

AIR Provider Interview Guide—Administrative Role: Early Care Experiences Under the Affordable Care Act

Introduction

(2 minutes)

My name is {BLANK}. I am with the American Institutes for Research. We have a grant from the California HealthCare Foundation to study the care experiences of consumers who are using health insurance they enrolled in through Covered California. As part of this research project, we are doing interviews with individuals such as yourself, in clinical organizations across the state. Today, we would like to talk with you about your perspectives and observations of consumers' experiences with using their new health insurance coverage and about your organizations' experience meeting the care needs of these consumers.

Informed consent

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. I have some structured questions that I will ask, but feel free to also offer information that you think is relevant and useful in addition to responding to the specific questions. Everything that you tell me is confidential. In our reports of findings, we will not include individuals' or organizations names. We would like to audio record this conversation, if that is okay with you. The recordings are to accurately document our discussion and will only be accessible to the research team here at AIR.

Do you have any questions?

Would you like to proceed with the interview?

Interviewee Background

(3 minutes)

1. To start off, can you tell me a little about your organization?
 - a. How long has it been in existence?
 - b. How many providers work here?
 - c. How many and what kinds of other staff work here?
 - d. What kinds of services do you provide?
 - e. About what proportion of your patients are enrolled in public insurance programs? Of those, what portion is Medicaid?

- f. On average, about how many patient encounters does your organization have per day?
2. Is your organization participating in any quality improvement initiatives or programs such as patient centered medical home, accountable care organization, or pay-for-performance programs?
If YES:
 - a. What program(s)?
 - b. For how long?
3. What is your position/role?
4. How long have you worked here?

Expectations associated with ACA (5 minutes)

Now, I would like to talk about your perspectives on the Affordable Care Act.

5. How did you think the ACA would impact your organization or your work, if at all? What made you think that this would occur?

{Note to interviewer: prompt if necessary using components of the legislation: the individual mandate for health insurance, standardized benefits plan, provisions for behavioral health, availability of the health insurance marketplace, availability of subsidy for health insurance, Medicaid expansion}

6. How did you think the ACA would impact consumers, if at all? What made you think that this would occur?

Systems changes made to support ACA (10 minutes)

7. Did you make any changes because of these expectations or to prepare for the implementation of the ACA? If yes, tell me about these changes.
 - a. What were they?

- b. How difficult were they to make?
 - c. What kinds of resource (e.g., time, funds, expertise) were necessary to make these changes?
 - d. How did providers and staff feel about making these changes? Were they engaged, committed, enthusiastic, resistant, skeptical, etc.?
8. Have there been any changes in your relationships, payment or contracting with health plans? If yes, what were these changes?
- a. Have there been changes in the plans that you accept?
 - i. If yes, tell me about those changes. What was the process for making these changes?
 - ii. If no, what made your organization decide not make any changes?
 - b. Are you accepting plans offered through Covered California?
 - i. If yes, which plans?
 - ii. If no, what made your organization decide not to accept plans offered through Covered California?
 - c. What were some of the things that your organization considered in deciding which plans to accept?
 - d. Have you begun or ended any contractual relationships with health plans?
 - i. If yes, tell me about those changes. What was the process like to execute these changes?
 - ii. If no, what made your organization decide not make any changes?

Impact of ACA on organization (15 minutes)

On January 1st of this year, consumers were able to begin using health insurance coverage purchased through the health insurance marketplace, Covered California. We are interested in learning about how things are going now that this key phase of the ACA implementation has begun. First, I'd like to talk about the impact of the ACA on your organization and its providers and staff.

Patient population and volume

9. Can you distinguish between patients that are using coverage purchased through the marketplace from those using coverage not purchased through the marketplace?
- a. If yes, how so?
10. Can you distinguish between patients that are receiving subsidies for their health insurance premiums from those not receiving subsidies for their health insurance premiums?
- a. If yes, how so?

