

INTEGRATION PROPOSED SYNOPSIS OF BETTER PRACTICE

Health Facility Integration Model (France)

Section I: Summary

France has experienced success in the promotion of an integrated health care system approach to prevention, acute and rehabilitative care through their regional hospitals. The hospitals became the central point for coordinating care and development of medical plans for regions.

Preliminary evaluation indicates increased patient satisfaction of care received due to the re-focus on specifically identified local needs.

Section II: Statement of purpose

Since September 2003, strategic regional health plans in France assumed the main responsibility for planning and distributing hospital resources in France. The reform provided an additional role for regional hospital agencies in controlling hospital activities, purchasing of health care services and resources as well as coordination of care for individuals in that particular region. The reform also re-defined health care territories to better account for local health care needs in hospital and ambulatory settings.

The regional hospital agencies were obligated to develop "medical plans" for each territory to promote collaboration and integration of health care services delivered between hospitals and health care professionals.

Moreover, the health care objectives and resources identified and demanded by regional hospital agencies as part of the "medical plans" are required to be coherent, coordinated, and integrated in the delivery of acute, preventive, rehabilitative, and long term care health care services. In addition, they are required to coordinate and integrate the care between ambulatory services, social services, and hospital care.

The overall goal of the reform was to provide a more integrated approach to all health care provision based on locally identified needs.

In order to achieve this goal, the revamping of regional hospital agencies involved critical interaction and feedback from multiple stakeholders including health professionals, hospital federations, ambulatory actors, elected representatives, and think tank representatives.

Section III: Outcomes

Even though France has experienced a more integrated approach to the delivery of health care services based on local needs and priorities through the regional hospital agencies, they are experiencing the effect of reform that may counter their efforts. For example, France has reformed the hospital payment structure which provides incentives to increase acute care activity not decrease overall acute care in inpatient hospital settings. In addition, the regional hospital agencies have limited coordination and integration responsibilities with outpatient care.

Section IV: Contact Information and References

Sources of Information

Veronique, Lucas-Gabrielli and Coldefy Magali: "Regional healthcare planning." Health Policy Monitor, October 2007. Available at <http://hpm.org/survey/fr/a10/4> on January 10, 2009.

Valerie Paris, Dominique Polton: "Hospital and Medical equipment planning." Health Policy Monitor, October 2003. Available at <http://www.hpm.org/survey/fr/a2/4> on January 10, 2009.