



housecall
providers
bringing health care home

VITALSIGNS

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IAH boosts house calls into national spotlight

Photo: Barb Gorman

First-year results from the Medicare demonstration project Independence at Home (IAH) are in, and those results cast Housecall Providers in the national spotlight.

Not only did the Housecall Providers medical care team turn in a stellar year-one performance, with a 32% savings over a local control group of similar patients, but the organization was featured nationally and globally in the media coverage of the project's first-year results.

"We were certain we would do well, that the numbers would validate our care model," said Executive Director Terri Hobbs, "and that was just for the first year of the project. We're eager to learn how we did in the second and third years."

Nine of the 17 participating home medical care organizations received shared savings from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) based on the total cost of care their control group incurred. The percentage a practice received depended on how many of the six quality measures it met. Housecall Providers was one of four practices



Executive Director Terri Hobbs, left, and Medical Director Pamela Miner, MD, field media questions at the June 18th IAH news conference.

that met all six quality measures, and out of the \$1.8 million saved that first year, they will receive \$1.2 million. Overall, participating organizations saved \$25 million, considered an outstanding performance by CMS.

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden praised

Housecall Providers, noting that he had been inspired by the organization to include IAH as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – or Obamacare.

"Housecall Providers is a national leader in home-based medicine, and I congratulate their outstanding performance in this demonstration project," Wyden said. "Their participation in IAH means that Portland-area Medicare beneficiaries are receiving exceptional home-based medical services from a top-flight organization. Their hard work and the example they have set were

Save the Date

Housecall Providers' second annual breakfast forum

The 21st Century House Call

Tuesday, October 20, 2015 • 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Multnomah Athletic Club

For more information please contact Mary Finn at mfinn@housecallproviders.org or 971-202-5541.

Continued on page 7

Our medical care model validated by national Medicare study

The first-year results from the national demonstration project Independence at Home (IAH) were released last month, and I am happy to report that the findings overwhelmingly confirm

While the numbers speak for themselves, and we are VERY happy that they do, I want to talk also about the homebound patients and family members that are at the core of the study and thank them

and support and administrative personnel all seemed to sense early on what successful results could mean to the nation's health care system and, most importantly, the estimated four million homebound people in the U.S. who need this kind of care. Thank you all for your dedication to providing the best possible care to our patients.

The IAH legislation has been broadly supported at a political level, too, attracting bipartisan support and driven by key political figures – notably our own Sen. Ron Wyden, who co-sponsored the bill.

It's no secret that people are living longer, and soon there will be increased challenges to serve this aging population. Each day, 10,000 people in the U.S. enter Medicare. Who will care for these millions of people when they get too sick to leave their homes? My hope is that one day they will be able to take advantage of Independence at Home and have the opportunity to age in place while receiving primary medical care in the comfort of their home.

– Terri Hobbs, Executive Director

Initial results from IAH prove that providing home-based care to the chronically ill achieves Medicare's triple aim.

what many of us in the field have known

anecdotally for years: that home-based medical care to the chronically ill does indeed achieve the triple aim of better care and better health that are delivered at a lower cost.

While these are only the year one results, house call practices involved in the study are cautiously optimistic that year two and year three data will come in even stronger and that in the no-so-distant future Congress will make IAH a Medicare benefit, as it did with hospice two decades ago.

for their willingness to be part of the demonstration project. That willingness to participate allowed Medicare to study and track a group of 8,400 patients who received primary medical care in the home and compare them to a similar group who did not receive home-based medicine.

The results, as you can see on Page 1, were remarkable, and I am proud to report that Housecall Providers saved the most of any of the 17 sites involved in the study, recording a 32% savings over the control group in Portland. Our staff of primary care providers, transition and hospice team members,



Photo: Andie Petkus

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Our mission

Housecall Providers is dedicated to providing quality home-centered medical care, integrating primary, palliative and hospice services for homebound members of our community. We offer compassionate physical, emotional and spiritual support through life's journey.

Time is of the essence for NP Maria Bucio

When Family Nurse Practitioner Maria Bucio "discovered" Housecall Providers, it was as though she had stumbled upon some unique model of delivering health care.

Which, of course, she had.

"I was looking for a job in Portland, and the one that brought me here didn't work out," she recalls. "Then I learned about Housecall Providers. I had never heard of such an organization before. The beauty of it was that here I would be able to take my time with my patients. And with these much more complex patients that we have, you need that extra time."

