California Health Improvement Project (CHIP)
Improving Continuity of Care Through Health Information Exchange

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Problem Statement and Underlying Causes

Critical information for continuous patient care is not easily transferable to providers involved with their care. Redwood Community Health Coalition's seventeen member health centers have implemented Electronic Health Records (EHR) to improve the health of their patients. However, different EHRs were selected, and separate databases along with system customization have left the health centers' systems completely disconnected from one another.

Project Description

In order to deliver the highest quality and most cost effective health care, patient information must be available to care teams when and where services are provided. Implementing a Health Information Exchange across Redwood Community Health Coalition will provide improved patient care in the safety net.

Goals and Objectives

Goal: Improve care team access to patient information by implementing health information exchange.

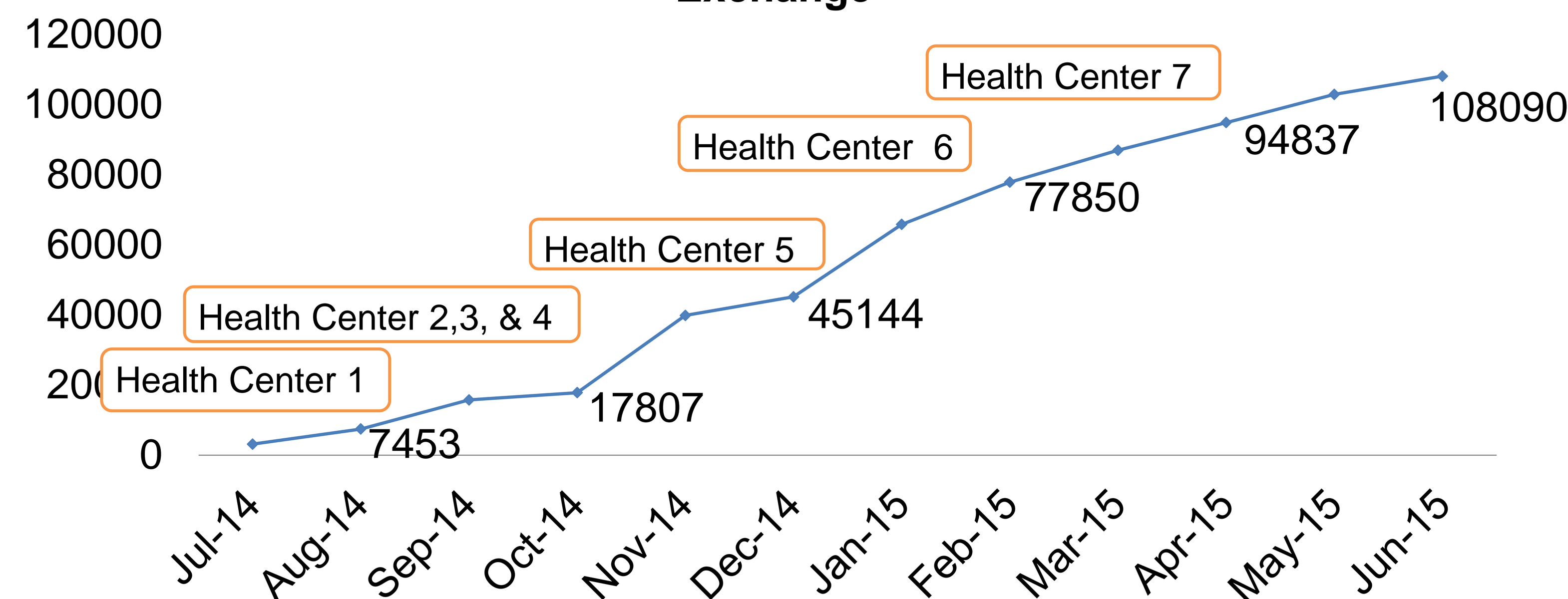
Output-oriented Objective 1: At the end of 2015 patient health records from at least eight health centers will be available electronically for use at the time of care at other health centers.

