



Quality Institute Newsletter

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



OCTOBER 25, 2018

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SchwimmerScript

A PRESCRIPTION FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE IN NEW JERSEY

Quality Reporting Moves Beyond Hospital Walls

Surgeries today are increasingly performed in hospital outpatient centers and ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs), yet there is practically no independent, consumer-friendly data about the safety and quality of care in these settings. The lack of accessible data comes as many purchasers guide patients to lower-priced settings, and often design benefits to steer appropriate patients to ASCs.

Since 2011, the Quality Institute has worked to increase transparency around ASCs in New Jersey. Our initial work led the state Department of Health to post certain inspection reports online, and, earlier this year, a law was passed to license one-room surgical practices in the same manner as ASCs — a move we've long called for to protect consumers.

Last year, with the insight of Quality Institute member ASCs and other interested members, we revisited the issue of transparency of ASC quality and safety information. We found that more state inspection information is now available. Yet to obtain much of that information we still needed to file an Open Public Records Act request. And federal inspection data was not available at all if a private accreditation organization conducted the inspection, which is often the case.

Most important, the inspection reports are not a consumer-friendly source of actionable information to help people make informed decisions about where to receive care. Inspection information is full of medical jargon and ordinary course inspections are conducted only about every four years. The information is not timely, or easily understandable, to have much value for consumers.

That's why at the Quality Institute we fully support The Leapfrog Group's [expansion of its safety survey](#) outside the hospital walls. For the first time, Leapfrog will begin to collect safety data on ASCs through a voluntary survey starting in April 2019, and hospital outpatient surgery departments will report similar data through a new section to the existing Leapfrog Hospital Survey.

Leapfrog is the right organization to take on this extensive and greatly needed work. The organization has experience gathering information about quality and safety of inpatient care for nearly 20 years and knows how to present that information in a way that's meaningful to consumers.

In New Jersey, our hospitals have stepped up and embraced transparency. We have 94 percent of hospitals voluntarily submitting data to Leapfrog, the highest participation rate of any state in the nation (except Montana, which has all two of its hospitals report). As the regional leader for Leapfrog, the Quality Institute works closely with hospitals on the inpatient survey. We've seen how hospitals use the survey to proactively strengthen and compete on quality and safety.

We're eager to see those same changes in the outpatient arena. Please share the news of the new survey with outpatient centers and encourage them to participate in the survey. Please also consider attending a half-day training with Leapfrog on November 6 in Chicago. Participants will gain in-depth knowledge of Leapfrog's Hospital Survey and Hospital Safety Grade programs, as well as the new ASC Survey. Learn more and register here. Soon, I hope to be able to say New Jersey has the highest rate of participation in the nation on the ASC survey.



Take Five with Missy Danforth

Missy Danforth is the Vice President of Health Care Ratings at The Leapfrog Group. She's a member of the

senior leadership team analyzing programs to drive safety and quality improvements.

Since 2001, Leapfrog has rated the safety and quality of inpatient hospital care for almost 2,000 hospitals across the county. Why is Leapfrog now planning to evaluate hospital outpatient and ambulatory surgical centers?

As more and more surgery moves to the outpatient setting — hospital outpatient departments and ambulatory surgical centers — we want to provide patients and payers with nationally standardized, evidence-based information about the safety and quality of these outpatient and ambulatory settings and procedures. We'll start collecting this information on April 1, 2019. Hospitals will be able to report on outpatient procedures on a new section of the Leapfrog Hospital Survey and ASCs will respond to a new ASC Survey.



Is there any reporting now that consumers can use to learn about safety and quality of procedures at hospital outpatient departments or ambulatory surgery centers?

Unfortunately, there's very little. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) collects and publicly reports very little information about ASCs or hospital outpatient departments that can be used by patients or payers. CMS is currently only collecting about a dozen measures from ASCs, and the way those results are made available does not allow patients to search for a specific facility or to compare facilities. We think it's important for consumers not just to compare ambulatory surgery centers to other ambulatory surgery centers, but also to be able to compare different settings, such as hospital outpatient departments where the same procedures are being performed. Right now, if you needed a routine colonoscopy, you could have that procedure in a hospital outpatient department or an ambulatory surgery center. If you wanted to compare facilities that perform the procedure it would be virtually impossible.

Is there any reason to believe that ambulatory surgical centers are more or less safe than surgery in hospitals?

