

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



BEACON



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Southeastern Michigan Beacon Community Will Use HIT to Combat the Toll of Diabetes

According to the American Diabetes Association, 'the Silent Killer' costs the national health care system almost \$200 billion a year. In the State of Michigan alone, these costs are nearly \$7 billion.

Yet beyond this financial toll on the state's health system there is the more important human one: Some nine percent of Michigan residents suffer from diabetes, which also is the state's sixth leading cause of death. These statistics become even more prevalent in economically hard-hit cities or communities like Detroit where 13.5 percent of the population has diabetes and some one-third of the entire population live below the poverty level and with limited access to health care.

"In my experience, by the time many high-risk diabetes patients finally come to the ER for treatment, their illness has created other and often untreatable health problems," says **Mary Jane Feldman, RN**, who spent nearly 30 years working in a Detroit hospital.

However, more than 50 area health care and community organizations including the Southeastern Michigan Health Association, the Voices of Detroit Initiative, and MPRO are working together to reverse this trend through a pilot program called the Southeastern Michigan Beacon Community.

Launched in the fall of 2010 and made possible by a \$16.2 million federal grant, the Beacon Community will use Health Information Technology to track and assist patients with diabetes at 36 primary care physician offices and Federally Qualified Health Centers across Detroit, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Dearborn and Dearborn Heights.

The program's initial goals have been to leverage HIT already in place at selected providers and therefore make the clinical transformation process to EHR easier and cost-efficient.

SEMHA is providing general oversight and project management for implementing the Beacon Community, while VODI and MPRO have been responsible for recruiting providers.

VODI, in particular, worked closely with FQHCs.

"As we continue to face our troubled economy, community health clinics are becoming more vital than ever for affordable quality care especially for the newly and long-term unemployed, seniors, low-income families and homeless populations," says **Lucille Smith**, Executive Director.

"With HIT, these identified clinics will be able to track and follow up with diabetes patients and encourage them to return to the same clinic rather than an ED for continuing care."

MPRO, for its part, is currently working with select primary care providers to enhance their use of electronic health tools and improve patient outcomes.

"We offer personalized training and workshops to support process improvement," says **Jackie Rosenblatt, RN, BSN, PhD**, CPHIMS, Director, Ambulatory Quality Improvement, MPRO.

"We believe Beacon will enable providers to have access to clinical summary information at the point of care and ultimately improve population health for patients with diabetes," says Rosenblatt.

While the initial focus of Beacon has been on patients with diabetes, the projected success of the program has the great potential to open the door to improving health for patients with chronic illnesses such as heart disease and heart failure.

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"Community health clinics are becoming more vital than ever for affordable quality care..."

— **Lucille Smith**
*Executive Director,
Voices of Detroit
Initiative*



*Lighthouse During Winter Storm
Ludington, MI*