

About ACCEL

ACCEL (ACCess EL Dorado) is a community-wide collaborative initiative seeking to create a healthier community, especially within our vulnerable populations. ACCEL works by identifying specific challenges or barriers to a healthy community and creating systematic improvements that include all our partners and will serve our entire community. Each of the improvements is designed to help create a stronger, better-coordinated community health care system for the people who live in El Dorado County.

Collaborating Partners

ACCEL is a partnership between the El Dorado County Health Services Department (Public Health and Mental Health), Barton Healthcare System (with affiliated medical providers and rural clinic), Marshall Medical Center (with affiliated medical providers and rural clinic), El Dorado County Community Health Center, and Shingle Springs Tribal Community Health Clinic. This partnership includes participants from many disciplines: physicians, nurses, community health workers, mental health clinicians, and administrators.

Focus and Projects

1. Improving access to both primary and specialty care for El Dorado's uninsured, publicly insured and underinsured populations. We have collaboratively worked on solutions to this problem through programs such as:

The Children's Health Initiative (CHI) expands health coverage to children under 300% of the Federal Poverty Level through outreach, enrollment campaigns, and procurement of insurance for children in the region. A key partner is Healthy Kids Healthy Futures regional collaborative. This initiative also implemented Community Health Workers who assist children and their families to connect with and use appropriate health care.

The Provider Capacity Project is a project to increase capacity through expanding the network of providers willing to see publicly insured patients, and supporting their affiliated clinic's ability to meet additional service needs. It also involves increasing the capacity at the various rural, FQHC (federally qualified health clinic) and tribal clinics, developing an expanded network of private practicing providers (primary and specialty) willing to see an established number of patients, and fostering clinic redesign to enable improved internal processes and capacity in the community.

The Specialty Care Initiative aims to improve access to specialty services by improving collaboration among providers to assure that both supply of and demand for services are managed with common goals of quality care and affordability to achieve improved health outcomes. Funded through a grant from The California Health Care Foundation, ACCEL will use care pathways, provider

training and clinical practice guidelines to improve access to orthopedic and pain management services.

2. Improving cross agency cooperation and communication for the underserved population of El Dorado County especially in: Newborn Care, Pediatric Mental Health, and Securing a Medical Home. We have been actively implementing cross-agency cooperation in addressing these problems through the use of Care Pathways.

Care Pathways are a jointly developed series of shared, coordinated, and standardized steps which bring about solutions to El Dorado County's identified health challenges. "Securing Healthcare Coverage" is one example of a Care Pathway which has been developed, and is responsible for enrolling over 3,000 children over the past three years, improving our eligibility success percentage from the low 80's to the high 90's.

Care Pathways use an outcomes based approach, which includes standardized cross agency step-by-step actions for resolving problems and tracking outcomes (and barriers) as part of the process. So far, ACCEL has developed and implemented six Care Pathways aimed at solving or improving our identified problems. Through Care Pathways, Community Health Workers help individuals and families navigate medical systems and agencies to ensure that the problem or barrier to accessing appropriate health care is resolved or quantified.

3. Improving use of Health Information Technology (HIT) between our partnering agencies. We have been able to select, customize, interface, and implement a software application shared by each of our partners that represents an electronic version of our Care Pathways. While Care Pathways are largely administrative in nature, ACCEL has developed the organizational foundation and experience to pursue formation of a County-wide clinical health information exchange (HIE) to increase secure access to health information across multiple settings. Having piloted a Countywide Enterprise Master Patient Identifier (EMPI), that enables sharing accurate demographic data among multiple providers, as well as having developed and implemented a common notification of privacy practices, privacy and security policies, and technology infrastructure, ACCEL is moving forward to select and implement Web-based technology to link participating agencies in an HIE that shares essential clinical data. This will include the capacity for disease surveillance, public health communicable disease reporting, and urgent community health alerts.

Moving Forward

ACCEL will continue to pursue its mission by improving access to health care through ongoing nurturing of the programs described above.

As regional and national health care policy calls for increased technology-enabled connectivity to improve patient care health outcomes, and outbreak surveillance, our Health Information Technology (HIT) will have increasing focus for ACCEL. HIT is designed to

- Create a secure system for sharing limited critical patient information with providers treating the patient across institutions.
- Support improved patient outcomes, experience and access to care
- Improve the quality of health care and administrative efficiency
- Create a county-wide Health Information Exchange

Values and Funding

Values: Collaboration, trust, and a shared commitment to the ACCEL goals are the fundamental values that have enabled our success. We work creatively to get maximum impact from limited resources. We genuinely want to make a difference in our communities.

Funding: Initial funding for ACCEL came when the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors allocated Tobacco Master Settlement Funds to address health care needs in the County. First 5 El Dorado augmented these funds and continues to support especially CHI. Building on this foundational funding, the Public Health Department secured a Healthy Communities Access Program grant of \$1.8 million from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to improve access to medical care.

Marshall Medical Center on behalf of ACCEL was subsequently awarded, in 2005, a three year, \$1.5 million, grant from Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ) to begin implementation of technology infrastructure and system improvement through the development of a comprehensive HIT Program. A \$200,000 grant from the Blue Shield of California Foundation in 2006 has served to further the implementation of the HIT programs, along with a final award of \$125,000 for 2009.

A grant from the California HealthCare Foundation serves to further specialty network planning and implementation efforts for the 2008-2010 period.

ACCEL will be seeking multi year grants, including applications for the deployment of 2009 Federal Stimulus funds to help support the ongoing development of a fully functional and sustainable Health Information Exchange.