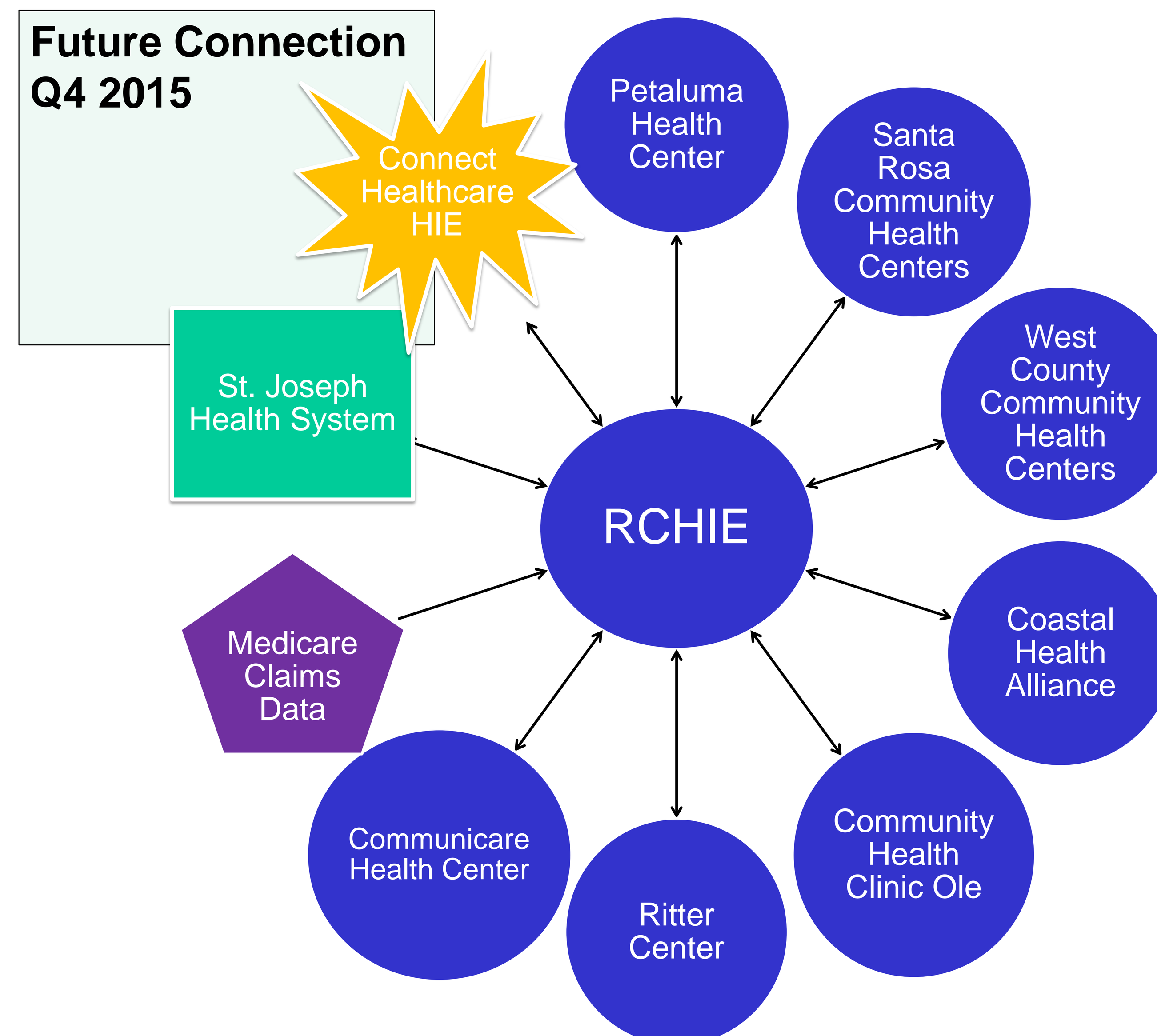
Output-oriented Objective 2: At the end of 2015 patient health records from at least eight health centers will be available electronically for use at the time of care at at least one Hospital.

Outcome-oriented Objective: At the end of 2015 hospital readmissions for at least one participating health center will be reduced by 5%.

Outputs & Outcomes

Outputs Achieved





RCHIE Patient Information Shared

- Patient demographics
- Advance directives
- Allergies
- Problem list
- Medication lists
- Immunizations
- Vitals
- Medical histories
- Labs & Diagnostic Imaging
- Referrals

Outcomes Achieved

- RCHC developed data sharing agreements and patient consent models. These were implemented at seven RCHC member health centers.
- Over a period of seven months, seven community health centers were connected and began sharing patient information with one another.
- A data sharing agreement was put in place with St. Joseph's hospital system. This agreement allows RCHIE to open a portal to physicians and St. Joseph's staff enabling access to primary care records for the hospital system.
- When the hospital is fully connected, the health center care teams will use information from hospitalizations toward preventing readmissions.

Lessons Learned

Negotiating patient consent and privacy issues among a consortium caused significant delays in launching the pilot site and opening sharing to non-health center entities.

It took eight months to have 50% of patient summaries available. Setting expectations around time needed to obtain sufficient data to share meaningfully is important.

Many patients were surprised to learn that we are not already sharing information via technology across health care organizations.

The process of sharing information with other health care organizations prepares us for accountable care. When we are responsible for the quality of care and total cost of patient care, we must be connected and have the information to impact both quality and cost.

About My Organization

Redwood Community Health is a network of 17 community health centers, with over 40 sites in Marin, Napa, Sonoma and Yolo Counties. Formed in 1994, our mission is to improve access to and the quality of care provided for under-served and uninsured people in our four counties. Our member health centers provide patient-centered primary care health homes to over 226,000 individuals in Marin, Napa, Sonoma and Yolo Counties. This represents more than one out of every five members of our communities. 60% of our patients have incomes below the Federal Poverty Level and close to 40% of our patients are uninsured.

Contact Me

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CHCF HEALTH CARE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

To learn more about CHCF go to:
http://futurehealth.ucsf.edu/