



News Release

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The SNP Alliance and Center for Consumer Engagement in Health Innovation Jointly Publish Report: “Special Needs Plans: Focusing on Social Determinants of Health among Duals”

MAY 25, 2017; WASHINGTON, DC — Today the **SNP Alliance** and **Center for Consumer Engagement in Health Innovation at Community Catalyst (the Center)** announced their release of a report that examines how two special needs health plans are responding to the social determinant of health characteristics to improve health outcomes for people who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.

The SNP Alliance and the Center are two nonprofit organizations who share a mutual interest in focusing attention on important policy, practice and social issues impacting the dually eligible beneficiary population. “We are pleased to have collaborated with the SNP Alliance to lift up the consumer experience and shine a light on some of the issues and potential strategies that impact ability to improve population health among our nation’s most vulnerable people,” said Carol Regan, Senior Advisor at the Center.

Social determinants of health—also known as social risk factors—can significantly impact medical and health outcomes. Individuals who are dually eligible (low-income meeting Medicaid criteria, and disabled or elderly meeting Medicare criteria) often have more social risk factors than the general population. Factors include: income/poverty status, housing instability, education level, limited English proficiency, partnership status, and transportation difficulties. Many of the health-related needs of the duals require non-medical supports, so addressing these risk factors requires collaborative efforts with partners within each community to ensure solutions that are locally designed and implemented. These partnerships can extend across services, settings and systems, among organizations that serve the same people within a geographic region.

Dr. Deborah Paone, Performance Evaluation Lead for the SNP Alliance, remarked: “This report provides highlights of the work of two special needs health plans (Care Wisconsin and UPMC Health Plan) that have put systems and services in place and are collaborating with others in their respective communities to help address these social determinant of health issues. Such issues are important considerations in quality measurement and improvement.”

Richard Bringewatt, Co-Founder and President of the SNP Alliance, added: “Over the last few years the SNP Alliance has worked to advance policies that attend to the importance of social risk factors on health and health care. We’re excited about this collaborative work and the shared learning opportunities with real-world insight from the field.”

“We are encouraged to see such examples of how plans are collaborating with providers and agencies within their communities toward better understanding social risk issues and developing or enhancing systems and services across organizations,” said Renee Markus Hodin, Deputy Director for the Center for Consumer Engagement in Health Innovation.

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About the SNP Alliance

The SNP Alliance is a national membership nonprofit organization comprised of 26 special needs plans serving more than 1.3 million individuals who have severe, disabling, or multiple chronic conditions, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports needs. Plans serve a large proportion of those persons in managed care who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. Special needs health plans work to integrate these two separate programs on behalf of their enrolled beneficiaries. Together with its member health plans, the SNP Alliance is dedicated to improving policy and practice to better serve these populations. For more information see: www.nhpg.org

About the Center for Consumer Engagement in Health Innovation

The Center for Consumer Engagement in Health Innovation at Community Catalyst is generously supported by The John A. Hartford Foundation and The Atlantic Philanthropies and serves as a hub devoted to teaching, learning and sharing knowledge to bring the consumer experience to the forefront of health innovation in order to deliver better care, better value and better health for every community, particularly vulnerable and historically underserved populations. The Center's work is supported through investments in state and local advocacy, leadership development, research and evaluation, and consultative services to delivery systems and health plans. Visit healthinnovation.org or follow them on Twitter [@CCEHI](https://twitter.com/CCEHI) to learn more and follow their work.