

QIO Success Stories: Physician Office Care

QIOs offer assistance to help physician practices increase regular screening for breast cancer and improve care for diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries. QIOs also promote preventive influenza and pneumococcal (PPV) immunizations in doctor's offices and clinics.

California

Brown and Toland, a large California medical group, increased its rate of blood sugar testing for senior diabetics from 50% to 90% while working with Lumetra, the California QIO. The medical group established a Diabetes Advisory Committee to examine data, recommend interventions, and analyze the program's effectiveness. It also created a tool that allows each physician to collect, customize and report patient data.

Hawaii

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health Foundation, the QIO for Hawaii, worked with a team of more than 10 local health care organizations during 1999-2001 to improve immunization rates for pneumococcal vaccine. Collectively, the team cut the number of seniors lacking immunization by 40%—twice the rate of improvement seen on a national level during that time period. Efforts included a television ad campaign; activities to improve immunization access, especially in rural areas; a direct mail campaign to pharmacies and physicians throughout the state; bus posters; presentations to native Hawaiian organizations and parish nurses, and other public awareness activities.

Iowa

The Iowa Health System, which serves 58,000 patients, worked with the Iowa QIO, Iowa Foundation for Medical Care (IFMC), to lower hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) to near normal levels for their patients with diabetes. The system adopted a standardized curricu-

lum for patients with type 2 diabetes; adopted uniform standards of care based on national quality standards; provided staff training in patient education, data collection, chart abstraction, data entry and behavior education; introduced the use of reminder calls to patients for return appointments; and used IFMC quality improvement tools.

New York

IPRO, the New York QIO developed a comprehensive contact management system that helped more than 5000 high-volume Medicare physicians improve their immunization practices. The system manages physician performance profiles and intervention material distribution and tracks outreach activities.

North Dakota

In 2000-2002, North Dakota Health Care Review, the North Dakota QIO, supplied software, training, guidance, and support to help all Northland Healthcare (an alliance of 15 mostly rural North Dakota facilities) establish diabetes registries. Data from eight Northland clinics, serving approximately 1250 diabetics, showed the percent of patients receiving blood sugar tests increased from 74% to 91% and the percent receiving lipid tests increased from 31% to 85%.

The American Health Quality Association represents the national network of Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) that work to encourage the spread of best clinical practices and improve systems of care delivery.