

A Snapshot: Recent QIO Success Stories

Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) around the country serve as a field force to help providers in nursing homes, hospitals, home health agencies, and physician offices improve care for all patients. QIO assistance focuses on efforts to promote the spread of best practices and redesign systems of care to maximize patient safety. Some snapshots of success in 2004-2005:

Hospitals

- Working with the Iowa QIO, Iowa Foundation for Medical Care, Cass County Memorial Hospital increased its rate of patient pneumonia immunization from 26% in 2nd quarter 2003 to 100% in 3rd quarter 2004.
- From November 2003 to July 2004, Bryan LGH Medical Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, worked with CIMRO of Nebraska, the state's QIO, to reduce surgical infections by providing antibiotics within the recommended 60 minutes before surgery. The percentage of patients receiving timely antibiotics increased from 50% to 100%.
- Montgomery Regional Hospital in Blacksburg, Virginia, worked with its QIO, Virginia Health Quality Center, from January to July 2004 to improve rates of medication administration. For heart attack patients, Beta blockers at hospital arrival increased from 83% to 100%; aspirin at discharge increased from 92% to 100%; and ACE inhibitors at discharge increased from 81% to 100%.
- Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital worked with Qualis Health, the Washington QIO,

from October 2002 to June 2004 to reduce surgical infections in hip and knee surgery patients. Infections in hip surgery dropped from 3.64 to 0; knee surgery from 9.26 to 0.

Two hospitals in Mississippi *eliminated* ventilator-associated pneumonia, a potentially life-threatening complication for ICU patients, with the help of the state's QIO.

- Working with Information & Quality Healthcare from September 2004 to March 2005, Baptist Memorial Hospital-DeSoto in Southaven, Mississippi and Singing River Hospital System in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, *eliminated* ventilator-associated pneumonia, reducing mortality and extended stay costs for intensive care unit patients.

Nursing Homes

- In 2003 Horizon Health and Subacute Center in Fresno, California, began working intensively with Lumetra, California's QIO, to improve pain treatment for its residents. At the end of the project, 100% of new residents received consistent pain screening, up from 16% of residents in the pilot population.

- The Northeast Health Care Quality Foundation, the QIO for Maine, collaborated with the Maine Health Care Association and the Maine Survey and Certification Agency to work intensively on pain reduction in 85 nursing homes across the state. They achieved a 70% reduction in pain (scores) over a two year period.
- Working with Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality, the state's QIO, the United Methodist Retirement Community reduced pressure ulcers (bed sores) in high-risk residents from 9.4% in 3rd quarter 2003 to 3.9% in 1st quarter 2005.
- Cameron Continuous Care, a 60-bed rural facility in West Virginia, worked with the West Virginia Medical Institute to reduce the percentage of residents experiencing chronic pain by 50% (from 14% in 3rd quarter 2003 to 7% in 1st quarter 2005).

Home Health

- Realizing that its patients were being hospitalized at a rate higher than the national average, Texas Cardiac Care contacted TMF Health Quality Institute, the Texas QIO, for help. In the first two months of working with the QIO, Texas Cardiac Care's hospitalization rate improved by 60%.
- Trinity Regional Medical Center Home Health in Fort Dodge, Iowa, worked with the Iowa Foundation for Medical Care, the state's QIO, to improve performance on dyspnea (shortness of breath or difficult breathing). The center achieved statistically significant improvement of nearly 40% in January 2005.

Physician Office

- Working California's QIO, Lumetra, from February 2004 to February 2005, Pioneer Medical Group, a physician-owned and operated multi-specialty group in Southeast Los Angeles County, achieved an overall improvement of 89% in patients receiving annual A1C (blood sugar) testing among those diagnosed with diabetes.
- The Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality, the state's QIO, helped Cardiology Clinic of Muskogee improve preventive care for diabetic patients. Referral for diabetes self-management education rose from 10% to 90%; eye exams rose from 50% to 85%; and foot exams increased from 50% to 87%.
- To improve rates of patients receiving appropriate preventive services, Ali Mohammad Internal Medicine Practice in Clinton, Oklahoma, instituted a paper-based patient registry with the help of Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality, the state's QIO. After one year, eye exam rates increased from 67% to 89%; A1C (blood sugar) tests increased from 87% to 91%; lipid profiles increased from 90% to 95%; and mammograms increased from 63% to 85%.
- Gulf Coast Endocrinology in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, worked with its QIO, Information & Quality Healthcare, to improve diabetic patient outcomes. Lipid profiles increased to 92%; A1C testing increased to 98%; and blood pressure was monitored in 100% of patients.

The American Health Quality Association is dedicated to improving the safety and effectiveness of health care. AHQA represents the national network of Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) that work with hospitals, medical practices, health plans, long-term care facilities, home health agencies, and employers to encourage the spread of best clinical practices and improve systems of care delivery.