PROJECT ABSTRACT

Project Title: Michigan Strategic Approaches to Improving Access to Quality Health Care for Children and Youth with Epilepsy

Organization: Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, Children’s Special Health Care Services (CSHCS)

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Funds Requested: $406,250

PROBLEM: Michigan lacks access to coordinated systems of care for children and youth with epilepsy between primary care providers, local community resources, and specialty care providers in urban areas. As a result, children and youth with epilepsy in rural and underserved communities, and the primary healthcare providers that care for them, are unable to access quality services, epilepsy educational resources, and information regarding self-management of epilepsy, due to the geographic distances from epilepsy specialists and lack of accessible epilepsy educational and self-management information.

GOALS: 1) Michigan children and youth with epilepsy (CYE) will receive comprehensive and coordinated care within a patient-centered medical home; 2) Michigan youth with epilepsy will have a youth transition plan to enable seamless transition to adult care and services; 3) Michigan CYE will have access to appropriate specialized epilepsy care; and 4) Michigan families of CYE and youth with epilepsy will be fully engaged in shared decision-making at all levels of services.

METHODOLOGY: The project focuses heavily on implementing a quality improvement Learning Collaborative with primary care providers and four pediatric epilepsy clinics. Using an existing quality improvement framework, clinics will identify processes that support medical home models, assure comprehensive and coordinated care, establish epilepsy action plans, incorporate transition infrastructure, and employ user-friendly telehealth or other technologies. Access to quality health care for CYE will be improved through telemedicine between primary care sites and epilepsy centers, training and education, community outreach, and user-friendly technologies that support self-management, care coordination, and transition to adult providers.

COORDINATION: Partners in the project include: Michigan’s Children’s Special Health Care Services Program (Title V), Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, the CSHCS Family Center, Beaumont Children’s Hospital, Children’s Hospital of Michigan/Wayne State University, Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital, and Upper Peninsula Health System: Marquette, Michigan Primary Care Association, Michigan Public Health Institute, Michigan Chapter of AAP, University of Michigan Child Health Evaluation and Research Unit (CHEAR), and targeted primary care providers from rural and underserved areas.

EVALUATION: A multi-level program of evaluation will be employed to understand the impact of the proposed project on key stakeholder groups: children and youth with epilepsy, their families, their medical home and specialty care providers, and the telemedicine network and systems that support them. The purpose of the evaluation is to understand the incremental benefits of: enhancing practice and perception of medical home models; expanding care coordination across networks; establishing transition infrastructure; increasing the use of telehealth and other technologies; enriching training and support systems; and concentrated efforts to increase family involvement.