Now, as one of the more experienced practitioners, Bucio can draw upon her work with her patients to help others understand what it takes to provide the proper care to those with chronic disorders who often can't tell you what hurts or how they're feeling.

But when she was hired five years ago, she herself needed that mentoring.

"I had 30 patients that year. I asked a lot of questions, looked a lot of things up. Now, I have 120. It's taken all of those five years to figure out how to keep all the plates spinning," she says with a smile. "When you come into someone's home, you're the clinic – you're it. The specialists can't go there, so I need to be able to figure out what they need and, if they need a specialist, explain what's going on."



Centennarian patient Helen Grubb with Family Nurse Practitioner Maria Bucio.

That kind of jack-of-all-trades attitude was handed down to her from an uncle in Mexico.

"He was a general surgeon in town but had a little office at the side of the house. Everyone came to him, and he had to do the best he could to help them," she says.

Her admiration of her uncle's work developed early.

"I was about seven years old, and I had a little black doctor's bag filled

Her patients pose multiple challenges. They range in age from their 40s to 103. Conditions include autism, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, pulmonary conditions and cancer.

"So many of them simply can't express anything. I have to go by subtle signals and experience," she says.

At the end of the day, time is what she values most about Housecall Providers.

"The beauty of it was that here, I would be able to take my time with my patients. And with these much more complex patients that we have, you need that extra time."

– Maria Bucio

with Smarties that I carried around as pretend medication that I would prescribe," she says. "My thought even then was, 'How am I going to get into health care?'"

She spent most of her early life in San Jose, California, but came to Oregon to finish her bachelor's work at Linfield College. She got a master's degree at OHSU, and, with family living in the area, Oregon has become her second home.

"I have more time to spend with each patient, and I have control over my schedule, so I have more quality time with my family than most practitioners do," she says. "For folks with families, this is an excellent place to work. They understand how important it is to attend a school assembly. They know our kids' lives are the most precious to us."

SAVINGS & TRENDS IN CARING FOR SENIORS AT HOME



4 MILLION adults in the U.S. need regular care at home.*

\$25 MILLION



in Medicare savings was realized in 2013 by treating adults in a home setting through the Independence At Home Demonstration.

Who needs primary medical care in their home?

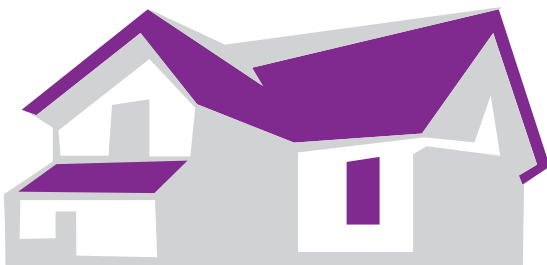
Adults with disabilities and those with multiple chronic conditions, including advanced dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

Why is it important to serve these types of patients in their homes?

This group often relies on emergency care for primary medical services. Most patients fall into the 5% of the Medicare population that utilizes nearly 50% of the funds.



If this homebound population is served in their home:



Trips to the ER, hospitalization and 30-day readmissions can be reduced, which can save up to \$4,200 per patient, per year.**

A recent study by the Oregon AARP found that the vast majority of Oregonians (90%) said it is important to have medical services that allow people to stay in their own homes as they age.

*Bruce Leff, Charlotte M. Carlson, Debra Saliba and Christine Ritchie. “The Invisible Homebound: Setting Quality-Of-Care Standards For Home-Based Primary And Palliative Care” *Health Affairs*, 34, no. 1 (2015): 21-29

**MedStar study: <http://www.medstarwashington.org/2014/08/04/new-data-shows-home-based-primary-care-lowers-medicare-costs-for-high-risk-elders>

IAH facts: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Demonstration-Projects/DemoProjectsEvalRpts/downloads/IAH_FactSheet.pdf

Photo: Barb Gorman



From left, Rodica Malos, DNP, Mary Ann Specht and Amy Long, GNP, outside Tabor Crest Residential & Memory Care.

A perfect partnership

By Barb Gorman, Marketing & Communications Specialist

The community partnerships that Housecall Providers has forged over the years have been a critical factor in our success at bringing medical care to the homebound. One particularly powerful connection has been our partnership with those who operate or own adult care homes and residential care facilities. Good communication, respect and the common goal of providing excellent patient-centered care are the hallmarks of these relationships.

Rodica Malos, DNP, is the owner and administrator of one such home, Tabor Crest Residential & Memory Care. Clinicians from Housecall Providers have been making house calls to Tabor Crest for years. Malos, herself a nurse practitioner, values the many benefits her residents receive through home-based medical care.

