

# Connecting Community Health Centers

## Community Health Centers (CHCs)

- 4,000+ CHCs serving 15 million mostly uninsured and underinsured patients.
- Provide comprehensive care at a low cost.
- Receiving significant government funding.
- Hospital emergency departments (EDs) treating these patients when they tend to be sicker.
- Referring ED patients to CHCs for primary care reduces subsequent ED use.
- Increased use of CHCs can save up to \$18 billion in annual health care costs — nationally.

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Brookline Technologies

## Community Health Centers (CHCs)

With 4,000+ facilities across the nation, CHCs are local, non-profit, community-owned health care providers, offering affordable primary care and preventive medical and health-related services to 15 million mostly uninsured or underinsured patients.

As CHCs are located in underserved areas often with large minority populations, they are open to all, and they provide comprehensive, culturally sensitive care that is customized to fit the needs of the communities they serve. CHCs have been successful in reducing or even eliminating the health gaps for racial and ethnic minorities, as well as for low income populations.

Because of their success, the General Accounting Office recognized Health Collaboratives, such as CHCs, as a promising federal program targeting health disparities that should be expanded. The

President's Health Center Initiative calls for doubling the size of the health center program with 1,200 new and expanded CHC sites.

Studies have also shown that low income, minority, uninsured and



Medicaid patients have higher incidences of preventable hospitalizations. A survey done by the American College of Emergency Physicians in 2004 found that two-thirds of the emergency doctors believe that uninsured patients treated in Emergency Departments (EDs) tend to be sicker and have more serious medical conditions than patients who have health coverage. These medically vulnerable patients relying on EDs are exactly who CHCs target for

continuous and effective primary care.

By increasing referrals of the medically underserved from EDs to CHCs, those patients can receive better care.

This can be done by electronically linking more CHCs with EDs.

Such electronic connection can also help those community hospital systems reduce the number of unnecessary patient visits to their EDs, thereby freeing up valuable resources to handle emergency cases.

Also, according to the National Association of Community Health Centers, CHCs provide comprehensive healthcare for about \$1.30 a day per patient served. If the patients seeking non-urgent and avoidable care at EDs went to a CHC instead, up to \$18 billion in annual health care costs could be saved nationally.

## Community Health Connect Solution (CHConnect)

Our CHConnect solution is designed for a healthcare consortium setting in which hospital ERs are enabled to refer patients to participating primary care and specialty facilities. It also allows those health centers and physicians to perform online patient cross-referral and appointment schedul-

ing.

With patients' records readily available for online viewing, clinicians can eliminate unnecessary duplication of tests, reduce clerical functions of handling patient files, and minimize patient waiting time.

It ultimately helps strengthen the

ability of those provider participants to deliver quality, integrated care in a more efficient manner.

Furthermore, through linking providers in a consortium setting, patients are more capable of accessing the optimum services of each participating provider.

## It Takes a Community to Provide Good Healthcare

### Current Healthcare Issues

According to a study by Robert Blendon et al, 57% of patients had to tell the same story to multiple health professionals, 26% received conflicting information from different health professionals, 22% had duplicative tests ordered by different health professionals, and 25% of test results did not reach the office in time for the patient's appointment.

A study by Center for Evaluative Clinical Sciences estimated that "close to one-third of the US health spending goes to care that is duplicative, fails to improve patient health, or may even make it worse".

Not to mention the significant medical error rate of more than one in five Americans who reported that they or a family mem-

ber had experienced a medical or prescription drug error. Of the 16% reporting a medication error, over one-fifth said the error turned out to be a very serious problem.



**More primary care, less emergencies.**

### Remedies Through Community-Based Electronic Health Records (EHR)

Sharing patient information electronically among a community of healthcare providers can help remedy some of the issues.

Depending on the community's charter, EHR can be implemented to provide a single, universal patient health record available to all authorized healthcare providers on a network in their community.

The record has all of a patient's health information - diagnostic tests, hospital care, physician records, drugs, ambulatory surgery center, etc. — and is available on any computer within the network regardless of where the services were provided. Community-based

EHR promotes care quality, economy and efficiency.

