



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***i*Care chosen to participate in National Committee for Quality Assurance research study on best practices in integrated care**

(Milwaukee, March 5, 2014)

Independent Care Health Plan (*i*Care) has been selected by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to participate in a research study to identify best practices in programs which integrate medical care and long-term services and supports for individuals with complex needs. *i*Care is one of eight organizations in the United States to be included in the study.

NCQA is a highly acclaimed nonprofit organization with a mission to improve health care quality. NCQA has titled the study, "Case Studies on Best Practices: Goal Setting and Achievement and Sharing Assessment and Care Plan Information."

"Wisconsin continues to be an innovator when it comes to adapting care services to the individual, rather than a one-size-fits-all model of care," says Kitty Rhoades, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. "I think it's great that the NCQA has chosen *i*Care to be included in its research, so that others might benefit from their approach."

The study will focus on *i*Care's Family Care Partnership program. Family Care Partnership is a managed care program that fully integrates Medicare and Medicaid services, including long term care services, and is designed to enable people with nursing home levels of needs to continue living in the community.

"*i*Care began originally as a CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) research and demonstration program to test the value of managed care for vulnerable populations," says *i*Care CEO, Dr. Thomas Lutzow. "Since that time, it has become one of Wisconsin's premier Family Care Partnership programs for people with a nursing level of need. *i*Care has developed a unique expertise in assisting these members to achieve their health, life and other personal goals."

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The purpose of the case study is to improve the quality, integration and experience of care for those receiving long-term care or behavioral health services and supports. The case study will gain insight from *iCare's* staff and supporting clinicians, on best practices for documenting and sharing member assessment, goal and care plan information with providers across care settings. If selected to participate in the second phase of the study, researchers will interview care managers and other clinicians, plan members and their families to identify best practices in assessing members' goals and using those goals to plan care and services. NCQA will use this knowledge to disseminate recommendations for best practices in this field to other health care organizations.

NCQA researchers will examine member case records, study the care planning and goal documentation process, and observe a member assessment encounter. Interviews will be conducted with staff and providers involved in quality oversight, data management, organizational leadership, health coaching, patient navigation and health information technology.

“The NCQA selection of *iCare* as a partner on a research study seeking to identify best practices in integrated care is gratifying for *iCare*. It's an affirmation of *iCare's* dedication and hard work. We're pleased to be able to share our experiences with others.” says Dr. Lutzow. “This selection is also a credit to the design and structure of Wisconsin's Family Care Partnership program. We are hopeful that the *iCare* Partnership program can provide NCQA with insight on how best to integrate a model of care that joins Medicare, Medicaid and long term care benefits into a seamless plan for the people we serve.”

This case study is supported by grants from The SCAN Foundation and The John A. Hartford Foundation.

The SCAN Foundation - advancing a coordinated and easily navigated system of high-quality services for older adults that preserve dignity and independence. For more information, visit www.TheSCANFoundation.org.

The John A. Hartford Foundation is a private philanthropy working to improve the health of older Americans. After three decades of championing research and education in geriatric medicine, nursing, and social work, today the Foundation pursues opportunities to put geriatrics expertise to work in all health care settings by advancing practice change and innovation, supporting team-based care through interdisciplinary education of all health care providers, supporting policies and regulations that promote better care, and developing and disseminating new evidence-based models that deliver better, more cost-effective health care. The Foundation was established by John A. Hartford. Mr. Hartford and his brother, George L. Hartford, both former chief executives of the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, left the bulk of their estates to the Foundation upon their deaths in the 1950s. Additional information about the Foundation and its programs is available at www.jhartfound.org.

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About iCare

Independent Care Health Plan was formed in 1994 as a joint venture between Humana Wisconsin Health Organization Insurance Corporation and the Milwaukee Center for Independence (MCFI). Independent Care Health Plan is a managed care organization offering both Medicare and Medicaid insurance benefits, and covers medical, dental, behavioral health, vision, and social services through a unique care management model.

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