



Quality Institute Newsletter

A bi-weekly look at the Business & Politics of
Health Care in New Jersey



JANUARY 31, 2019

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SchwimmerScript

A PRESCRIPTION FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE IN NEW JERSEY

Share Your Real-World Case Studies of Improving Quality

I urge anyone committed to improving health care quality to read this [case study](#) from Texas Children's Hospital's Pavilion for Women, which outlines how the organization reduced the use of episiotomies by more than 60 percent in five years. Today, these surgical incisions — which increase complications and maternal deaths — are used in just 3.4 percent of births at the Houston hospital.

The case study, provided by The Leapfrog Group, shows the power of transparency to advance best practices, and also demonstrates how sharing comparative data with clinicians drives real change. Clinicians who clearly see how they stack up against their colleagues are motivated to improve.

To me, the Texas case also shows that when leaders of a health care organization prioritize a clinical area

or measure the improvements can be real and lasting. We saw that on Tuesday at our [Leapfrog Quality Breakfast](#), where New Jersey hospital leaders showed how they are driving quality improvements at their institutions.

At our breakfast, over scrambled eggs and coffee, we heard from nearly 70 quality leaders working at the 12 New Jersey hospitals designated as [Top Hospitals by Leapfrog](#). The leaders shared their hard work to drive down C. Diff and surgical site infections, reduce Cesarean sections, strengthen antibiotic stewardship, and more.

Every quality leader spoke about the need for continual monitoring of the data and frequent collaboration. Hospitals need to educate their own staff as well as community providers, several said. I heard about the challenges but also learned about impressive successes — and was reminded that behind every improved metric is a better outcome for a real patient.

At the heart of quality improvement is transparency, and I am also proud that in New Jersey now all but one hospital (Memorial Hospital of Salem County) participates in the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, our best showing ever.

I believe that our members working to improve quality have much to share with a wider audience. That's why I'm issuing an "open call" to our members: let us help you share your quality improvements in a future Leapfrog case study. The work would need to focus on efforts to meet a current measure on the Leapfrog survey or safety grade.

We can help you create a Leapfrog Case Study so others can learn from — and be inspired by — your achievements in quality.



The Quality Institute's Quality Breakfast from January 29th, 2019.



Take Five with Shantanu Agrawal, MD

Shantanu Agrawal, MD, is President and CEO of the National Quality Forum (NQF). Dr. Agrawal, a board-certified emergency medicine physician, is the former director for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Center for Program Integrity. He spoke with us about how NQF is advancing quality and patient safety.

The National Quality Forum brings together diverse experts — from purchasers to providers — to address the most pressing issues in health care safety and quality. What is the value of having those differing perspectives?

We strive every day to make sure that we are genuinely multi-stakeholder. And so, for us, that means making sure that all of our work — whether it's measurement work, or quality improvement work, or work in social determinants of health — that all of that work is informed by expert input from every major stakeholder group in the health care ecosystem. So, that definitely includes payers, providers, hospitals, clinicians, and also — very



importantly — consumers, patients, and purchasers. This has been at the core of NQF literally since we were founded. I think that's one of the reasons people trust NQF.

After you determine how quality issues should be measured, what are the next steps to make sure you have impact?

We try to show where there are good measures already in place, and our endorsement helps to identify the most scientifically valid, the most useful, and most supported measures set by the stakeholders that we were just talking about. Recently, we have started to connect our measurement work to quality improvement activities, which I think is really critical so that we are not only establishing the right measures; but we are also supporting delivery systems and helping patients get the care that everyone wants and needs. It's a new area for us, and one that I think holds a lot of promise.

And beyond measurement, we try to identify areas that really need improvement in the quality ecosystem overall. So, years ago, for example, we got very involved in risk adjustment for various types of clinical risk in measurement and in other areas. Now, we have really started to work on social risk, on the social determinants of health. And that's an area where we have definitely prioritized as a strategic goal.

