Aligning Pay for Performance (P4P) with Evidence Based Practices (EBP) to Advance Clinical Outcomes
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Problem
In 1999, the IOM published the landmark study detailing the extent of errors in healthcare and resultant adverse events. Although healthcare providers understand EBP to improve quality, implementing strategies and allocating resources are challenging.

Evidence
The current healthcare system pays providers for services performed. CMS pays for reporting on compliance for process of care provided. This ‘Pay for Reporting’ methodology does not establish an expectation for improvement on evidence-based measures. P4P programs represent a shift in payment reform, incentivizing for improvement of quality and outcomes.

Strategy
The Highmark QualityBLUEsm Hospital P4P program is a unique program, aligning reimbursement dollars with a focus on improving measures for hospital efficiency, infection prevention, and process of care.

Practice Change
As a result of this program, hospitals develop multi-disciplinary teams, engage senior leadership, increase hospital awareness and healthcare personnel accountability, and provide ongoing education to improve compliance with EBP.

Evaluation
The P4P program indicators align with standardized national quality organization measures and assess compliance with EBP, ultimately reducing adverse events. Hospitals are required to improve the quality of care for clinical indicators with performance evaluation based upon achieving targeted goals.

Results
As a result of this program, hospitals successfully achieved defect free care for 95% of stroke patients, demonstrated rapid improvement in VTE prophylaxis compliance from 82.2% to 92.6%, and achieved a central line associated bloodstream infection rate significantly below the national rates.

Recommendations
To advance care quality, healthcare payers should develop a P4P program that establishes a relationship to achieve mutually shared goals. Strategies to engage the provider through clinical consultative on-site meetings and providing a platform for shared learning for all hospitals through a best-practice forum fosters a culture of quality for all.

Lessons Learned
Established payer-provider collaborations, actively engaging hospitals through ongoing communication and shared learning, creates a win-win strategy for all.