IMPOWR

Empowering Community Care: Beyond Closed Loop Referrals

The intriguing concept of Closed Loop Referral often falls short when addressing the multifaceted needs of community-based partners (CBOs). Despite being hailed as a potential solution, especially within initiatives and requests for proposal (RFPs) aimed at managing Social Determinants of Health (SDoH), these systems fail to address the fundamental challenges faced by these organizations. Consequently, they may inadvertently exacerbate existing issues rather than effectively resolve them.

The Crucial Role of CBOs in Catering to Under Resourced Individuals

CBOs occupy a pivotal position in catering to individuals grappling with a multitude of health and social needs. These populations are often lacking consistent engagement with medical providers, so CBOs become their go-to for essential necessities such as shelter, sustenance, and transportation. Unfortunately, while these organizations amass crucial data and insights, the lack of accessibility hampers the effective planning and management of care services.

Unveiling the Untapped Potential in Data and Insights

The implementation of Closed Loop Referral systems aid in tracking and reporting, yet these singular systems overlook the invaluable insights held by CBOs. Rather than merely focusing on closing the referral loop, it's critical to empower these organizations with comprehensive tools that not only manage individuals but entire populations and communities efficiently. CBOs possess profound insights about individuals, providing a depth of understanding that traditional healthcare providers can only aspire to achieve.

Issues surrounding incomplete referrals, a concern highlighted within clinical settings by entities like CMS and the American Academy of Family Physicians, may be substantially amplified within the context of CBOs. In the absence of a robust communication infrastructure, overloading CBOs with diverse platforms for data input and referrals only exacerbates administrative burdens, stretching their already limited resources to the brink.

Specifically, CBOs grapple with the absence of essential electronic medical record (EMR) systems or centralized data management platforms necessary for streamlined operations. Neglecting these core operational requisites poses the risk of overwhelming these organizations with administrative tasks and inadequate structural support.

Shifting Focus from Simplistic Referral Systems to Empowering CBOs through Technology

So, if existing Closed Loop Referral systems aren't enough, what is? The simple answer is technology that helps organizations transcend the simplicity of SDoH referrals and concentrate on empowering CBOs with much more robust capabilities.

It has become ever more crucial to invest in advanced solutions that enable these community partners to be not just recipients of demands but active, connected, and financially engaged entities. Thanks to emerging technology platforms, this can now become a reality, allowing CBOs to effectively support the health and well-being of the individuals and communities they serve.