“Housecall Providers brings all the service that a doctor’s office has to each of my residents who need frequent primary care visits,” she said. “Those suffering from multiple acute and chronic physical and mental conditions are often in distress and discomfort and are unable to tolerate going to a medical clinic.”

The house call is a perfect fit for the residents of adult and residential care facilities, most of whom are elderly and struggle from some form of memory loss, dementia or Alzheimer’s disease. Travel for these residents is extremely difficult, so regular medical care often takes the back seat, leading in no time at all to chronic health problems. Lack

“Once Amy was in charge of my mom’s care, she never went to the hospital again.”

– Mary Ann Specht

of proper medical care creates anxiety and stress for the families, too, who worry constantly about their loved ones’ conditions. When Housecall Providers enters the picture, hospitalizations for those patients decrease, as does the stress that many families have felt for months or even years.

Mary Ann Specht knows this “stress scenario” all too well. Five years

ago, her mother, Hazel Kennedy, was suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. Specht was dissatisfied with the care facility where her mother resided, and began to search for a better home. One rainy winter’s evening, Specht, burdened by her mother’s condition, found herself walking through the door at Tabor Crest. She knew instantly that her search was over.

“I was mad almost every day that she was at the other facility, and I wasn’t mad once when she was living at Tabor Crest,” Specht said. “They were so caring, and my mom was always kept so clean – you can tell that they really care about their residents.”

Soon after her mother became a Tabor Crest resident, Malos suggested to Specht that she put her mother in the medical care of Housecall Providers. Amy Long, GNP, was making house calls to the facility and quickly got Hazel’s conditions under control. “Once Amy was in charge of my mom’s care, she never went to the hospital again,” Specht remembered.

Five years passed and the time came for Specht to consider hospice care for her mother. She chose Housecall Providers Hospice. It was a seamless transition and Specht appreciated how the hospice team laid out the parameters of what her mother would experience now that she was coming to the end of her life.

“They were all so very nice and consoling as I dealt with all the emotions that come with making a decision like that,” Mary Ann said. “They couldn’t have made it better for me and Mom’s passing was really beautiful.”

Palliative care program to launch this summer

Housecall Providers has received two grants, totaling \$328,750, to create a home-based palliative care service for patients currently being served by the organization. The three-year grants to trial this program are from Meyer Memorial Trust and The Collins Foundation, both long-time supporters of HCP's innovative programs. The funds will support the creation of Housecall Providers' "official" palliative care team, whose role it will be to bridge the gap between our primary care and hospice services. Many times our patients are close to being hospice-appropriate and require additional medical support that a single primary care provider alone cannot provide.

The transition team, created to support our participation with Independence at Home, was by design a pilot to rolling out a palliative care program. Throughout the three years it has been in place, the team was able to collect data and show positive quality metrics each year that supported an increase in care to our patient population that is high-risk for multiple emergency department visits and hospitalizations.

The focus of palliative care is relieving symptoms that cause suffering and finding the best quality of life as chosen by a patient and their family. Palliative care employs an interdisciplinary team approach (primary care provider, nurse, social worker and a chaplain) similar to hospice, to provide holistic care to improve physical and psychosocial symptoms.

We are currently hiring for a social worker and a registered nurse to be part of our palliative care team. If you or someone you know is interested in being part of an organization that is helping to provide the highest level of care for our community's homebound and chronically ill members, while playing a key role in the national discussion surrounding home-based medicine, please visit the Careers page on our website to view the job descriptions.



Meyer Memorial Trust

Connect to your health 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Housecall Providers patients have access to a new service – the online patient portal. This new tool is designed to offer patients and their families and caregivers an opportunity to play an active role in managing their health care.

The patient portal provides registered users with secure 24-hour access to the patient's personalized health information. It's a convenient and efficient way of communicating with the patient's health care team through a secure messaging system.

Through the patient portal, you will be able to:

- View parts of the patient's medical record
- View lab results
- Receive and send the patient's health care team non-urgent messages
- Obtain a current list of your active medications
- Review your past Clinical Visit Summaries

To register, go to housecallproviders.bridgedpatientportal.com/en/register and complete the registration form. Once you have set up your account, click on the "Personal" tab and answer the questions under Basic Information. If you are registering as a patient's representative, create your own account first and then click Add New Dependent under the "Contacts & Privacy" tab.

