

Improvements in Nursing Home Care

QIOs are a key part of the federal Nursing Home Quality Initiative launched by CMS in 2002. The initiative combines public reporting on quality of care by all Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing homes with QIO technical assistance to nursing homes. Working closely with QIOs, many nursing homes have achieved significantly greater improvement than the rest of the industry in key clinical areas, despite starting with more significant problems.

Arizona

Working with the Arizona QIO, Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG), the 115 bed Santa Rita Care Center, an urban, for-profit, nursing home cut the percentage of patients experiencing chronic pain from 12% down to 2% in 2002-2003.

California

Horizon Health and Subacute Center, in Fresno CA, worked intensively with California's QIO, Lumetra, on improving treatment for pain in 2003. Where 62.5% of residents received timely treatment for moderate or severe pain before the collaborative, more than 95% were consistently treated for pain in a timely manner after working with the QIO. Resident satisfaction scores rose from 13% in the beginning of the collaborative to 100% at the end of project.

Colorado

A number of nursing homes working with the Colorado Foundation for Medical Care are recognized as models of improvement in pain management. Some examples: Mount St. Francis home cut the number of residents reporting chronic pain by 63%; Garden of the Gods care center cut the percentage of residents experiencing chronic pain to 7%; Doak Walker Care Center, in Steamboat Springs, cut the number of residents reporting pain from 36% to 7%. Clear Creek Care Center in Westminster cut by 50% the number of residents experiencing moderate to severe daily pain.

Connecticut

Working intensively with Qualidigm, the Connecticut QIO, Branford Hills Healthcare Center reduced use of physical restraints by 50% over a period of five months in 2002-2003.

Florida

All Saints Catholic Nursing Home & Rehabilitation Center in Jacksonville worked with FMAQI, the state QIO, to practically eliminate the incidence of new, avoidable, facility acquired pressure ulcers during 2004.

Idaho

Qualis Health, the QIO for Idaho, held educational workshops and provided evidence-based tools for improving care; among 59 nursing homes across the state, the percentage of long-term residents reporting moderate to severe pain fell from 18% in spring 2002 to 8% in spring 2004.

Kansas

The percentage of residents suffering chronic pain at The Cedars' nursing home dropped from 20% to 2% after participating in a year-long quality improvement project with the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, the Kansas QIO.

Minnesota

A group of 68 nursing homes in Minnesota demonstrated more than 45% relative improvement in chronic pain management and

almost 20% relative improvement in post-acute care pain management after working with Stratis Health, the Minnesota QIO.

Rhode Island

Working with Quality Partners of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island QIO, Cedar Crest Centre in Cranston developed better ways to target and ensure that at-risk patients had mattresses and wheelchairs with special pressure-relieving cushions, reducing pressure ulcer rates over nine months from 11.8% to 5.0%.

South Carolina

The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence, the South Carolina QIO, led projects in 2003 and early 2004 that resulted in a nearly 20% relative improvement in post acute pain management and 17% relative improvement in chronic pain as well as a reduction in self-reported data for pressure ulcers. Forty-three nursing homes took part in the effort to reduce pain and 70 nursing homes participated in the project to reduce pressure ulcers.

Texas

Working with the TMF Health Quality Institute, the Texas QIO, Windsor Place home implemented new care guidelines that required staff to screen all new residents for the risk of pressure ulcers and monitor those patients carefully to help prevent ulcers from occurring. Facility-acquired pressure ulcers were reduced from 9% to 3.2% in six months; during the last six months of the project, no new pressure ulcers were acquired.

Washington

Pinewood Terrace Nursing Center in Colville, WA, substantially improved pain management, reducing chronic pain by 87% and post-acute pain 88% while participating in an intensive 18-month collaboration with Seattle-based QIO Qualis Health.

QIO-to-QIO Collaboration

Some of the nation's largest nursing home companies participated in a two-year project jointly led by two QIOs: Quality Partners of Rhode Island and the Colorado Foundation for Medical Care. The study involved 163 nursing homes across the country with total resident population of more than 19,000 and resulted in greater than 45% improvement in pain management. Companies participating included Beverly Health Care, Genesis Health Care, HCR Manor Care, Kindred Healthcare, Mariner Health Care, Sovereign Health Care, SunBridge Healthcare, Inc., and Trans Healthcare, Inc.

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. Visit www.abqa.org.