

Hawaii Physician Workforce Summit (6/29/2010): Demand Workgroup Summary

The **Demand Workgroup** was tasked with discussing how to decrease physician demand. The top three issues that the group felt should be pursued in the next year were:

1. Change the system of healthcare in Hawaii,
2. Train and recruit non-physician clinicians for Hawaii, change the culture to be more accepting of non-physician clinicians and
3. Comprehensively implement an electronic health records and a health information exchange for Hawaii.

Group discussion of the top three solutions is described below:

Changing the System of Healthcare for Hawaii

The physician demand workgroup felt strongly that by making the healthcare system more efficient and operable for patients, that the day to day pressure created by the physician shortage can be lessened. By implementing a model such as the patient centered medical home, physicians will be able to practice at the top of the degree while sharing clinic responsibilities with PAs and NPs. This system should be collaborative, utilize evidence-based medicine and focus on primary care and preventive medicine.

Train and Recruit Non-Physician Clinicians for Hawaii

Hawaii should embrace the expanded clinical role of physician assistants and nurse practitioners. It takes less time to train non-physician clinicians than physicians and they will serve as critical pieces of the healthcare delivery system, especially if efficient system changes are implemented as described above. Hawaii should invest more resource in training non physician clinicians and should consider starting a PA program. Scope of practice issues must be continually addressed for non-physician providers that serve the interests of patients.

Comprehensively Implement Health Technology

By adopting a personal health record for all patients and implementing a statewide health information exchange, new efficiencies can be realized and physician clinical work will be streamlined. Waste will be reduced and outcomes based medicine can be supported. The patient centered medical home concept depends on health technology to reduce redundancies and waste, and to best direct patients to the level of care they require.

Conclusions from the Physician Demand Work Group

By changing the way Hawaii delivers healthcare, training and utilizing more NPs and PAs as healthcare providers, and implementing a health information exchange, Hawaii can blunt the effect of the severe and growing physician shortage and begin to address it with pipeline solutions.

In addition, the importance of community education and involvement was discussed, telemedicine and how to effectively accomplish regionalization of care. Resources were discussed and ideas offered in these areas.