

## **HEALTH PLAN PARTNERSHIPS IMPROVE BLOOD PRESSURE CONTROL**

*Self-management reduces hospital stays and emergency visits, lowers blood pressure*

### **Public Health Problem**

- Over twenty percent of Utah adults have high blood pressure.
- Well over half of the people with high blood pressure don't have it under control, an important step for preventing strokes and heart attacks.
- Healthy eating, regular physical activity and taking prescribed medication can contribute significantly to lowering blood pressure.

### **Program**

- Surveys of Utah physicians indicated that patients needed to take more responsibility for controlling their blood pressure, but many barriers to achieving this goal existed.
- Patients said they needed more information to help them to manage their blood pressure and liked the idea of health plan incentives for blood pressure control.
- Partnerships between the Utah Heart Disease & Stroke Program and two Utah health plans, SelectHealth and Molina Health Care, were developed.
- The Utah Department of Health provided technical assistance, and funding to conduct physician and patient focus groups, collect and report data, develop physician education programs for licensure credits, and provide materials for patient self-management kits.
- SelectHealth developed "BP Take Control," a comprehensive blood pressure management program for physicians and members. Molina Health Care focused on high blood pressure with customized education, telephone assessment and incentives for members.

### **Impact**

- Hospital inpatient stays and visits to hospital emergency departments related to high blood pressure and heart disease were reduced by 60% for Molina Health Care participants in the blood pressure self-management program, saving money and improving quality of life.
- A majority of SelectHealth patients reported lower blood pressure following the initial stage of the intervention.
- Over three years, there was a 6% improvement in blood pressure control among SelectHealth patients participating. Control is maintenance of blood pressure below recommended levels.
- Lowering and controlling blood pressure through patient and provider interventions has potentially saved lives and prevented disability from stroke and heart attack.

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