



## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Tools for Improving Quality of Care for  
Children with Special Health Care Needs

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## Best Practices

### The Shared Responsibilities Model in Action: A Case Study at Neighborhood Health Plan

Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP), a 135,000 member managed care plan in Massachusetts, and New England SERVE began a collaborative effort in 1999 to improve quality of care for children with special health care needs (CSHCN) enrolled in NHP, using the *Shared Responsibilities* model. An Advisory Council, comprised of NHP staff, parents of CSHCN, providers and state agencies was created to oversee the project and to assist NHP's efforts to address the needs of CSHCN enrolled in the plan. As part of this project, NHP developed an algorithm, using claims and other administrative data, to identify its CSHCN and assess their use of health services. Satisfaction data and information on plan performance were gathered from over 500 families of CSHCN enrolled in NHP and more than 170 pediatric primary care providers, using the surveys in the *Shared Responsibilities* Toolkit.

As a result of these activities, NHP has committed itself to developing and implementing a specialized approach to care management, care coordination, benefit determination, family involvement and problem resolution for CSHCN, one which NHP's former Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Robert Master, says "must be based on different thinking, different rules and different systems." The plan has already implemented a number of specific interventions to improve quality of care for its CSHCN and their families, including:

- Ongoing identification of CSHCN using multiple methods, including claims and other administrative data, member health needs assessments and self-identification. (Future plans include use of internal identifiers that will allow members services staff to individualize their responses to members.)
- Hiring a parent consultant, the mother of a child with special health care needs, to support families and children enrolled in the plan, and to work to improve NHP's policies and programs for CSHCN.
- Developing a web-based resource database on providers, services and support for CSHCN, available to all NHP staff to assist members. Also available to members and providers.
- Providing specialized training and support for primary care providers on specific topics such as ADHD.

Identify    ▪    Collaborate    ▪    Improve