

Quick Facts about QIOs

- ***QIOs promote patient safety and the adoption of best clinical practices.*** A national network of 40 QIOs works under contract to Medicare to improve care in hospitals, nursing homes, physician practices, and home health care in all 50 states and U.S. territories.
- ***QIOs provide services to help individual Medicare beneficiaries get the right care.*** QIOs handle beneficiary appeals related to denial of health care services and respond to beneficiary complaints about unsatisfactory quality of care or access to emergency room care.
- ***QIOs help hospitals make surgery safer and improve care for major illnesses.*** In the past three years, QIOs helped hospitals improve on nine out of 10 major quality measures and improve adoption of clinical practices to reduce surgical infections. During the 2005-2008 contract cycle, QIOs will work intensively with 15-30% of all hospitals on a broadened effort to reduce surgical complications, including the prevention of post-operative pneumonia and surgery-related adverse cardiac events—with the goal of reducing surgical complications by 25%. QIOs will also help 450 hospitals cut errors rates in care for heart attack, pneumonia, and heart failure by 50%.
- ***QIOs are leaders in statewide patient safety and public health initiatives.*** QIOs work closely with consumer groups, employers, state and local governments, patient safety organizations, and public health authorities—as well as with hospital and medical associations—to conduct public education about quality of care, to promote preventive care, to implement programs to improve patient safety, and to reduce disparities in quality of care for underserved populations.
- ***QIOs facilitate public reporting on quality of hospital care.*** Since 2002, QIOs have provided expertise on quality measurement and public reporting to almost 4,000 hospitals nationwide. Over the next three years, QIOs will assist 1,000 hospitals to publicly report quality performance on an expanded set of 22 quality measures for heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, and surgical infection prevention.
- ***QIOs are helping wire America for better care.*** QIOs will help primary care physicians over the next three years use health information technology (HIT) systems to improve chronic and preventive care and reduce disparities in delivery of care.
- ***QIOs are improving nursing home and home health care.*** QIOs worked with more than 2,700 nursing homes since 2002 as part of Medicare's Nursing Home Quality Initiative. Nursing homes that worked intensively with QIOs showed far greater improvement reducing resident pain, reducing the use of physical restraints, and treatment of pressure ulcers. QIOs also provided training in quality improvement to more than 75% of all home health agencies. In 2005-2008, QIOs will seek to cut in half preventable hospitalizations of patients in at least 1,400 agencies.