11. Are you seeing a higher volume of new patients? Have you seen increased demand for care?
 - a. If yes, how so?

12. Have there been changes in the kinds of patients that you are seeing? For example, the socio-demographic characteristics (age, race/ethnicity, native language, gender), types of presenting conditions, severity of illness, prevalence of comorbidities, etc.?
 - a. If yes, how so?

Claims processing and reimbursement

13. Are you seeing more variety in the insurance plans people are using?
 - a. If yes, tell me about those changes.

14. Have there been changes to how you process claims?
 - a. If yes, tell me about those changes. Has it been easier, harder, faster, slower etc. to process claims?

15. Have there been changes in reimbursement rates associated with the plans you accept?
 - a. If yes, tell me about these changes.

16. Have there been changes in the timeliness of reimbursements from health plans?
 - a. If yes, tell me about these changes.

General perspectives

17. What benefits or successes have you seen of the ACA as it relates to your health care organization or its providers and staff?

18. What challenges have you or your organization faced that are associated with the ACA implementation?
 - a. What strategies, if any, have you or your organization used to address these challenges?
 - b. To what extent were these strategies successful?
 - c. What strategies do you think would be most successful in addressing these challenges?

Impact of ACA on consumers

(20 minutes)

Now I would like to talk about the impact you have observed of the ACA on consumers who are receiving their new health insurance.

Access to care

19. Do you think that consumers are able to see doctors that they prefer?
 - a. Tell me about what makes you think that.
 - b. Have they been able to keep their doctors? Or have there been patients that you can no longer see?
 - c. Have there been requests for doctors with specific language skills or interpreters?
 - i. If so, has your organization been able to accommodate these requests?
 - ii. What has allowed or prevented you from accommodating these requests?

20. Do you feel consumers are able to access care in a timely fashion?
 - Have wait times for appointments increased?
 - Are you having to turn away more patients? For example, because you do not accept their health insurance, because you do not have resources to care for non-native English speakers, or because you are unable to accept new patients?

Health plan knowledge and satisfaction

21. To what extent do you think that newly insured consumers understand their cost sharing and other administrative responsibilities associated with their health plans?
 - a. Have people seemed more, less or about the same in terms of their knowledge of their out of pocket expenses (co-pay, co-insurance, etc.)
 - b. What areas do they seem to understand well?
 - c. What areas do they not understand well?
 - d. Can you give me some examples of what makes you think that?

22. To what extent do you think that newly insured consumers are satisfied with their cost sharing and administrative responsibilities?
 - Can you give me some examples of what makes you think that?

23. To what extent do you think consumers understand what services and prescriptions are covered under their health plan?
 - Can you give me some examples of what makes you think that?

24. To what extent do you think that consumers are satisfied with their health plan coverage?
- Can you give me some examples of what makes you think that?
25. To what extent do you think consumers understand which providers they can go to under their health plan?
- Can you give me some examples of what makes you think that?
26. To what extent do you think consumers are satisfied with their network options?
- Can you give me some examples of what makes you think that?

General perspectives

27. What successes have you seen for consumers associated with the ACA implementation?
- What aspects of their new health insurance coverage do consumers seem to like the most?
28. What challenges have consumers faced that are associated with the ACA implementation?
- What aspects of their new health insurance coverage do consumers complain about most frequently?
 - What strategies, if any, have you or your organization used to address these challenges?
 - To what extent were these strategies successful?
 - What strategies do you think would be most successful in addressing these challenges?
29. What care or health insurance related issues that consumers face do you think that the ACA has not addressed?

Closing

(5 minutes)

30. Generally speaking, since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, have things proceeded according to your expectations?
- a. If yes, how so?
 - b. If no, what has been different from what you expected?
31. Is there anything that I didn't ask about that you'd like to share with me or any additional thoughts you have about the topics we have discussed?

Lastly, we recognize that the implementation of the Affordable Care Act is a work in progress and changing all the time. We would like to do some follow up interviews in about BLANK to see how things are changing over time.

32. Would it be okay if we contacted you in about BLANK to ask for a follow up interview?

Yes

No

If YES, What is the best way to contact you?

Contact information:

Thank you very much for participating in this discussion today.