

New Alliance Seeks to Promote Health and Prevent Illness by Addressing Social Determinants of Health

Non-medical determinants of health are thought to account for up to 60 percent of health outcomes

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, June 29, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new collaborative called the Utah Alliance for the Determinants of Health (the Alliance) has been formed to promote health,



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Mikelle Moore, Intermountain Senior Vice President, Community Health

improve health care access, and decrease health care costs. The Alliance—a collaboration in Ogden, Utah, and St. George, Utah, led by Intermountain Healthcare involving city, county, and state government agencies and other community based organizations—seeks to improve health by focusing on non-medical factors that affect health, such as housing instability, utility needs, food insecurity, interpersonal violence, and transportation. The collaborative will begin with two demonstration programs in Ogden and St. George.

Americans have shorter lifespans and fare worse on many health indicators despite our expending double the per-capita

average of our industrialized peers in other countries. To effectively care for Americans with complex medical conditions, it is often best to simultaneously address medical treatment along with what are commonly called the social determinants of health. These non-medical determinants of health are thought to account for up to 60 percent of health outcomes.

Addressing these non-medical health drivers requires innovative, comprehensive, and collaborative solutions from the public and private sectors. The goal of the Utah Alliance for the Determinants of Health is to achieve healthier communities, lower healthcare costs, and be a model for positive changes that other areas of the U.S. can replicate. The work will begin in Ogden and St. George with SelectHealth Medicaid members with an intent to eventually initiate similar work throughout Utah with other patients.

Intermountain will provide funding to support the Alliance’s initial demonstration programs in Ogden and St. George for three years subject to applicable regulations. These communities were selected based on the needs of the communities, opportunities to partner with other organizations and agencies, as well as on other factors such as available social services. The initial demonstration will work with SelectHealth Medicaid members in four ZIP codes: 84401 and 84403 in Ogden and 84770 and 84790 in St. George. Alliance program services will be available to qualifying persons without regard to their choice of healthcare providers. Upon the completion of the demonstration, the program will be evaluated for expansion to other populations and geographic areas.

The Alliance is designed within the Accountable Health Communities model designed by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This approach will include screening SelectHealth members for social needs and assisting with coordination of those needs. It will also include working

with community partners to ensure that services are aligned with the needs of community members.

Intermountain will be investing \$12 million over three years—\$2 million annually in both Ogden and St. George—which will sustain the three-year demonstration project. Intermountain’s initial funding for this demonstration will be used to bolster the impact of numerous pre-existing programs currently led by community partners. The addition of funds will enable Intermountain and community partners to gain efficiencies in coordinating care and other services that will reduce total spending. In addition, Zions Bank has made a generous donation of \$100,000 to support the work of the Alliance.

“We are very excited to work with our local and statewide partners in this innovative Alliance,” said . “By working together in new ways to promote health, we expect to make a real difference in the lives of the people in these programs. The Alliance will lead to healthier communities and will also have a positive impact in slowing the rise of healthcare costs.”

“Addressing social determinants of health increasingly plays a vital role as the country transitions to value and holistic-based health care. Leavitt Partners is pleased to leverage our expertise regarding social determinants of health, health care transformation, and alliances to provide instrumental advisory and strategic support to Intermountain and the Alliance on this initiative,” said Andrew Croshaw, CEO of Leavitt Partners.

Intermountain Healthcare is a Utah-based not-for-profit system of 22 hospitals, 170 clinics, a Medical Group with about 2,300 employed physicians and advanced practice clinicians, a health plans group called SelectHealth, and other medical services. Intermountain is widely recognized as a leader in transforming healthcare through high quality and sustainable costs. For more information about Intermountain, visit www.intermountainhealthcare.org.

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