2023 Align Summit | September 18-20, 2023
Executive Summary

Who We Are and Why We Hosted This Conference

The University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy and the Center for Leading Healthcare Change designed and hosted the inaugural Align Summit: Advancing Provider-Health Plan Partnerships for Optimizing Medication Outcomes. This summit sought to bring a diverse group of national stakeholders together to share Minnesota’s experience with this type of event.

Throughout the nation, diverse pockets of pharmacy innovation exist at the local and regional levels. The Align Summit underscores the value of coming together to exchange insights, experiences, and successes across stakeholders. By fostering collaboration and breaking out of our silos, we can drive the pharmacy profession forward to optimize patient outcomes. The summit has uncovered shared challenges within this community, encouraging participants to draw lessons from each other’s experiences. Successful implementation requires effective innovations such as consistent and high-quality Comprehensive Medication Management (CMM) services, effective implementation such as a learning and action community or coaching, and enabling contexts such as sustainable payment models for the service, all resulting in improved health of our patients and communities along with reduced care costs.

Goals of the Align Summit

1. Share best practices in health plan/pharmacist provider partnerships
2. Explore strategies that build collaboration and investment between health plans and pharmacist providers
3. Highlight the benefits of a regional focus on health plan/provider partnership development
4. Inspire the formation of communities of practice around regional health plan/pharmacist provider partnerships

“...There is national interest in advancing Comprehensive Medication Management across the country and many innovative ideas were shared. Many are ready to forge ahead.”
THEMES OF THE CONFERENCE

The Align Summit Final Agenda was designed around four themes to optimize medication outcomes through provider-health plan partnerships:

**PARTNERSHIPS**

Designing successful partnerships between health plans and pharmacist providers.

> I learned that we are more likely to have impact through a regional focus, rather than attempting universal changes nationwide.

**METRICS**

Identifying, prioritizing and adopting metrics aligned with the Quintuple Aim to measure value from medication management services in today’s health care environment.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

Establishing effective benefit design of medication therapy management programs that create engagement with beneficiaries and care providers to produce value.

> Most payer stakeholders making funding decisions are not pharmacists and they won’t know that CMM, MTM, pharmaceutical care, or a pharmacist care coordination initiative, are usually the same thing. They can’t align on a payment structure if we can’t define what the service is as a profession.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Once partnerships are formed, adopting best practices that support accelerated engagement by care providers in the health plan partnership and strategies to evaluate, adapt and scale the program to ensure desired outcomes of the partnership are realized.

**Overall Takeaway Themes**

- Collaboration models are highly effective (such as the RITZ model promoted by AIMM and applied in Utah and North Carolina).
- Value-based partnerships are able to delve into strategies and payment models. These capture value and support the sustainable provision of effective medication management services, returning captured value to the pharmacists who are generating it.
- Community-based efforts can connect social service agencies, medication management services, and primary care to address medication-related needs in vulnerable populations, expanding these partnerships beyond traditional health care settings in order to reach the patients who need them most.
- Innovative collaborations and partnerships, such as those involving academic institutions, health
systems, health care providers, and health plans, are able to identify shared areas for improvement and to implement strategies that meet the needs of multiple stakeholders.

- Implementation support and effective implementation strategies are necessary for these efforts, particularly in an environment where pharmacists and other health care professionals may have limited bandwidth to dedicate to planning an organizational change.

### Who Participated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Plans/Payers</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication Management Service Providers</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Institutions (not including UMN)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/State Professional Organizations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health System Leadership</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical Industry</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMN Faculty, Staff, Residents &amp; Students</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
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**Participants coming to us from the following maroon states:**

![Map of attendees from maroon states](image)
What Comes Next

Since returning home from the Align Summit, have you followed up on your personal commitment to action?

Results: Of these responses (data collected on 10/11/23), 19 individuals reported that they have follow up meetings scheduled, getting contracts, implementing a new initiative, sharing best practices, becoming a Medicaid provider, and continuing to network with fellow Align Summit participants.

Like our participants, The University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy’s personal commitment to this community includes facilitating a:

• community of learning/practice through connections established at the Summit
• framework for ongoing discussions, likely including a follow-up Summit in 2024.