AAMC PROJECT CORE®: OVERVIEW OF BENEFITS AND SERVICES

The following describes the benefits and services associated with participation in the AAMC Project CORE® (Coordinating Optimal Referral Experiences). Email projectcore@aamc.org with any questions about participation.

OVERVIEW OF AAMC PROJECT CORE

Project CORE was launched in 2014 and is now active in over 50 adult and pediatric hospitals and health systems across the country. The CORE model, initially developed and piloted at the University of California, San Francisco, has many benefits:

- Patients have improved access to specialty care and fewer unnecessary tests and visits.

- eConsults enable primary care providers (PCPs) to receive timely input and expertise from specialists, supporting more comprehensive care.

- PCPs and specialists work from the same set of expectations before and after a referral has been made.

- Specialists receive clear clinical questions and related documentation that enable more efficient referrals.

The CORE model uses tools embedded in the electronic health record (EHR), **Enhanced Referrals** and **eConsults**, that provide point-of-care decision support. Along with a robust implementation strategy, these decision-support tools enhance clinical workflows, improve communication and coordination at the interface of primary and specialty care, and enhance both the quality and efficiency of care. Analyses have shown timelier access to specialty input, a reduction in unnecessary utilization and costs, and positive patient and provider experience.

OVERVIEW OF THE BENEFITS AND SERVICES

Participants have access to a suite of resources and expertise to successfully implement the CORE model.

CORE MODULES AND RESOURCES

The AAMC provides a set of modules detailing the key aspects of program implementation, including:

- CORE Specialty Engagement and Template Development.

- Primary Care Provider and Specialist Outreach Strategies.

- eConsult and Enhanced Referral IT Build Resources.

- Establishing an Effective Quality Assurance Program.

- CORE Data and Program Implementation Metrics.

- Developing a Program Evaluation Plan and Assessing Program Impact.

- Planning and Facilitating Effective Co-Management Conferences.

- Billing and Payer Engagement.

- Advancing Health Care Equity Through eConsults.

In addition to the modules, a host of additional AAMC and CORE health system resources are available, including:

- Specialty- and condition-specific templates.

- *eConsults in Action* book of sample eConsults across 18 medical and surgical specialties.

- *eConsults in Action - Pediatrics* book of sample eConsults from children's hospitals across 18 medical and surgical specialties.

- Specialty-focused CORE newsletters.

- Sample communication and implementation resources from other CORE health systems (e.g., eConsult newsletters, provider outreach communications, quality assurance tools).

- Specialty-specific eConsult data reports and benchmarks.

To learn more about Project CORE or to request additional information, visit **aamc.org/projectcore** or email **projectcore@aamc.org**.

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CONSULTATION ON PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Through in-person meetings and virtual consultations, the AAMC team and other CORE health system leaders provide implementation and program support, including:

- **Pre-launch of the CORE model.** During the application process, the AAMC will help guide the necessary preparatory efforts at your health system to support a successful implementation, including a focus on baseline referral and access metrics to inform program planning, the formation of your project team, and alignment of institutional resources to enable successful program rollout.

- **Program orientation workshop.** Your team will participate in an orientation workshop that will be a deep dive into program details, team roles and responsibilities, and planning for successful implementation. This workshop is also an opportunity to network with leaders from other CORE health systems.

- **Team calls and communications.** The AAMC will hold one-on-one calls with the health system project team throughout the engagement to help troubleshoot local challenges and provide implementation guidance, including program planning and IT build support. The AAMC team is also available for ad hoc calls and email inquiries as questions or challenges arise.

- **Site visit.** The AAMC team and a CORE physician lead will conduct a customized visit to provide technical assistance and help identify solutions to early implementation barriers. Site visits typically include meetings with leadership and key stakeholders from participating primary care and specialty departments, IT build-focused discussions, focused team planning time, review of data and reports to identify opportunities for improvement, provider feedback sessions, and broader presentations to raise program awareness. The agenda is developed with the team based on local priorities and needs.

ACCESS TO THE CORE NETWORK

Participation in Project CORE includes access to the CORE Network, which offers several additional benefits:

- **Learning collaborative activities.** The CORE Network includes over 50 health systems that have implemented the model. Teams have access to ongoing CORE Network activities, including CORE member newsletters, webinars, work group calls, related advocacy efforts, and in-person meetings.

- **Benchmarking data.** Teams will receive regular comparative data reports to gain insights on program uptake at their institution relative to other CORE sites and help identify opportunities for improvement.

- **Virtual community.** Clinical leads and program managers will participate in the CORE Network Virtual Community, which promotes resource-sharing, fosters peer-to-peer discussions, and provides regular program updates.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

With a commitment to further scale this innovation and improve the quality of ambulatory care, the AAMC continues to work with AMCs, health systems, and health care organizations to implement the CORE model and optimize existing eConsult programs. Several options are available for consultation. Please contact projectcore@aamc.org for more details on participating in the program.

SITE SPOTLIGHT

The Yale University team shared the following reflections on their program and participation in Project CORE:

Yale Medicine, Yale University's multi-specialty group faculty-practice, joined Project CORE in 2017. At that time, we were piloting an eConsult model with a local federally qualified health center. There was low utilization of that model because of a challenging workflow as well as lengthy guidance and multiple hard stops in eConsult orders. Our population health team wished to improve upon and expand this program to other primary care clinics. Joining Project CORE allowed us to establish a roadmap for expansion, utilize best practices to optimize the EHR workflow, and refine guidance within the orders. Project CORE also encouraged us to develop enhanced referrals, which have helped referring clinicians frame questions and initiate work ups that promote more efficient and focused specialty consultation. By Spring 2022, Yale Medicine had launched 31 adult and pediatric specialties, and had onboarded 6 diverse primary care practices, including two federally qualified health centers, an employee health plan, a free clinic, and two school-based health centers. In addition, three Obstetrics practices and the Department of Oncology joined as primary referring sites. Utilization of eConsults has grown exponentially, with now more than 200 eConsults placed each month. Feedback from PCPs and specialists has been consistently very positive, and the success of the program has been highlighted by Yale Medicine's CEO. The AAMC CORE network has been a valued partner to Yale, providing guidance, wisdom, and support throughout all stages of implementation and expansion.

To learn more about Project CORE or to request additional information, visit **aamc.org/projectcore** or email **projectcore@aamc.org**.

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