Can you tell us what the National Quality Forum is doing in the area of opioid use and abuse?

So, we are trying to bring every major capability that we have to the opioid issue. Measurement in the opioid space, or the substance use space, generally is really lacking. And we have been talking to a number of stakeholders about how to get the right measures put into the field. We have worked with CMS and also provided technical assistance to Capitol Hill on a [bill](#) that ultimately included a provision to identify gaps and promote measure development to drastically increase the number of measures in the opioid space. And we'll be launching an opioid technical expert panel later this year to help identify the priority gaps in measurement. Addressing the opioid crisis was an NQF priority last year and we

produced, through a multi-stakeholder approach, an [opioid stewardship playbook](#) that delivery systems can use to better manage their opioid prescribing and utilization.

Linda Schwimmer, President and CEO of the Quality Institute, serves as chair of NQF's Consensus Standards Approval Committee (CSAC), representing the purchaser/consumer voice. How do organizations such as the Quality Institute make an impact in your organization?

The purchaser and consumer voice has been critical to us from the very beginning and is one of the foundational reasons NQF was created. We've never lost sight of that as we've evolved as an organization. Consumers and patients sit on all of our committees. CSAC has a special role in our process. It helps to ensure that individual endorsement committees are being consistent with each other as they make their endorsement recommendations. We have a chair, vice-chair model that oscillates between a consumer or purchaser organization and another kind of stakeholder organization. Linda has been absolutely great in that role and really pulls people into the conversation. She's gone from vice-chair to chair, which also means that she'll hold a seat on the NQF board, which I think is really exciting. Consumers and purchasers are not just at the table but also serve in leadership positions.

You are nearly 20 years old as an organization. How do you envision NQF's role in the next 20 years?

I think we need to do a better job in quality. Measurement is not an end onto itself. We certainly recognize that. We have to do a better job as a community of connecting measurement to population health approaches so that we are actually producing the change that we want to see. And so, one of the things that we're doing this year, partly to mark our 20th anniversary, but also, frankly, because there are a number of challenges that I think we need to talk through, is that we're launching a task force to help address exactly this type of question. That'll be comprised of quality leaders and will help to create the future vision for the overall quality enterprise, which I think will be really compelling and help take us into the next 20 years.

Upcoming Quality Institute Events

Join us for an **upcoming CE accredited webinar** in the GPTN Webinar Series: "[Using a Social Service Referral Tool to Help Patients](#)" on **Thursday, February 21**, with Adrian Diogo of the Quality Institute and Megan Sheppard of the Cumberland County Health Department. Open to the public.

[Register today](#) for the [5th Annual Innovation Showcase](#) hosted by NJII and the Quality Institute on **Thursday, March 21**, at the NJIT Wellness and Events Center in Newark. We will open this year's conference with remarks from Shereef Elnahal, New Jersey Commissioner of Health, and hear from our keynote speaker, Former Utah Governor Mike Leavitt, about using data to drive value innovation. Stay through the afternoon for breakout sessions focused on Government, Innovation, and Value. Participation in this conference is free of charge, open to the public, and a complimentary light breakfast will be served.

New Member

[University Hospital](#) is one of the nation's leading academic medical centers, and is the Level 1 Trauma Center for Northern New Jersey. Located at University Heights in Newark, University Hospital is a principal teaching hospital of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and a regional resource for advanced services across many medical specialties.



Medicaid

This [recently published article](#) from the **Camden Coalition** illustrates the impact and importance of having primary care accessible and utilized within communities. Through their 7-day Pledge Program, the Camden Coalition partnered with primary care providers throughout the city to ensure that patients who are discharged from the hospital have a primary care visit in the community within a week. When the patients in this program received follow up primary care, there was a statistically significant reduction in avoidable hospital admissions at both the 30-day and 90-day mark post-hospital discharge.

This program and the focus of the Camden Coalition is to deliver care to the most vulnerable populations in Camden, including those who have Medicaid insurance, or who are uninsured or underinsured. The 7-day Pledge Program shows that hospitals, primary care providers, and community leaders can work together to improve health. Learn more about this program [here](#).

