

THINKING POINTS FOR BREAKOUT SESSION – TRANSPARENCY IN HEALTHCARE

Transparency in Healthcare:

- ✚ To support decision-making, consumers want comprehensive, accurate healthcare services information at their fingertips.
- ✚ Consumers can make choices of where to receive care. Logical user-friendly, data must be provided that optimizes value for the consumer and educates them about outcomes, cost, and convenience.
- ✚ Consumers want their healthcare delivery to be comprehensive, convenient and seamless.
- ✚ Providers (Physicians, Hospitals, Ancillary Service Provider) want accurate, timely information that enables informed clinical decision, administrative ease, and more effective disease management. They also want to minimize their financial risks and want payment guarantees.

Critical Value Factors in Transparency:

- ✚ Information must be understandable – consumers need to be able to interpret the display of data and understand what the measures mean for their experience or outcome.
- ✚ Information must be relevant – reports need to relate to the medical problems that concern consumers and support their relationships with their clinical service Providers.
- ✚ Information must be timely – data needs to predict the experience consumers are likely to have - not the experience of the distant past.
- ✚ Information must allow comparability among choices – consumers must be able to understand the difference in performance among providers including how differences are driven by random variation over time or differences in patients rather than differences in process. Quality must be embraced as a key component of the foundation for transparency.
- ✚ Information must be accessible – consumers should be able to access comparisons when they are making their decisions.
- ✚ Information provided to consumers should be ideally standardized, so that comparisons can be on an “apples to apples” basis.
- ✚ Funding, cooperation, pro-activity, process value-realization, and shared accountability are at the root of transparency. All of these elements are controversial and, these necessary pieces do not automatically come together from legislation.

Requirements for a Transparent System:

- # The development of standards in measurement definition, data and communication methodologies.
- # Systems that allow movement and aggregation of data in a way that transcends organizational structures and enables comprehension.
- # The development of valuable clinical service partnerships that utilize “collaborative healthware” to develop measurements, share data, and create reporting structures, resulting in enhanced Patient/Provider relationships.
- # Consumers will need to be educated in order to access, understand, and use relevant data. Healthcare delivery choice should be based on quality factors rather than cost. Obviously some consumers must choose care with cost as the driver, but others have choices. This opportunity must be seized by service partners.

Important Questions to Consider:

- # Who will pay for initiatives that support transparency?
- # How will consumers balance cost and quality data so that they can make effective decisions and choices?
- # How will consumers integrate information of different dimensions and multiple measures - many of which may not apply specifically to them?
- # What role will Providers/Payers play in the next five years in promoting transparency?
- # Is the value proposition of transparency compelling enough to justify its accomplishment?

Dr. Michael Apkon, MD, Vice President and Executive Director,
Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital
Michael.Apkon@ynhh.org

Sybil A. Graham, Vice President, Interactive Healthcare Solutions, Acsys Healthcare
Acsys Healthcare, a practice of Acsys Interactive inc. Sybilg@acsysinteractive.com