

The Success of Value-Based Care Depends on Expert Translators

By: Paul Campbell

State and Local Government Benefits Association (SALGBA) collaborated with the Bush School of Government & Public Service at Texas A&M University to conduct a “World Cafe” event at its 37th annual national conference in Ft. Worth, Texas. The purpose of the World Cafe was to bring together over 40 healthcare representatives from a cross section of private and public sector backgrounds to discuss implementing Value-Based Care (VBC) initiatives. The concept of a World Cafe workshop is to create an environment where participants can think freely and express their thoughts and opinions without the restrictions of judgment and opposition. Healthcare representatives that participated in the World Cafe discussed the key challenges and opportunities of VBC initiatives for their state and local employee health plans.

There was broad consensus that VBC is a critical strategy to improve healthcare quality and reduce costs. The group discussed a wide range of issues; the most prominent was that VBC initiatives will not advance quickly enough without buy-in from elected and appointed officials. There is a significant opportunity to build support among elected officials and move the needle with VBC.

The positive is that we already have “bright spots” that we can point to as evidence of success. Many participants of the World Cafe noted that in their state insurance programs where VBC was successfully implemented there were economic savings that provided additional money to pursue other healthcare incentive programs or this money was moved into a general savings fund, much like Texas’ Rainy-Day Fund. Leadership within state and local government employee health plans need to tell these stories and educate elected and appointed leaders to build broader support.

To advance VBC, the benefits leader must be an effective translator. They must develop tools and techniques to make sure they manage the dynamic tension and emotions created when sitting between these two opposing cultures. SALGBA can help lead by developing a set of recommendations supporting the critical success factors of VBC. These recommendations will demonstrate that SALGBA supports VBC initiative’s, help communicate the vision of value over volume and recognize the important role that elected and appointed officials play in the successful growth of VBC initiatives.