

Engaging Local Populations in American Children's Hospitals

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In 2015, the Children's Hospital Association polled its membership to better understand the nature and scope of their population health initiatives. Following these efforts, we will conduct follow-up with hospital leadership regarding their current efforts and future plans to support the wellbeing of their surrounding population. The data will come from 10 in-depth interviews and will focus on how children's hospitals have responded to the new community benefit requirements associated with the Affordable Care Act. In particular, with a new responsibility to conduct regular health needs assessments, new opportunities exist to conduct research on local health problems and engage community members in this process. Little is known, however, if community-engagement is a mainstream aspect of the population health efforts of American children's hospitals. Therefore the qualitative nature of our data will provide a robust picture of how population health activities such as mandatory Community Health Needs Assessments are interpreted and how hospitals define the populations they serve. These findings will further uncover barriers to developing community-engaged population health efforts, as well as best practices for implementing population health interventions aimed at boosting health outcomes in surrounding communities.