

Lower Health Care Costs Is One of the Benefits of Wellness

Improved access to appropriate health care services leads to better outcomes and reduced costs. Inadequate health insurance is one of the largest barriers to health care access and contributes to disparities in health. Memorial Hermann has developed strategies to provide care for the uninsured that is organized, coordinated and comprehensive.



Proactive interventions include:

ER and Inpatient Navigation

Managing the use of inpatient and emergency center care, while promoting more preventative and primary care, community health workers (CHWs) assist patients with locating an appropriate medical home, accessing medications and food, and ensuring they understand their health condition and next steps, all prior to discharge. These four steps, with follow-ups post-discharge, are the keys to reducing recidivism in the ERs and on the inpatient units.

Connections include:

- Assistance finding a primary care clinic or primary care provider, and assistance scheduling appointments
- Health education, including information about available community resources and the importance of primary care
- Assistance with prescription discount programs
- Assistance with food resources
- Assistance applying for Medicaid, Harris Health Financial Assistance and other indigent-care county programs
- Assistance applying for CHIP/CHIP perinatal resources
- Follow-up until connections are resolved

OneBridge Health Network

OneBridge Health Network was created to close the gap in specialty care within Houston's safety-net community. OneBridge connects Federally Qualified Health Center partners to volunteer specialists to address debilitating conditions that, if treated, can return the patient to an improved quality of life.

OneBridge verifies that patients qualify for specialty care and ensures pre-specialty visit testing is completed and provides navigation support for other quality-of-life needs. OneBridge strives to ensure seamless transition from the referring primary care provider to the specialist and back to the primary care provider.

Pathways for Health, Pathways for Costs

Pathways for Health, Pathways for Costs proactively engages with patients who are being discharged from the ER or hospital but who clinicians think will be back due to not having the support structures in place to deal with his/her health issue. By wrapping clinical and social support services around patients sooner as opposed to later, more effective decisions regarding care can be made, reducing overall costs and improving overall health.