



HOW TO Alliances and Employers: Working Together for High-Value Health Care

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The business community is uniquely positioned to demand higher-quality care at affordable rates. With approximately 149 million non-elderly receiving their health coverage through employers, the business community is a formidable purchaser.ⁱ Yet, despite such strong purchasing power, engaging employers to take a more active role in demanding better value in health care remains challenging. Many Alliances struggle with how to engage and partner with employer groups who do not see themselves as having a role in payment or delivery system reform.

To support Alliances in working with employers to achieve high-value health care, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) developed two short templates on Bundled Payments and Patient-Centered Medical Homes (PCMHs): “How [Alliance] Can Help Employers Implement a Bundled Payment Initiative” and “How [Alliance] Can Help Employers Implement a Patient Centered Medical Home Initiative.” These documents provide narratives that Alliances can customize and share with employers to illustrate the benefits of partnering with Alliances to implement these models. These documents can be used in conjunction with the RWJF-funded pieces that focus on the ROI of Bundled Payments and Patient-Centered Medical Homes for employers.ⁱⁱ

How can Alliances use these customizable documents?

Alliances can use these documents to:

- **Educate the business community** about the Alliance and how the Alliance and employer groups can partner on initiatives to provide high-value care to their employees.
- **Initiate engagement with employer groups** who have not been previously involved with the Alliance by providing a case for the opportunity to partner.
- **Further engage with existing employer partners** by highlighting new examples or benefits of partnering with the Alliance.

About Aligning Forces for Quality

Aligning Forces for Quality (AF4Q) is the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s signature effort to lift the overall quality of health care in targeted communities, as well as reduce racial and ethnic disparities and provide real models for national reform. The Foundation’s commitment to improve health care in 16 AF4Q communities is the largest effort of its kind ever undertaken by a U.S. philanthropy. AF4Q asks the people who get care, give care and pay for care to work together to improve the quality and value of care delivered locally. The Center for Health Care Quality in the Department of Health Policy at George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services serves as the national program office. Learn more about AF4Q at www.forces4quality.org. Learn more about RWJF’s efforts to improve quality and equality of care at www.rwjf.org/qualityequality/af4q/.

About the Author

American Institutes for Research (AIR) provides technical assistance for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s *Aligning Forces for Quality* initiative. AIR is working with Aligning Forces communities to support consumer engagement efforts to promote high-quality health care at a low cost.

How can Alliances get started?

Alliances can customize these documents to: (1) reflect the health care challenges facing employer groups in their local areas and (2) specify how they can support employers in efforts to demand high-value health care. Below are three questions to consider when customizing these documents:

- What are the unique services that your Alliance can highlight and offer to employers?
- What examples or quotes from employer partners can your Alliance include to convey the value of partnering with your Alliance?
- What statistics can you include about your community to make the health care challenges in your community salient to employers?

How can AIR help?

AIR can work with you and your team to customize these documents to reflect your Alliance's skills and experience to support your employer engagement goals. For help customizing these documents, please contact Lee Thompson at lthompson@air.org.

What are some overarching strategies Alliances can use to implement payment and delivery reform strategies with employers?

1. Work with business coalitions and councils to apply purchasing power on health plans to implement payment and delivery system reform strategies.
2. Tailor a payment or delivery reform strategy to the regional market's unique needs and health care landscape.
3. Structure agreements regarding how premiums would be reduced if the payment reform strategy is successful.

ⁱ Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. The Uninsured: A Primer. Kaiser Family Foundation. 2011 Available from: <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/upload/7451-07.pdf>. 56.2% of the non-elderly American population receives insurance coverage through an employer-sponsored plan.

ⁱⁱ Available at <http://www.rwjf.org/en/research-publications/find-rwjf-research/2013/02/payment-matters--the-roi-for-payment-reform.html>.