It is also important to community mental healthcare. According to the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, it can help provide patients with chronic disorders with evidence-based care by matching treatment to the needs of the patients through monitoring their functional impairments and making proper diagnoses along the way through appropriate facilities within the network.

According to economic estimates, information exchange among healthcare information systems within the U.S. would deliver na-

tional savings of \$86.8 billion annually after full implementation and would result in significant direct financial benefits for providers and other stakeholders.

Hospitals and clinics would benefit by \$33.7 billion per year. Currently, 90% of data is shared manually via telephone, fax, and mail, and one study found that pertinent patient data were unavailable in 81% of patient visits to an outpatient clinic.

Electronic medical records would save the average primary care provider an estimated \$86,400 over five years, compared to traditional paper-based methods.

*"More than one in five Americans who reported that they or a family member had experienced a medical or prescription drug error."*



**EHR: Win-Win for patients and community health care providers.**

### Our Incremental Approach to Community-Based EHR

Our approach to community-based EHR is to start with a small consortium of healthcare providers in order to build interest and momentum.

The early success and momentum built by these quick implementations can help increase the number of clinical services as well as expand the consortium. You can

start with linking a community health center with a local hospital ER, or sharing medical information of referred patients among two or more health centers.

While maintaining the independence of consortium clinics, our CHConnect solution is designed to capture only the most essential medical information to facilitate

direct patient care and critical analytical data.

Such additional data would be used to support outcomes analysis, population based planning, screening protocols, patient scheduling to improve case management and minimize lost follow-up.

## Your Direct Line to Collaborative Care

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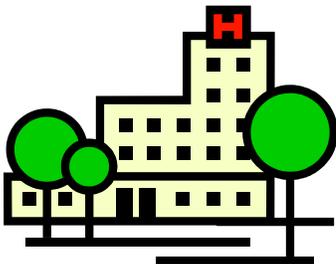
**Brookline Technologies was founded in 1997. Since inception, it has been developing and maintaining innovative enterprise software solutions for a variety of industries including healthcare.**

**Working with healthcare organizations, the company has found that the most commonly cited barriers to further adoption of information technologies (IT) are initial investment costs, followed by lack of interoperability with current systems, acceptance of technology by clinical staff, and availability of well-trained IT staff.**

**Leveraging its years of successful software innovation, the company has defined a vision for its healthcare software solutions.**

**Its solutions are designed to overcome the cited barriers while enabling healthcare organizations to achieve their strategic objectives of increased revenues, operational efficiency and improved community relationship.**

**For more information,  
visit our web site at  
[www.brooklinetech.com](http://www.brooklinetech.com)**



**Treat as many conditions as possible in primary care facilities, and then use ERs appropriately for emergency cases.**

We provide Community Health Connect solution (CHConnect), a HIPAA-compliant patient cross-referral, scheduling and electronic health information system. It helps redirect patients from hospital ERs to community health centers and physician offices for follow-up primary or specialty care.

Studies have shown that patients who have access to regular primary care are less likely to visit ERs for health care. Such access leads to patients living longer, healthier lives as well as lowering costs.

With CHConnect, on average an ER can reduce subsequent non-urgent patient visits by 30%, thus saving millions of dollars annu-

ally. Additionally, ERs are able to handle increased urgent cases for higher revenues, while referred health centers and physicians can deliver services to more patients from referrals.

**Proven Solution.** CHConnect is a proven solution as it has been used successfully for several years by a community consortium consisting of multiple health clinics, serving a target population of 100,000 people.

**Customized Service.** Unlike other costly healthcare information systems, the CHConnect solution is offered affordably as a web service, customized and hosted specifically for each community healthcare consortium.

#### **Pay as You Use the Solution.**

We are entirely responsible for the hardware, software, maintenance, upgrades and network operations. There is no need for your organization to hire additional technical personnel nor incur any up-front investment for software licensing and computer server hardware. There is a reasonable monthly subscription fee for the service.

**Contact us.** We will discuss CHConnect with you, understand your community healthcare needs and verify that CHConnect will indeed help your community and that your organization will achieve ROI for using CHConnect. Contact us now.