

## POPULATION HEALTH FORUMS

### Transforming Health Care in Pennsylvania: Preparing for the Future

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Turning the somewhat vague vision of a healthy Pennsylvania into a hardnosed reality is a major challenge, given that the state scores poorly in many indicators of health.

At a recent JSPH Forum, Michael J. Consuelos, MD, MBA, senior vice president at the Hospital and Health System Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) spoke on the challenges of preparing the current system of care to be more accountable for health outcomes. Dr. Consuelos is responsible for facilitating the work of HAP with its member hospital and health system leaders to promote innovative ways of improving health care delivery.

A pediatrician, Consuelos has an MD from the University of Pennsylvania and an executive MBA from the Pennsylvania State University Smeal College of Business.

He believes that health care in Pennsylvania is at a critical juncture, one in which greater collaboration between physicians and hospitals can create improved quality and drive community health efforts.

What HAP is doing to bring about that transformation, he said, is to focus on integration of care, community health and well-being, and population health metrics... all of which, he said, will result in a better experience for patients and consumers; healthier communities; lower annual growth in per capita spending and financial sustainability for providers to achieve these goals.

Dr. Consuelos outlined five strategic priorities for HAP that will help accomplish these goals:

- Serve as a catalyst for integrating care across the continuum, specifically by facilitating dialogue among providers and by removing barriers to coordination of care;
- Expand HAP's role as a convener of stakeholders within healthcare and particularly by encouraging them to understand consumer health needs;

- Engage the broader healthcare community in advocacy and in working to achieve better health;
- Become more consumer focused, in part by conducting consumer research and creating a consumer advisory council; and
- Champion hospital priorities related to strengthening health care financing and the operating environment. This means in part advocating for fair Medicaid and Medicare payments and increasing health coverage for low income or uninsured patients.

Among the enabling strategies for these, said Dr. Consuelos, is to strengthen HAP's technology platform and data analytic capacity and to develop a business model to sustain the Association's new vision.