Please note: Under Basic Information you will need to provide the patient's Social Security number, date of birth, and medical record number. This information is required to ensure the privacy of our patient's health information. If you have questions about signing up or need assistance with your account, please contact Emma Nabors at enabors@housecallproviders.org or 971-202-5560.

IAH Results

Continued from page 1

part of the inspiration for the IAH program, and they are helping set the standard for success."

The news broke on Thursday, June 18, with the Associated Press picking it up and distributing it to more than 600 news outlets nationally and around the world. Housecall Providers was the only project participant mentioned in the AP article.

Hobbs and other Housecall Providers leaders met with local media that morning to discuss the first-year results. Wyden, unable to attend, sent a congratulatory video message that was played during the press conference. Housecall Providers



Pamela Miner, MD, fields questions during the IAH press conference.

received considerable local news coverage, with The Portland Business Journal, KGW, and The Lund Report picking up the story.

Hobbs, Mary Sayre and Dr. Pamela Miner took turns at the podium as

Photo: Dan Cook

cameras rolled, explaining Housecall Providers' service model, the significance of the numbers produced by the Housecall Providers team, and why IAH represented a paradigm shift for the way Medicare patients will be cared for in the future.

All in all, an extremely exciting morning for everyone at Housecall Providers as the days of relative anonymity for this amazing organization officially came to an end. Looking ahead, Housecall Providers will most assuredly play an increasing role in shaping the national discussion around home medical visits and how they accomplish Medicare's goal of providing better health care at a lower cost for the nation's costliest patients.

Early life experiences set Kelly, Ashlee on medical path

Kelly Fromuth, Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner

Kelly's strong connection to the senior population started early on, through the close relationship she had with her grandfather. She was raised in the same home with her grandfather, and she says he was her greatest source of inspiration. "He was extra special because he really let me be who I was and encouraged my individuality," Kelly remembers. As years went by, their special bond became stronger, especially as his health began to decline. It was her turn to be there for him. "I was honored every time he asked me to give him a hand because I knew I was playing a role in supporting his independence, something he gifted me with when I was growing up," she continued.

Kelly did her undergraduate nursing studies at Villanova University, then spent six-plus years in Philadelphia, specializing in vascular and surgical oncology. With the support of her family, she was motivated to become a nurse practitioner in order to learn more dynamic ways to expand access to health care through education, empowerment and multidisciplinary partnerships.

Ashlee Tubb-Martinez, Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner

A recent addition to Housecall Providers' clinical care staff, Ashlee is a native of New Mexico. Her medical career calling surfaced early in life: as a child, when other kids decorated their bedroom walls with posters of TV stars and singers, she chose to mount medical posters of human organs (pancreas, heart, liver) on her walls.

She earned her Master of Science degree from Walden University in 2014, specializing in adult/gerontology primary care. Her medical experience includes long-term care, hospice and critical care – the perfect background for her new position at Housecall Providers. Ashlee

says she was drawn to our organization by its mission to bring quality medical care to patients in their homes. For Ashlee, providing this kind of care is both a service and a profession.

New nurse practitioners Kelly Fromuth, left, and Ashlee Tubb-Martinez.



Photo: Barb Gorman

housecall providers

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Volunteer trainings

By Todd Lawrence, Volunteer Coordinator

If you have interest in being a patient or administrative volunteer for Housecall Providers, consider joining our upcoming training session. This training will consist of four sessions and will cover a comprehensive selection of topics, including patient care, grief and bereavement; professional boundaries, spiritual care, dementia awareness, disease process and more.

The schedule for this next session will be:

Tuesday 8/25/15	6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Thursday 8/27/15	6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Tuesday 9/1/15	6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Thursday 9/3/15	6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Volunteers must complete an application and interview prior to being accepted into training. Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older, pass a background check and two TB tests (provided by us) to participate in this opportunity. For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Todd Lawrence, volunteer coordinator, at 971-202-5515 or tlawrence@housecallproviders.org.

Individuals are encouraged to wait a year after the loss of a significant person before serving as a home hospice volunteer working with patients, families and/or caregivers.

Housecall Providers Hospice extends services to entire community

We have good news to share! Our hospice, which opened in 2009, recently expanded its admission policy so that more patients and their families can experience the excellent end-of-life care Housecall Providers Hospice offers.

Previously, we had limited admission to those in our primary care service. Numerous requests for hospice care from facilities made it clear that expanding services is an important step toward fulfilling more of our mission in the community. So we have now opened our hospice to everyone in the community, regardless of whether you or a loved one are in Housecall Providers' primary care or another service. Please contact us today for more information at 971-202-5500.

