



Health Policy Research



Our expertise in health, equity, economics, clinical care, statistics, research methods and implementation science delivers leading-edge support for health services.

Highlighted Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Work

Oncology Care Model (OCM)

Client: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

OCM is designed to incentivize better care coordination and to improve access to both practitioners and evidence-based cancer treatment for Medicare beneficiaries. Abt is conducting a mixed methods evaluation of OCM's impact on all-cause mortality, quality of end-of-life care, medication management, disparities in cancer care, impacts of other payer participation and unintended consequences. Abt researchers integrate data from Medicare administrative data, case studies and surveys of patients, clinicians and practice leaders to provide CMS with both rapid-cycle and comprehensive annual reporting.

Coverage Transitions for Children with Special Health Care Needs

Client : Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC)

To support MACPAC, Abt is examining state and federal policies related to transitioning children and youth with special healthcare needs (CYSHCN) between child and adult Medicaid coverage and pediatric and adult health care services, and how those services are implemented to maintain continuity of coverage and care. Abt is conducting a mixed-methods study—including policy scans in all 50 states and the District of Columbia—to examine how coverage requirements, state waiver and programs work in practice. Stakeholder interviews with state and national experts, focus groups with CYSHCN and their families, and in-depth state profiles will help to inform future Commission discussions on approaches to improve CYSHCN transitions between child and adult coverage and care.

Strategic Medicaid & CHIP Managed Care Monitoring, Oversight, and Technical Assistance

Client: CMS

Abt serves as a strategic partner for CMS to help ensure state Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) managed care programs are compliant with federal rules, and provide access to high-quality health services for beneficiaries. As part of this work, Abt is identifying policy gaps, developing strategic frameworks, and providing tools and training modules that consider and incorporate the needs of a diverse set of stakeholders to address the breadth and scope of managed care program.

Selected Expertise

RESEARCH, MONITORING & EVALUATION

- Randomized experiments
- Quasi-experimental designs
- Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

- Program implementation support (including quality measurement)
- Public reporting support
- Provider training
- Federal rulemaking support
- Technical assistance

Evaluation of the Maternal Opioid Misuse Model

Client: CMS

CMS's Maternal Opioid Misuse (MOM) initiative uses a coordinated care model to address the need for improved care for pregnant women enrolled in Medicaid who use opioids. Abt and partners are evaluating the model's ability to improve quality and health outcomes while cutting costs; improve access to treatment, service delivery capacity, and infrastructure; and create sustainable coverage and payment mechanisms.

Evaluating CMS's InCK Model for Kids with Complex Health Needs

Client: CMS

The Integrated Care for Kids (InCK) payment and delivery model was designed to better integrate service delivery across behavioral health, physical health, and other health-related services for children with the goal of reducing Medicaid expenditures and improving outcomes. Abt is leading a mixed methods evaluation design to evaluate the model and will also execute a quasi-experimental design to assess its impacts on children within and across participating communities. The results will address whether early identification, service integration, and alternative payment models improve the well-being of children and their families.

Highlighted Technical Assistance and Implementation Work

Hemoglobinopathies National Coordinating Center

Client: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

Abt is the technical capacity building and learning lead for the national coordinating center on hemoglobinopathies, or sickle cell disease (SCD). Along with partners and experts, Abt is advancing the SCD system of care by improving knowledge and capacity among patients, families, and clinicians; linking individuals and families to evidence-based care; and fostering partnerships between clinicians, community organizations and other stakeholders to improve the ability to deliver coordinated, comprehensive care. Abt holds SCD training workshops with community health workers, supports the implementation of regional action plans, and provides technical assistance to local community health centers.

Home Health Prospective Payment System (HH PPS), Hospice, Home Infusion Therapy (HIT), Home Intravenous Immune Globulin (IVIG) Items and Services and Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Prospective Payment System (IRF PPS): Analysis Support and Monitoring

Client: CMS

Abt provides technical support and payment analyses for the development, implementation, and monitoring of payment reform options for Medicare's current home health prospective payment system (PPS), the hospice benefit, home infusion therapy benefit, intravenous immune globulin benefit, and the inpatient rehabilitation facility PPS. Abt staff support CMS in federal rulemaking and associated payment systems changes. The team recently helped CMS develop a new benefit for Home Infusion Therapy and is supporting the development a new benefit for intravenous immune globulin treatment.

Nursing Home Care Compare

Client: CMS

For more than a decade, Abt has worked closely with CMS to develop, implement, refine and support the nationwide Five-Star Quality Rating System for nursing homes, which are displayed on the Nursing Home Care Compare website. Ratings for each nursing home are based on annual health inspection survey results, staffing ratios and a set of assessment and claims-based quality measures. Abt calculates the nursing home ratings, generates more than 15,000 individualized provider preview reports each month and operates a Helpline for provider inquiries.

Home Health Quality Measurement, Value-Based Purchasing Model and Hospice Assessment Instruments Development and Maintenance

Client: CMS

To support Medicare and Medicaid home health and hospice providers, Abt is providing CMS with a range of quality improvement support, including quality measure development, testing and maintenance, clinical assessment instrument support, rulemaking support, stakeholder engagement and public reporting of quality metrics. The Abt team assists with help desk operations, the calculation of quality measures and performance metrics and public reporting for CMS's Care Compare program.

Reducing Maternal Health Disparities in Underserved and Vulnerable Populations

Client: HRSA

Abt provides evaluation and technical assistance to recipients of grants from HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care's Quality Improvement Fund- Maternal Health Fund (QIF-MH). The purpose of the QIF-MH is to identify scalable patient-centered models of care that address maternal health disparities. The Abt team creates a core set of evaluation measures and provides ongoing data-driven technical assistance and peer learning to support awardees in evaluating and refining their efforts.

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