and the greater community to ensure that affordable, high quality health care is available and provided to all Massachusetts residents.

We affirm the comments contained in this response are true to the best of our knowledge as Board Chair and Executive Director of Massachusetts Health Quality Partners.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Meredith B. Rosenthal, Ph.D.
MHQP Board Chair



Barbra G. Rabson
MHQP Executive Director