The Gulf South Quality Network, L.L.C. (GSQN) is a physician managed, physician operated, clinically integrated physician network that consists of physician members from multiple medical, surgical and primary care specialties. The GSQN’s physician membership is comprised of a select group of EJGH Medical Staff members who are either in independent practice or are employed by EJGH. All GSQN physician members have committed themselves to actively participating in ongoing efforts to maximize the value of healthcare services provided to their patients. These efforts include continuously working to improve quality of care, managing the escalation of healthcare costs, and using clinical information technologies to coordinate care. As a clinically integrated physician network, the GSQN will offer direct and measurable benefits to patients, providers, employers, health insurers and the communities within the Gulf South region.

Clinical integration, as a model of care, is gaining momentum throughout the country as an effective way to provide care. What is important to note is federal guidelines for clinical integration may have seemed confusing to the medical community, but that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has provided a consistent definition of what it considers an acceptable clinical integration agreement.

In its Antitrust Enforcement Policy in Healthcare, the FTC and the Department of Justice states that a qualified agreement is “an arrangement to provide physician services in which: 1. all physicians who participate in the arrangement participate in active and ongoing programs of the arrangement to evaluate and modify the practice patterns of, and create a high degree of interdependence and cooperation among, these physicians in order to control costs and ensure the quality of services provided through the arrangement; and 2. any agreement concerning price or other terms or conditions of dealing entered into by or within the arrangement is reasonably necessary to obtain significant efficiencies through the joint arrangement.”

Coordinating a patient's care is increasingly more important and more complex as patients are often times seeing multiple specialists as well as primary care physicians.

In a report issued by the American Hospital Association (AHA) in February 2010, AHA cited a Medicare study that found the average Medicare patient annually visited “two primary care physicians and five specialists.” Most of those physicians are all working in different offices. AHA believes that because of this need for overlapping care, the clinical integration model of sharing resources will be a key component of medicine that is practiced in the future. AHA also believes that with the growing adoption of electronic-based health records this coordination can be more easily attainable.

“Launching the Gulf South Quality Network is a significant step forward in advancing patient care and quality in our region,” says Jeffrey Griffin, M.D., practicing colorectal surgeon and Chairman of the GSQN’s Board of Managers. “This network will link the very best medical experts in our area, allowing them to work together to develop comprehensive solutions aimed at delivering the most effective treatments and protocols to our patients. It will also drive down healthcare costs for every stakeholder in the healthcare system. It’s a win for our member physicians, for East Jefferson General Hospital, and for the employers and insurers in our region. But most importantly, it’s a win for our patients.”

In describing the hospital’s collaborative relationship with the GSQN, Dr. Mark J. Peters, EJGH President and CEO states, “East Jefferson knows that the future of healthcare requires the highest level of care coordination by all members of the medical community. We are proud that over 200 physicians have already joined the GSQN, and we expect that number to continually grow. Through a sharing of resources, ideas and information, the newly established Gulf South Quality Network will allow East Jefferson General Hospital to deliver an even higher quality of care to our patients and our community.”
About The Gulf South Quality Network, L.C.C.

The GSQN is a clinically integrated physician network that is committed to maximizing the value of healthcare services provided to patients throughout the Gulf South region of the United States. All of the GSQN’s participating physician members are actively engaged in ongoing efforts to continuously improve the GSQN’s performance in regards to practicing and furthering the development of evidence-based medicine; providing appropriate preventative care, screening and disease management services; coordinating patient care across providers and care settings; delivering healthcare services in a way that addresses patients’ healthcare issues and their personal preferences; and embracing technology to enable optimal patient care.

The GSQN believes that creating value for healthcare consumers requires physicians to provide high quality healthcare services to patients in a cost-effective manner. The GSQN and EjGH expect that their collaborative Clinical Integration efforts will result in a multitude of benefits including:

PATIENTS
- Access to a high quality network of physicians
- Increased value for healthcare dollars spent
- Higher quality care
- More personalized care
- More coordinated care

PHYSICIANS
- Access to more detailed information on their practices’ patient population
- Access to a more holistic view of individual patients across practices and sites of care
- Access to infrastructure that supports value improvement
- Ability to monitor and improve performance on relevant quality measures
- Increased ability to identify and address gaps in care and provide patient outreach
- Access to a high quality referral network
- Potential financial rewards

HEALTH PLANS
- Access to a high quality network of physicians
- Increased value for healthcare dollars spent
- Savings from physician-led cost containment and utilization programs
- Higher subscriber satisfaction
- Increased compliance with HEDIS measures

HOSPITALS
- Ability to align physician and hospital quality and safety efforts
- Ability to address cost and utilization across episodes of care

COMMUNITY
- Improved community health
- Increased value-based competition
- Ability to recruit and retain physicians within the community

To learn more about the Gulf South Quality Network, L.L.C. or to become a physician Member, please visit www.GSQN.org

Jeffrey Griffin, M.D.
Gulf South Quality Network
Board of Managers Chairman

“It’s a win for our member physicians, for East Jefferson General Hospital, and for the employers and insurers in our region. But most importantly, it's a win for our patients.”

jeInforMD.com