Purpose

The purpose of the National Council on Aging’s (NCOA) Center for Healthy Aging Network Development Learning Collaborative (NDLC) is to provide community-based organizations (CBOs) with the knowledge and skills to create, enhance, and/or successfully manage network hub partnerships.

Background

The health care industry and federal and state governments are more cognizant that addressing care management for high-need health care consumers requires an integrated approach to achieve better quality and performance outcomes. This trend of health care and CBO engagement requires that CBOs evaluate their traditional modes of delivering services, especially as independent entities. Moreover, assessing organizational capacity and infrastructure are necessary components of a strategic business plan that supports outreach and engagement with new health care customers. According to a recently published survey report from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), the number of CBOs delivering contracted services to health care organizations has increased significantly.

Ongoing developments in Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS), Medicare Advantage, and Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) continue to evolve and transform health care delivery and quality. Person-centered planning and holistic approaches to care coordination are increasingly ingrained into the traditional health care delivery systems, synchronizing the social determinants of health (SDOH) with traditional clinical care. This shift adds a new wrinkle to health care consumer management. CBOs, who are the SDOH experts, have a significant opportunity to engage with various health care partners across the spectrum. CBOs must develop a deeper understanding of health care organizations’ needs, create partnerships and networks to meet those needs, and define the value propositions that effectively address health care organizations’ needs. The sustainability of CBOs as community resources is dependent upon their aptitude and ability to adapt to their business philosophies and practices to access new sources of revenue. A key factor in developing productive relationships with health care organizations is the alignment of collaborative networks among CBOs.

A network or network hub utilizes a centralized, coordinated model for service provision by incorporating uniform logistical practices for recruitment, referral, enrollment, marketing, quality assurance, and evaluation. This process is carried out under the direction of the hub’s central organization and is coordinated among the collective service delivery network. It provides a unified and consistent approach to program delivery across a geographic area, either regional or statewide. The central organization is the center of activity that connects a network of partners, including health care systems and local community organizations who offer evidence-based programs, all working together toward a common goal.

Among the many benefits in the establishment of network hubs is the capacity to:

- Deliver a broader scope of SDOH services;
- Reach more diverse consumers and populations;
- Build stronger administrative infrastructures;
- Capitalize on economies of scale;
• Provide expanded regional/statewide coverage;
• Offer one-stop contracting for multiple services with payors; and
• Expand quality improvement initiatives and successes

The NDLC will provide selected participants with training on the fundamental elements of network development such as identification of CBO partners, establishment of participation agreements, and exposure to the primary drivers for health care organizations to support building value propositions. Over a period of 11 months, the NDLC will provide participants with an opportunity to learn from their peers, while receiving technical assistance and training from NCOA and other industry subject matter experts (SME). Additionally, NDLC participants will be engaged with other CBOs that have successfully created coordinated hubs and contracted with health care organizations.

**Timeline**

11 months: May 2018 - March 2019

**Key NDLC Learning Benchmarks**

Participating organizations will work toward achieving these tactical objectives:

• Draft a participating organization agreement;
• Complete a Readiness Assessment and utilize the results to strengthen your strategic plan;
• Complete a Partnership Evaluation;
• Utilize the cost calculator tools to support development of fiscal planning;
• Detect gaps, if any, in current hub composition and identify additional partners/network participants to maximize organizational capacity (post LC); and
• Target a local healthcare organization for partnership engagement.

**Participant Expectations**

Up to 10 organizations will be selected to participate in this LC and will be announced mid-March 2018. Participants are expected to:

• Complete the entire 11-month NDLC cycle;
• Attend an in-person kick-off orientation meeting (May 21, 2018), in conjunction with the annual NCOA Center for Healthy Aging Annual Meeting, with webinar capability availability for those not able to attend in person;
• Identify key partners to participate as a unit/team on monthly NDLC webinars and related activities;
• Become familiar with the recommended resources and community-integrated health care resources on NCOA’s website;
• Collaborate with team to develop measurable goals and objectives to achieve the NDLC purpose;
• Attend all lectures/trainings held via webinar;
• Establish monthly hub meetings to collaborate and prepare for monthly NDLC lectures and assignments;
• Participate during monthly webinars by verbally reporting on progress and lessons learned to encourage shared growth of NDLC participating organizations;
• Actively and regularly participate in ongoing discussion, relevant postings, assignment submission, and progress reporting within the online community;
• Work closely with hub team to plan and implement the project objectives;
Support from NCOA’s Center for Healthy Aging (CHA)

CHA, in collaboration with the Administration for Community Living will support participants through the NDLC experience in the following ways:

- Host the in-person NDLC Kick-Off Meeting as a preconference to NCOA’s Center for Healthy Aging Annual Meeting (May 21, 2018);
- Provide technical assistance and support for the successful execution of NDLC expectations;
- Host monthly webinars that include lectures by experts from the field, peer-to-peer learning, and discussion of suggested readings and homework assignments;
- Connect participants with other experienced organizations that have successfully created network hubs and contracted with health care organizations; and
- Moderate an online community to facilitate sharing of best practices and resources, foster peer-to-peer support, and provide technical assistance.

Please contact Kathleen Zuke at kathleen.zuke@ncoa.org with any questions regarding this charter.