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### **Stillwater Billings Clinic Recognized for Improvement in Patient Care**

Stillwater Billings Clinic was recently awarded the Montana Rural Healthcare Performance Improvement Network's Quality Improvement Award for its work on transitional care and discharge planning.

The Montana Rural Healthcare Performance Improvement Network (PIN) is a voluntary membership of 48 critical access hospitals throughout the state. Through this Network, member hospitals are able to benchmark their performance with their peers on a variety of financial, utilization and direct patient care measures that encourage safe, effective, patient-centered care delivery in even the most remote communities of the state. PIN quality of care measures are based on national benchmarks, but are tailored to reflect the realities of the state's rural population.

Stillwater Billings Clinic has demonstrated a commitment to its community and the region it serves through its involvement with the MT Rural Healthcare PIN. Throughout the last year, PIN members focused on four core improvement areas; patient satisfaction and engagement, transitions of care from the emergency room, emergency room stay times, assessment and provision of influenza immunizations for inpatients, and influenza immunizations for healthcare workers. Award winners are required to demonstrate measurable improvement in one of the previously mentioned quality of care focus areas over the previous year and show consistent participation in the PIN's data programs. Applicants are also required to demonstrate an active and leading role in supporting PIN quality improvement efforts by participating in PIN events and sharing with peers throughout the state.

The mission of the MT Rural Healthcare PIN is to develop and provide a collaborative support system which will enable small rural hospitals to have the ability to deliver quality care and achieve customer satisfaction. PIN activities are supported by the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) Program, which provides funding to spur quality and performance improvement activities, stabilize rural hospital finance and integrate emergency medical services (EMS) into existing health care systems. The program encourages the development of cooperative systems of care in rural areas to increase efficiencies.