

The Next Steps to Improving Home Health Care for Children with Medical Complexity

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Today's Moderator

Carolyn C. Foster, MD, MSHS

Assistant Professor, Division of Academic General Pediatrics and Primary Care Department of Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University Attending Physician, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

Access the Article

ORGANIZATION OF CARE

By Carolyn C. Foster, Rishi K. Agrawal, and Matthew M. Davis

Home Health Care For Children With Medical Complexity: Workforce Gaps, Policy, And **Future Directions**

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ABSTRACT With the medical and surgical advances of recent decades, a growing proportion of children rely on home-based care for daily health monitoring and care tasks. However, a dearth of available home health care providers with pediatric training to serve children and youth with medical complexity markedly limits the current capacity of home health care to meet the needs of patients and their families. In this article we analyze the workforce gaps, payment models, and policy challenges unique to home health care for children and youth with medical complexity, including legal challenges brought by families because of home nursing shortages. We propose a portfolio of solutions to address the current failures, including payment reform, improved coordination of services and pediatric home health training through partnerships with child-focused health systems, telehealth-enabled opportunities to bridge current workforce gaps, and the better alignment of pediatric care with the needs of adult-focused long-term services and supports.

ingly, pediatric patients are surviving conditions her to live at home with her family was financially that were untreatable decades ago. While ap-inaccessible. Bipartisan legislation in the wake plaudable, hospital-based medical advances of her case, as well as the subsequent passage of that have saved children from previously fatal the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as conditions have not been matched with adequate interpreted by the US Supreme Court in its 1999 home and community-based medical care, which decision in Obustead v. L.C., expanded access to leaves many parents to manage complicated. Medicaid home and community-based services medical care for their children at home alone. waivers that provided lone-term services and struggling to stay employed and healthy them-supports for a broad array of children and adults selves. The primary challenge of the pediatric with disabilities and a consequent reduction in home health care crisis is to develop a trained institutional care." and adequately compensated workforce to meet With medical advances that increase the likeli-

ome health care for children and The origins of home health care for this speadolescents is an understaffed cial population are unique. In the early 1980s a health care model that does child named Katie Beckett required a breathing not meet the current needs of machine to live, but she was institutionalized in a patients and families. Increas- hospital because nursing care that would allow

the needs of children and their families. In this hood of surviving a childhood disease, the mediarticle we analyze the policy context for this cal needs of children with medical complexity are workforce gap. We also propose opportunities extending well into adulthood.3 Parents report to address the current failures in providing a increased need to forgo employment to care for home health workforce for children and youth. their children with medical needs.44 Medicaid

Carelyn C. Fester (colonters) pediatrics in the Division of Academic General Pediatrics Hespital of Chicago and in Chicago Hilmis.

associate professor of pediatrics in the Division of Hasaital-Based Medicine at Children's Hospital of Chicago

professor and division head of Academic General Pediatrics and Primary Care at Ann & Rubert H. Lune Children's Hespital of Chicago and

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Medical Complexity: Workforce Gaps, **Policy, And Future Directions** Carolyn C. Foster, Rishi K. Agrawal, and Matthew M. Davis

Home Health Care For Children With

HEALTH AFFAIRS

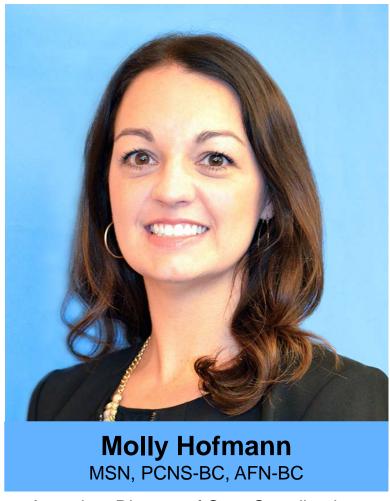
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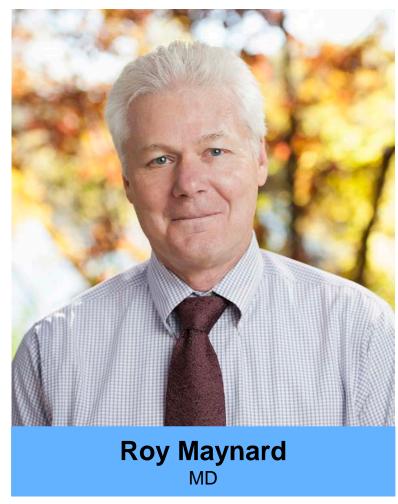


Cara Coleman JD, MPH

Consultant, Family Voices Instructor of Pediatrics, Virginia Commonwealth University Medical School



Associate Director of Care Coordination, University of Illinois at Chicago-Specialized Care for Children



Medical Director, Pediatric Home Service, American Academy of Pediatrics Representative

Ask Questions!

