

POSTER ABSTRACT

Integrated Health and Social Care in the United States: A Decade of Policy Progress

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Introduction: Over the last decade in the United States (US), the burden of chronic disease, health care costs, and fragmented care delivery have increased at alarming rates. To address these challenges, policymakers have prioritized new payment and delivery models to incentivize better integrated health and social services.

Policy practice: This paper outlines three major national and state policy initiatives to improve integrated health and social care over the last ten years in the US, with a focus on the Medicaid public insurance program for Americans with low incomes. Activities supported by these initiatives include screening patients for social risks in primary care clinics; building new cross-sector collaborations; financing social care with healthcare dollars; and sharing data across health, social and community services. Stakeholders from the private sector, including health systems and insurers, have partnered to advance and scale these initiatives. This paper describes the implementation and effectiveness of such efforts, and lessons learned from translating policy to practice.

Discussion and conclusion: National policies have catalyzed initiatives to test new integrated health and social care models, with the ultimate goal of improving population health and decreasing costs. Preliminary findings demonstrated the need for validated measures of social risk, engagement across levels of organizational leadership and frontline staff, and greater flexibility from national policymakers in order to align incentives across sectors.