



**For Immediate Release**  
Sept. 21, 2016

**For More Information**  
David Waymire 517-485-6600

## **MAHP salutes health plan innovation in 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Pinnacle Awards**

*Winners include programs that expand access to health care, improve member safety and health outcomes and reduce health care costs*

Lansing, Mich. – Ten Michigan health plans from across the state submitted 31 groundbreaking programs to the Michigan Association of Health Plans Annual Pinnacle Awards, showing entrepreneurial spirit as they increased efficiency and improved patient health care to lower health care costs and increase service to Michigan citizens.

The winners were presented at a reception on Tuesday, Sept. 20 at the Radisson Hotel in Lansing. Health Alliance Plan, Priority Health and Molina Healthcare of Michigan each captured two awards in the competition. Other winners were Physicians Health Plan, McLaren Health Plan, Total Health Care and UnitedHealthcare.

MAHP shares the winning programs among members, helping them adopt best practices throughout the state's health plans. This year's winners address a host of issues, from empowering staff to increase efficiency and reduce costs, to better video and virtual delivery of health care and boosting treatment of diabetes, depression and breast cancer.

"I am always pleased to see the innovation and continual improvement processes used by our MAHP members to address key issues aimed at improving the health of their members and their communities," said Rick Murdock, executive director of MAHP. "Over the years we have seen smart ideas become accepted practices, and our state is the beneficiary. It's truly an honor to recognize these achievements and watch many be adopted around the state and nation."

Health plans submit new programs to a judging panel comprised of health care experts, lawmakers and news media. The panel reviewed submissions in depth before selecting winners in various categories for commercial health insurers and Medicaid health plans. Full details on each winner are available at [www.mahp.org](http://www.mahp.org).

Following are brief descriptions of winning programs:

***Business Operational Performance – Commercial to Health Alliance Plan for “ReThink Lean Journey.”*** HAP adapted a “lean” process lead by a Continuous Improvement Team to give employees daily opportunities to improve business processes, and branded it internally as “ReThink.” Over the last two years the company has saved \$28.4 million by reducing claims inventory, improving technology performance and billing accuracy, among other actions, along with increasing customer satisfaction.

***Business Operational Performance – Medicaid to Priority Health for “Partnering with MedNow to Virtually Connect Members and Providers.”*** MedNow is a new telehealth partner with Priority Health, allowing Medicaid recipients with access to a computer in-home, real-time access to primary care providers for non-life-threatening conditions, including video visits for those with a webcam and a strong internet connection. It has provided effective health care services to beneficiaries at measurable cost savings. Data analytics from the video-enabled virtual visits help measure patient and provider use and satisfaction.

***Clinical Service Improvement – Commercial to Physicians Health Plan for “Closing Gaps in Care and Promoting Member Safety.”*** To combat adverse drug interactions, PHP contracted with Express Scripts for an evidence-based safety program that uses medical, pharmacy and lab test data to prevent adverse drug events and find gaps in care. The extensive algorithms detects potential safety and health risks, and generates alerts for pharmacists and physicians. In two years the program has generated more than 10,000 alerts and saved PHP more than \$5 million.

***Clinical Service Improvement – Medicaid to McLaren Health Plan for “Food 4U.”*** Encouraging members to value preventative screenings is critical to promoting a healthy lifestyle and catching risks early. McLaren’s FOOD 4U program partners with the Greater Lansing Food Bank to provide food bundles to members when they complete a mammogram during breast cancer screening events. McLaren staff members deliver the food, and engage members in health risk assessments, satisfaction surveys and other preventative outreach, boosting utilization of this important early-detection tool.

***Chronic Disease Management – Medicaid to Priority Health for “Medically Complex Children Project.”*** Major illnesses in children can require multi-faceted approaches to ensure the best outcomes, for the child and family. Facing serious issues, Priority helps coordinate a team of pediatricians, care managers, community health workers, nurses and specialists to provide assistance before, during and after the health care delivery. That may include food, housing, clothing, medication management and transportation. The teams plan ahead, anticipate needs between appointments and minimize unnecessary emergency department visits – creating a better experience for the child and his family and improving outcomes.

**Care Management for Medicare Populations – Medicare Advantage to Health Alliance Plan for “Cost-Effective Process to Improve Drug Adherence for Medicare 5-Star.”** The federal CMS 5 Star Program recognizes companies who achieve high levels of metrics measuring use of drugs managing diabetes. HAP focused on improving adherence to drug therapies with Targeted Medication Reviews (TMRs) in the Medication Therapy Management Program. To perform the TMRs, HAP moved from pharmacists to pharmacy analysts trained to recognize why members weren’t taking medications and how to address their concerns. The overall program worked, improving proper diabetes drug usage, saving money and decreasing hospitalization rates. The program saved more than \$1.2 million in 2014 and 2015 combined.

**Care Management for Medicare Populations – Special Needs to Molina Healthcare of Michigan for “Integrating Care for the Behavioral Health High-Risk Medicare Special Needs Population.”** Molina has long had a high percentage of members with behavioral health conditions and high service utilization for behavioral and physical health care. Under this program, a member with their third behavioral health hospital admission within a year are assigned to a social work case manager, who visits the member in the hospital or via phone while still hospitalized. The case manager identifies barriers, breaks down their social determinants and seeks solutions. Comparing member health care costs before and after the case manager intervention showed a 12 to 1 return on investment.

**Integration in Medicaid to Total Health Care for “Beating Depression with Primary Care.”** THC partnered with its behavioral health vendor, Beacon Health Options, to “virtually embed” behavioral health services in primary care physician offices, to increase depression screening and improve medication adherence for those with depression. Physicians have telephone access to behavioral health providers around the clock, giving patients access to behavioral health experts while in the physician’s office. THC’s Provider Relations office brought the physicians on board with webinars, lunch and learn sessions and tool kit with screening tools. Bottom line: Substantial improvement in key metrics and better treatment for members.

**Community Outreach – Single Plan to UnitedHealthcare for “What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick.”** Seeking to reduce unnecessary emergency room visits, UnitedHealthcare developed “What to Do When Your Child Gets Sick,” to help low-income families gain problem solving skills to manage common childhood illnesses. The program provides basic health information and learn how to use a basic, plain-English medical reference guide. Plan staff also provided hands-on instruction in basic medical procedures, such as taking temperatures and measuring medicine. The company trained 12 staff members at Head Start schools and 150 families throughout Wayne County. The program reduced emergency room visits by 23 percent for children aged 1-6, and parents said they would be less reliant on the emergency room in the future.

***Collaborative Community Health Initiatives to Molina Healthcare of Michigan for “Improving Population Health through Health Screening and Education.”*** Molina regularly works with community partners across the state to provide screening and wellness events for low-income individuals. As part of its response to the Flint water emergency, Molina launched a robust lead awareness and testing campaign, focused on raising awareness, providing education and testing for lead exposure and assist community members in scheduling physician appointments. The campaign included 19 lead awareness and testing events with more than 3,400 attendees, resulting in almost 1,500 adults and children receiving lead tests.

*The Michigan Association of Health Plans (MAHP) is an industry voice for 14 health care plans, covering over 2.5 million Michigan residents, and 50 businesses affiliated with the health care industry. MAHP facilitates communication among members, government, and the industry regarding health care issues of common concern. The mission of the Michigan Association of Health Plans is to provide leadership for the promotion and advocacy of high quality, affordable, accessible health care for the citizens of Michigan.*