

## The Effects of the Implementation of Patient-Centered Medical Home on Staffing and Productivity in Community Health Centers

Jeongyoung Park, Xiaoli Wu, Patricia Pittman

### OBJECTIVE

To understand the workforce transformation occurring in community health centers (CHCs) that have achieved patient-centered medical home (PCMH) recognition, and to assess the relationship of those changes to productivity.

### DATA/SETTING

Researchers used the 2007-2013 Uniform Data System records for 693 CHCs whose status in adopting the PCMH model during the study period could be determined (450 PCMHs and 243 propensity score matched non-PCMHs).

### DESIGN/METHODS

This study examined changes in staffing and productivity before and after the adoption of PCMH in CHCs between 2007 and 2013. The analysis method is a difference-in-differences approach with CHC fixed effects. Staffing was measured as the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in the following types: primary care physicians, advance practice staff, nurses, other medical staff, mental health staff, and enabling staff. Productivity was measured as the total number of visits.

### RESULTS

We find three important trends. First, contrary to our expectations, we do not find significant changes in nurses, other medical staff, or enabling service staff. Second, we find a growth in the use of advanced practice staff and a decline in primary care physician use. Third, we do not observe a significant increase in total visits, but we find marginal productivity increases associated with this shift and with the increased use of mental health/substance abuse staff.

### CONCLUSIONS

Although advance practice staff (nurse practitioners and physician assistants) have been employed extensively in CHCs in the past, PCMH adoption appears to be accelerating the phenomenon. The more years of experience a CHC has with the PCMH model, the more likely they are to increase their use of advance practice staff and decrease use of physicians.

**Key Words:** Patient-Centered Medical Home, productivity, staffing