



TriCore Reference Laboratories partners with MCO to improve prenatal care

Timely and appropriate prenatal care is crucial for the safety and well-being of both mothers and babies. Prenatal care includes pregnancy counseling, physical checkups, lab tests and delivery preparations. Standard of care guidelines recommend early and regular prenatal care to minimize possible gestational complications. Unfortunately, many expectant mothers do not receive optimal prenatal testing.

Without the insights gained from timely laboratory testing, clinicians are often not able to reliably identify higher risk pregnancies or initiate appropriate interventions.

TriCore Reference Laboratories (TriCore) led an unprecedented partnership by teaming up with a large managed care organization (MCO), to develop and implement a statewide prospective program for expectant mothers who are covered by Medicaid. This strategic and collaborative program integrated expertise from an interdisciplinary team that included laboratory medicine, information technology, pharmacy and the University of New Mexico Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology to determine the most important insights for improving prenatal care.

TriCore leveraged details from their laboratory information system to compare laboratory testing information with a list of MCO members to flag newly identified pregnant patients of the MCO's. This information would then be sent to MCO care coordinators who would then engage the identified patients in care.

Their well-designed solution has achieved extraordinary outcomes for patients, payors, clinicians and health systems. The program identified 13.4% more patients in the first trimester than the state's baseline, decreasing NICU admission rates from 18.2% to 10.7%. Reducing NICU



Top (L-R): David Grenache, Michael Crossey, Mark Koenig;
 Bottom (L-R): Amy Freeman, Monique Dodd, Kathleen Swanson,
 Teofilo Burunda Duque, and Richard VanNess;
 Not pictured but part of this winning care team are:
 Eugene Sun and Eve Espey.

admissions has substantial emotional advantages to patients and their families, reducing anxiety while also mitigating substantial costs for payors. Clinician satisfaction was also increased as their solution allows timely data access for proactive risk stratification of patients before complications arise. Lauretta Dozier, Registered Nurse, states, "It is evident that our partnership with TriCore has

expanded the Special Beginnings program and has assisted our team with surpassing enrollment numbers, never seen before in the New Mexico program."

This team was recognized, with distinction, by the 2019 UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence due to their unique clinical care coordination around the use and communication of laboratory generated information with measurable improvement to healthcare.

THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Proactive prenatal care is imperative for optimal health and well-being of mothers and their babies.
2. Strategic partnerships involving clinical laboratories and managed care organizations can ensure earlier identification of expecting mothers with actionable insights that maximize downstream utilization of clinical services for improved clinical outcomes.
3. Key performance indicators of increased patient safety, improved partner relationships and decreased NICU admissions are possible with teamwork, laboratory leadership and strategic partnerships.