

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

How one pediatric practice succeeded in the Medicaid PI program during the pandemic

ABC Pediatrics' hard work and determination has paid off for them in more than one way. After initially attesting to the Medicaid PI program in the first years of the program they had stopped participating due to many factors, even though they were still eligible. Fast forward to 2020 and they were in the middle of a pandemic and having to scramble to implement telehealth and get connected to their patients virtually. This drastic change also had a negative financial impact on their practice like most other medical practices during this time. However, their providers and staff worked hard and rose to the occasion, despite their circumstances, and began to re-think how the Medicaid PI program might work for them now. They were already utilizing their patient portal and had a 2015 certified EHR in place. With incentive payments still available for all their providers they thought this program might be a good way to replace lost revenue due to COVID-19 and fully utilize the functions of their EHR.

Jenna Koch, RN was tasked to figure out what their practice needed to do to begin participating again in the Medicaid PI program. Jenna has strong clinical skills and was comfortable working with EHRs. However, the biggest barrier Jenna faced in completing the program was learning the requirements to meet the measures in the EHR. The technical side of things was completely new to her having practiced as a nurse for many years. Jenna realized quickly though that it was often just a box that had to be checked in a form or a section of the note in the system. After looking into these required EHR workflows, the providers' reports went from zeroes to meeting the measures in a matter of weeks! They were already doing the work just not documenting it in the correct place in the EHR.

Jenna remembered from previous years that ILHITREC could assist providers in meeting the requirements of the program. Jenna worked with ILHITREC's Kerri Lanum on a weekly basis to keep on track with meeting the measures as well as other registrations that needed to be completed in a timely manner. "Jenna completed every task with the highest degree of completeness. She never left anything unfinished," said Lanum, "and she made my job very easy." After 6 years of not participating in the program, the providers at ABC Pediatrics were able to successfully attest in 2020 and plan to do the same for 2021. Because only a 90-day requirement is needed for both Objective and Clinical Quality Measures in 2020 and 2021, ABC Pediatrics was able to complete their attestation already for 2020 and receive their incentive payments sooner than having to wait until the end of the year.

It really goes to show if you set your mind to accomplish something you will. For more information on 2020 requirements for the Medicaid PI program you can visit <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/medicaid-ep-2020-table-contents.pdf> or contact ILHITREC for assistance with the Medicaid PI program at info@ilhitrec.org.