



News Release

(For immediate release)

MINNESOTA BRIDGES TO EXCELLENCE AND THE QUALITY INCENTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM RECOGNIZE 248 CLINICS FOR EXCEPTIONAL CARE

Programs focus on achievement and clinical improvement in the treatment of diabetes, vascular disease, and depression, which are major drivers of health care costs

BLOOMINGTON, MN (JULY 11, 2017) — Chronic conditions accounted for more than [83 percent](#) of Minnesota’s health care spending in 2012. Recognizing the need for improvement, the [Minnesota Health Action Group’s Minnesota Bridges to Excellence](#) (MNBTE) program has since 2006 tried to inspire change by rewarding clinics that achieve optimal results for patients with targeted chronic conditions. This year, Bridges to Excellence recognized 248 Minnesota and border state clinics who demonstrated a commitment to improving treatment of diabetes, vascular disease, and depression, three chronic conditions that are key drivers of health care costs in the state.

“Health care costs continue to increase dramatically, particularly in Minnesota, and diabetes, vascular disease, and depression are significant drivers of those costs,” said Carolyn Pare, president and CEO of The Action Group. “Diabetes alone accounted for more than \$5 billion in health care spending in 2012, so improving care for people with these conditions can make a substantial difference in quality of life, controlling overall costs, and improving care for all patients.”

MNBTE and the state of Minnesota’s [Quality Incentive Payment System](#), a companion pay-for-performance effort administered by The Action Group, recognize clinics for either having a certain percentage of patients at optimal levels of care or increasing their percentage over the previous year. Clinic-level scores for diabetes, vascular disease, and depression are publicly reported by Minnesota Community Measurement.

Among this year’s recognized clinics:

- Four earned recognition for achieving optimal diabetes care,
- Eight were recognized for achieving optimal vascular care,
- 48 achieved optimal depression care based on depression remission at six months,
- 68 were recognized for improvement in diabetes care,
- 36 were recognized for improvement in vascular care,

- 84 were recognized for improvement in depression remission at six months, and
- Park Nicollet Clinic — Golden Valley met optimal targets in **all three categories**, achieving its third consecutive **MNBTE Grand Slam**.

A guiding coalition of health care purchasers, providers, health plans, and organizations involved with quality reporting and improvement collaborates with The Action Group to set the performance goals used to evaluate clinics for MNBTE, which ensures continuity with other market initiatives. This year's recognized clinics will share \$163,358 in rewards. Financial rewards for each clinic are based on the number of patients treated there who receive health care benefits from participating purchasers (the Minnesota Bridges to Excellence Champions of Change).

To be eligible for an MNBTE reward, clinics must have a certain percentage of patients at optimal levels of care or increase their percentage over the previous year.

- For **diabetes and vascular disease**, composite measures are used that require a patient to meet all individual measurement components to be considered at optimal care levels.
- The **diabetes measure includes** levels of blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure, along with non-smoking status and daily aspirin use for all patients at risk for cardiovascular disease.
- The **vascular disease measure includes** cholesterol and blood pressure levels, along with non-smoking status, and daily aspirin use.
- The **depression measurement** targets remission at six months based on improvement in the patient's PHQ-9 score over a six-month period. The PHQ-9 is an assessment questionnaire completed by patients that results in a numerical score representing severity of depression.

This is the 12th and final year for MNBTE in its current form, and the program leaves a legacy of improved care and better outcomes for Minnesotans living with chronic health conditions. MNBTE has awarded more than \$6.5 million to high-performing clinics and care systems over the life of the program to reward optimal care for people with diabetes, vascular disease, and depression. Those rewards have helped inspire improvements to care for patients across the state. Changes have led to patients gaining access to quality information they can use to find the best care for their condition, and purchasers uniting to offer a common set of standards and a transparent reward mechanism.

“The health care purchasers who are part of Minnesota Bridges to Excellence have sent the message for more than a decade that high-value health care and improved outcomes are a priority,” said Ken Horstman, senior director of total compensation for the University of Minnesota, and chairman of the board for The Action Group. “By advocating for better care in these important areas, MNBTE has moved the entire market forward in a unified way.”

Champions of Change include Best Buy, Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative, the University of Minnesota, and Wells Fargo.

The Action Group will honor clinics awarded under MNBTE at a July 27 reception. For more on Minnesota Bridges to Excellence or the recognition event, visit mnhealthactiongroup.org.

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About the Minnesota Health Action Group

The Minnesota Health Action Group is a coalition of public and private purchasers whose sole purpose is to represent the collective voice of those who write the checks for health care in Minnesota. Action Group members collaborate with community stakeholders to drive innovations that support high-quality health care, create engaged consumers, and ensure the economic vitality of all Minnesota communities. Based in Bloomington, Minn., the Minnesota Health Action Group was formed in 1988 as the Buyers Health Care Action Group. To learn more, visit MNHealthActionGroup.org. Follow on LinkedIn and Twitter: @actiongroupmn.

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