If you have questions, please contact Matt D’Oria at mdoria@njhcqi.org or Kate Shamszad at kshamszad@njhcqi.org.

The Quality Institute’s Medicaid work is funded by [The Nicholson Foundation](#).



Mayors Wellness Campaign

Quality Institute Members: Begin the new year with community health at the top of mind by working with your local mayor to design your town’s 2019 Mayors Wellness Campaign. View our [video](#) on how to start your campaign and access our [toolkit](#) for ideas to implement a campaign in your community. Now is the perfect time to think about how your work impacts community health and what resources can be offered to make your community a better place to live, work, and play for all.

Mayors: We encourage you to share with us your community’s recent Mayors Wellness Campaign events and news for the chance to be highlighted in an upcoming Quality Institute and/or Mayors Wellness Campaign quarterly newsletter.

The Mayors Wellness Campaign is a statewide community health initiative that provides mayors and their team with free to low-cost evidence-based tools and resources to implement health and wellness programming in their communities. To learn more, contact Adrian Diogo at adiogo@njhcqi.org.



Quality Corner



Congratulations New Jersey for achieving the highest hospital participation ever in the Leapfrog Group Hospital Survey! The Quality Institute applauds **St. Luke’s Warren Hospital, East Orange General Hospital, and Hudson Regional Hospital** for participating in the hospital survey for the first time, showing their dedication to quality transparency. For the 2018 Survey, all but one hospital in New Jersey, **Memorial Hospital of Salem County**, participated. A big thank you to New Jersey Hospitals for making transparency on safety a priority.

If you're interested in learning more about the proposed changes to the upcoming 2019 Leapfrog Hospital Survey, including information on the addition of a section focused on the quality and safety of outpatient procedures, click [here](#). Final changes to the 2019 Survey will be posted prior to April 1, 2019.

To learn more, contact Adelisa Perez at aperez@njhcqi.org.

Calendar & Industry Events

3.24.2019 | [National Quality Forum's 20th Annual Conference](#). Linda Schwimmer, the Quality Institute's President & CEO and Chair of the National Quality Forum's (NQF) Consensus Standards Approval Committee (CSAC), will be among the speakers at the NQF Annual conference. The Quality Institute encourages all health care leaders to attend to learn about the latest opportunities to improve quality for their communities and patients. [Learn more and register now](#).

5.21.2019 | Quality Institute Annual All Council Conference. Save the date for the Quality Institute's Annual All Council Conference at 2 pm. More details to follow; members and invited guests only.

Shout Outs

The Nicholson Foundation funded a cutting-edge digital media campaign that made a real difference in lowering the consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks in some vulnerable communities. The Nicholson Foundation funded **The Public Good Projects** to create and implement NJ Sugarfreed. The full evaluation report can be downloaded [here](#).

Kudos to St Peter's Healthcare System for offering select patients on-demand and pre-scheduled transportation for non-emergent medical appointments to and from their facilities. The Quality Institute **applauds** St. Peter's efforts to expand patients' access to care through eliminating transportation as a barrier. Read full article [here](#).

The Quality Institute is very proud of our many members that have stepped up to help those federal employees, and their families, that were affected by the recent government shutdown through waiving deductibles and co-pays for those that needed medical care.

Congratulations to **Cooper University** for being the first in the nation to provide advanced surgical trauma training to the U.S. Army's elite Forward Resuscitation Surgical Team (FRST) via a collaborative agreement with the United States Army. Read more [here!](#)

Fantastic job **Carrier Clinic and Hackensack Meridian Health** — these Quality Institute members just announced plans to open the first urgent care center in New Jersey with on-site behavioral health services and also plan to open new addiction treatment centers across the state. Read more [here.](#)

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- Mayors Wellness Campaign
- QI Collaborative
- The Leapfrog Group



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