Background

The eCare Plan Hub arose from the recognition that social determinants of health (SDOH) play a vital role in health outcomes. Many community-based organizations (CBOs) partner with Community Health Centers (CHCs) work together to address social and medical needs of their communities, but follow-up and coordination is often conducted via emails and phone calls with tracking taking place manually at each organization. As such, this project created a shared care plan that facilitates a closed loop for enabling service referrals and improves the collection and analysis of SDOH in both electronic health records (EHRs) and other service provider information systems.

Objective

Leverage an existing partnership between a CHC and a CBO to demonstrate the feasibility and impact of a working comprehensive, multi-domain shared care plan.

Methods

AllianceChicago, a health-center controlled network, engaged a development team and CHC and CBO end users to document current workflows and communication mechanisms for referrals and care coordination. Through weekly meetings to understand the social needs and other data needed to ensure improved workflows in care coordination between medical and social services, a Fast Interoperable Healthcare Resources (FHIR)-enabled application was developed and tested.

Results

Through this pilot, a central web-based application has been created that,

- Allows the CBO to send referrals to the CHC
- Uses FHIR to send referrals from the CHC to the CBO from the Electronic Health Record (EHR) directly into the web-based application using the existing Service Referral workflows
- Allows management and tracking of referrals using the application to ensure appropriate follow-up and communication between the CBO and the CBO

Conclusion

This pilot has been successfully implemented and will be available on GitHub to be scaled and used by social service organizations and CHCs to impact social needs and medical services currently being provided via ad-hoc or disjointed care coordination mechanisms.