

The Impact of Effective Care Management on the D-SNP Population: A Conversation with Commonwealth Care Association

HealthEdge's own Jennie Guiliany, RN, Lead Clinician recently sat down with Justin Quall, Vice President of Strategic Finance at Commonwealth Care Association (CCA) to discuss the impact effective care management has had on its dually eligible special needs plans (D-SNPs) population.

CCA, a multi-state integrated care system, has been using the HealthEdge care management solution GuidingCare® since 2019. GuidingCare is a complete care management platform for patient-centered care, offering health plans and provider organizations easy-to-use, next-generation data integration and workflow management tools. This is important for all plan types, but especially useful for D-SNPs because of the complexity of these plans and their diverse populations.

Jennie: The needs of the D-SNP plans across the country are wildly different. Having the ability to be flexible and customizable based on each state's requirements is a necessity. Can you talk a little bit about how CCA handles these challenges?

Justin: Over the last six months, we've become a multi-state health plan and seen, first-hand, that across each state there are different paradigms for dually eligible managed care products. Depending on the state, product availability looks different, and different state regulators will have different covered services and different integration requirements between Medicare and Medicaid. CCA believes very strongly in using integration to better coordinate services and become more efficient, and, ultimately, leading to better health outcomes for our members.

Jennie: How are the needs of a dual eligible population different? What have you seen in your populations?

Justin: This population has everything from extremely complex medical cases to patients who are working to overcome behavioral health patterns and a whole range of social factored gaps that we look to bridge wherever possible. It's an example of a place where consumer-oriented, thoughtful, hardworking, safety net health plans can help their consumers stay healthy, happy, and well taken care of in the community.

Jennie: As we're talking about being able to take care of members in the community, what are some of those capabilities that are needed from a health plan standpoint? And how do you translate that?

Justin: We understand that the level of integration and the funding streams look very different from state to state. Our overarching goal is to find what makes our approach to care special. Let's think about the care model that can really engage and move and heal our patient base and get as far as we can to enable that care model. That includes everything from coordinating transportation in a very high touch way to things like looking at housing in an entirely different way, in terms of being there, shoulder to shoulder with our patients, helping them with housing applications, approaching home modifications in a much more in depth, thoughtful, time-consuming way, than other populations may require. To take care of the community effectively, CCA believes in leaning in across medical behavioral health and mental and socioeconomic needs and evolving with the healthcare environment.

An example of when CCA translated that to our population was during the height of the pandemic. We launched a home bound vaccination program and operated isolation recovery sites for people with COVID-19 who are experiencing homelessness. We also set up a cottage environment as shelters for people experiencing homelessness in one part of Boston. Those are just some of the additional interventions that we took as COVID-19 presented new challenges to help our population.

Jennie: Let's talk about CCA's specific models of care. How do you approach these diverse populations?

Justin: Our goal is to be as consumer oriented as possible and acknowledging how heterogeneous our population is. It really means meeting those patients where they are. We have three lines of service - CCA One Care, CCA Senior Care Options, and CCA Medicare Plans.

CCA One Care is our under 65 integrated dual product and with that population we see extremely high levels of substance use disorder. We see perhaps, a less medically complex population than our over 65 plan as a whole, but we also have patients who are suffering from conditions like quadriplegia and have other complex medical needs. Since a large portion of this population has substance use disorder issues, it reinforces the need to have options like our crisis stabilization units available. That's an alternative to lock-setting inpatient psych environment, where those patients can find refuge and a place to heal and feel like they're really moving back into health and into the community.

The CCA Senior Care Options is our over 65 integrated duals product. This population is often incredibly, medically complex and trying to handle a range of chronic conditions, typically three or more, with very limited socioeconomic resources. For CCA Senior Care Options patients, having cultural tailoring becomes incredibly important. Over 50% of this population speaks a primary language other than English. We have a staff that speaks a range of different languages, well beyond just English and Spanish to again, meet patients where they are and communicate in a way that builds trusting longitudinal patient relationships. Another example for this population is not just working with one large, delivered meals vendor, but working with about 40. That allows us to partner with local community-based organizations, which are going to have offerings tailored to the residents of their surrounding communities. Again, all focused on keeping patients happy and healthy and approaching them in a way that they'd really want to be approached, leading to higher patient satisfaction and lower disenrollment rates.

For the CCA Medicare Plans, we see an opportunity to engage patients in a more proactive way than some of the competitors in our local markets. A lot of these patients are very complex, and we expect in the next five years that many of them are going to spend down into Medicaid eligibility and become dual eligible

patients. The question here is how can we influence the patient's health trajectories in such a way that they're able to proactively manage their health and stay happy and healthy in the community rather than institutional settings, where that option is appropriate.

Jennie: How does technology help support your care management processes?

Justin: As an integrated payer provider, employing more than 800 clinicians across a range of different licensure types, technology is vital. We have our own electronic medical records, and we have different dashboards for stratification. We use GuidingCare for care management and the flexibility of those solutions is something that I really depend on.

So that means, with GuidingCare, it's certainly going to include workflows for our clinicians around referrals in specialist care, but it's also going to have a much higher frequency of needing to be able to address issues like social determinants of health. For example, does the patient need an air purifier, to help them with their COPD or asthma? Does the patient need a home modification that isn't just a grab rail, but is a ramp or a lift system? We really believe that technology is a helpful tailwind for everybody, not just the "healthy wealthy," but all the consumers that CCA and all our peers seek to serve as well.

This discussion is an excerpt of the ACAP webinar "**A Health Plan Story: The Impact of Effective Care Management on the D-SNP Population.**" To hear the conversation in its entirety, [click here](#).

About CCA

Based in Boston, Commonwealth Care Alliance® (CCA) is a multi-state integrated care system influencing innovative models of complex care nationwide. Mission-based and person-centered, CCA focuses on sustainable and evidence-based healthcare breakthroughs that improve the health and well-being of people with significant needs, and advocates for affordable, high-quality, and cost-effective policies that lead to healthcare equity for individuals who need it most. **The CCA care model is consistently recognized as one of the best in the country at finding and engaging traditionally hard-to-reach individuals. Since 2016***, consumers have consistently rated CCA One Care as one of the best for overall experience and CMS rated CCA Senior Care Options 5 out of 5 stars for 2022. CCA recently began a multi-year, mission-aligned geographic diversification growth strategy to extend its proven care model throughout the United States, and now serves more than 62,000 individuals and operates health plans in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, California, and Michigan.

*Based on the 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) surveys.



©2022, HealthEdge Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. HealthEdge, HealthRules, and HealthRules Language are trademarks of HealthEdge Software, Inc. T 781.285.1300 F 781.419.6183 E info@healthedge.com W healthedge.com