

MPRO'S IMPACT ON HEALTH CARE IN MICHIGAN: 2008-2011



External Quality Review



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Monitoring Medicaid Managed Care Quality

External Quality Review

In 1965, long before Health Care Reform or Affordable Care Act became a part of the American lexicon, Medicaid was created to provide a health care safety net for low-income adults and their children, people with certain disabilities, and some seniors requiring long-term nursing care. Over the last four decades, Medicaid has faced challenges ranging from management of the program to funding cuts.

Unlike Medicare, Medicaid is controlled at the state level and over time, states have increasingly turned to managed care organizations (MCOs) to provide healthcare services. According to a Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS)-sponsored report, there were well over 300 MCOs offering Medicaid in 2007 including for-profit, non-profit, commercial and independent organizations as well as MCOs owned by health care providers. MPRO's External Quality Review (EQR) services provide

resources for states to monitor these MCOs to assure they are providing the best possible care.

"The capitated nature of managed care has the potential to create fiscal incentives to underserve medically disenfranchised beneficiaries such as those enrolled in Medicaid," says **Angela Bullock BA, MHSA**, Director, External Quality Review. "Our job is to help state Medicaid agencies to monitor access to and quality of care delivered to their Medicaid managed care populations. Through annual reviews, we evaluate each Medicaid MCO's quality outcomes and timeliness of, and access to health care services."

MPRO's EQR team has reviewed MCO quality and clinical measures - such as child immunizations, lead screening, and breast cancer screening - in the states of Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Carolina and Virginia. Ultimately, the team reviews the plans to make sure they are in compliance with federal and state regulations.

In addition to compliance, the EQR team helps states with quality improvement projects and special studies.

"We help MCOs rethink problem-solving in that we have them focus on finding the solution first," says Bullock. "We helped one state develop a guide, or handbook, featuring tips on how to identify and implement quality projects which can have the most impact on patient populations."

MPRO's EQR team customizes each quality performance improvement work plan, explains Bullock.

"We help develop operational interventions that have the biggest impact on a patient population."

MPRO's EQR efforts are not limited to Medicaid managed care organizations. MPRO also evaluates the quality of health care services for the Michigan Department of

Corrections as a subcontractor for Health Management Associates (HMA). As a third-party reviewer, HMA conducts reviews of medical, pharmacy and mental health services provided to the 48,000 Michigan inmates.

In its Corrections work, MPRO's EQR team reviews data integrity, organizes claims paid for services,

Management Associates. "MPRO consistently meets or exceeds our expectations on deliverables. Their quality improvement and health care data analytic skills are exceptional."

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**– Angela Bullock, BA, MHSA,
Director, External Quality
Review, MPRO**

and helps evaluate and structure quality improvement activities for inmate mental health services.

"MPRO has been quite flexible in addressing significant changes in scope and meeting project timeframes," says **Donna Strugar-Fritsch**, principal, Health