We look forward to a lively discussion with our audience. Enter questions in the GoToWebinar question box.



"Sarah's" Story

A 15 month old diagnosed with an unexpected genetic disorder, Sarah needs a portable breathing machine and monitoring to live at home safely

- Parents were both working with employer-based insurance, but it does not cover home care nursing
- Sarah is eligible for Medicaid waiver, but even with it the parents cannot reliably identify qualified home nurses to care for her
- Sarah's mother had to drop out of work-force and the family moved homes to accommodate

When faced with patient stories like Sarah's:

Conduct research to understand how home health care is serving children by examining:

- Current evidence base
- Measurement of current access and quality
- Identify key driving policy concerns

Current State of Home Health Care for Children

Summary of Home Health Care For Children With Medical Complexity: Workforce Gaps, Policy, And Future Directions

- 1. Growing population with diverse set of conditions
 - Uniquely reliant on adult caregivers for health care tasks
- 2. Legally entitled services
 - Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) Medicaid Provision
- 3. Inadequate home health care workforce pool to care for them
 - Non-competitive wages for highly skilled work
 - Few training opportunities
- 4. Current lack of evidence and quality measures incentivizes states to institute highthresholds for service eligibility
- 5. Leads to preventable hospital spending, hard on families and patients

Policy Recommendations to Address Gaps and Areas of Improvement

Summary of Home Health Care For Children With Medical Complexity: Workforce Gaps, Policy, And Future Directions

1. Enhance access and readjust spending via payment reform

 Introduce increase in wages better matched to clinical needs, comparable to other skilled nursing labor

2. Improve quality through partnerships with child-focused care systems (e.g. trainings, telemedicine)

- Trainings: Children's hospitals are a source of clinical and technical expertise
- Real-time extension, telemedicine to support families and home nursing staff

3. Align with adult care to improve evidence base and inform quality measurement

- National data collection efforts
- Support quality measures to hold care accountable and track quality efforts

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Consultant, Family Voices and Instructor of Pediatrics, Virginia Commonwealth University Medical School



Key Thoughts

- Gaps, policy and future directions spot on for families
- Measure it for kids!
 - Can't (and actually do not) have quality care (incl. accountable, accessible, continuous, helpful) without measures
- Integration of home health within child-focused health care systems
 - Utilize family workforce expertise-as providers, coordinators, teachers, quality improvement specialists, advocates, etc.

One thing to change about the discussion

- Families and family-led organizations MUST be partners in care AND systems change
 - We are the engine- don't try to drive future directions without us!

Molly Hofmann, MSN, PCNS-BC, AFN-BC

Associate Director of Care Coordination, University of Illinois at Chicago-Specialized Care for Children



Key Thoughts

- Caregiver support
- Education & training of home health care professionals
- Single points of entry for services

Roy Maynard, MD

Medical Director, Pediatric Home Service and American Academy of Pediatrics Representative



Key Thoughts

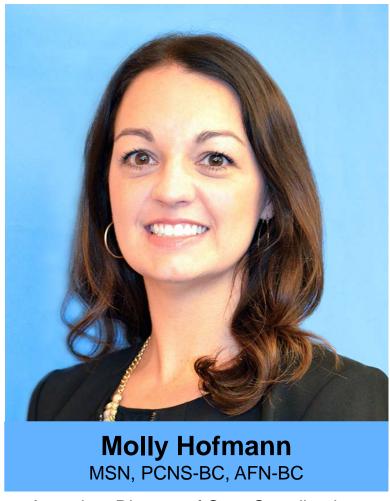
- Factors that affect access to home health care
- Access to home health contributes to healthcare disparities
- Reimbursement and home health care
- Recommendations to expand access to home health care

Submit your questions

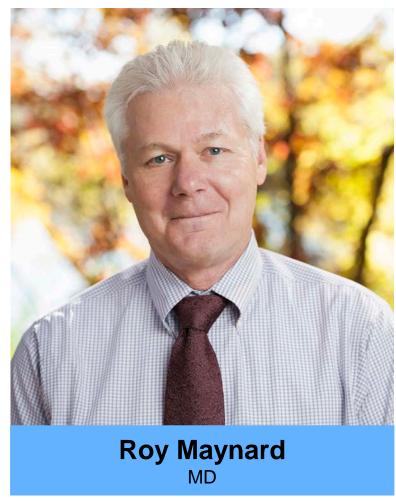


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Additional Resources

HEALTH AFFAIRS BLOG—Workforce in the Community

Not Just Along For The Ride: Families Are
The Engine That Drives Pediatric Home
Health Care Cara L. Coleman (April 18, 2019)

AAP Section on Home Care (SOHCa)
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