That's a good question. We know they are less costly. We really don't know if they are safer, as safe, or

less safe. The data we collect through our two new initiatives will provide some answers to that question.

What has been the reaction among ASCs and others in the health care industry about this initiative?

In the past two years, in talking with hospitals and ASCs, they do seem eager to be able to make quality and safety information available to the public. Many are already working with health plans and employers that are looking to move into value-based purchasing and they need quality data to use along with their cost data. These healthcare leaders know that in order to truly help employers and other payers contract for care based on value all this information is essential.

What measures will be included in the new Outpatient Surgery section of the Leapfrog Hospital Survey and new Ambulatory Surgery Center Survey?

We'll be looking at five different areas: basic facility information; medical and nursing staff; volumes of procedures and outcomes, when available; patient safety practices, such as hand hygiene and the culture of safety, similar to what we have on our inpatient survey; and we'll be asking some questions about patient access and experience. In the first year, we are planning to publish a national report based on the surveys we received. We plan to publish facility-specific ratings in 2020.

How can the Quality Institute and our members advance this survey?

Start a conversation with hospital leaders and ambulatory surgical center leaders. We are looking for ambulatory centers and hospitals to volunteer to pilot the new survey content. We also need a strong commitment from purchasers and payers to use this information in public reporting, network design, and contracting. We expect to highlight differences in safety and quality between participating facilities, and until we tie payment to some of these differences it will be difficult to see the improvements in patient care that we all strive for.

Upcoming Quality Institute Events

Today, October 25, 9:30 – 11:00 AM : Quality Institute Northern Regional Membership Engagement Event hosted by Atlantic Health System at Morristown Medical Center. *For more information about*

membership, please contact Virginia Tesser at vtesser@njhcqi.org.

November 13 – November 15: At this year’s New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City, the Quality Institute’s Mayors Wellness Campaign will be at **booth #105**, where **New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Shereef Elnahal** will stop by on **Wednesday, Nov 15, at 10 am for a Shout Out & Photo Op with Mayors**. We will also be hosting the panel “Bringing Wellness to Your Community with the Mayors Wellness Campaign” on **Nov. 13 at 2pm in room 307**. *To learn more, please contact Adrian Diogo at adiogo@njhcqi.org.*

New Member

Please welcome our newest member [GlaxoSmithKline](#) (GSK). As one of the world’s leading research-based pharmaceutical and health care companies, GSK is committed to improving the quality of human life by enabling people to do more, feel better, and live longer.



Medicaid

At the most recent Medical Assistance Advisory Council, the state presented an interactive [Medicaid Data Dashboard](#), which allows users to explore several important Medicaid data points, including eligibility and health plan enrollment by client type and county, long-term care utilization by program and county, and member satisfaction with their health plan. We support the state’s plan to further expand the dashboard to include data sets on the utilization and cost of Medicaid services in the near future. We encourage our members to visit the dashboard and provide the state with feedback on which data points are most valuable to their own work.

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

Scotch Plains hosted its annual Health and Wellness Fair on October 13, following The Rose Checchio Walk to Wipe Out Breast Cancer. The fair featured health screenings, flu shots, a bike helmet raffle, and a car seat inspection. Learn more about how mayors engage their communities by visiting the [MWC toolkit](#), which houses over 30 unique resources to support mayors' work in keeping their communities healthy.



Have questions about MWC? Contact Adrian Diogo at adiogo@njhcqi.org.

Quality Institute in the News

Our October 11 [Schwimmer Script](#), focusing on the Health Care Cost Institute's exclusive analysis of New Jersey's health care costs, continues to generate interest and press coverage throughout the state. If you have any press related inquiries, please reach out to Carol Ann Campbell at C: 973-567-1901 | E: cacampbell@njhcqi.org.

10.17.2018 | NJ 101.5 / [This Is How Much Health Care Costs Have Increased In NJ](#)

10.15.2018 | NJ Spotlight / [Health Care Costs Continue to Rise in NJ, Outpacing National Increase](#)

10.12.2018 | NJ.com / [The Price of Health Care Really is More Expensive in N.J. Here's the Proof](#)

10.11.2018 | NJ Biz / [New Study Shows Health Care Spending Up 18% in NJ](#)

10.11.2018 | ROI-NJ / [Health Care Costs in N.J. Rising Even Faster Than Nationwide Numbers](#)

Industry Events

11.08.2018 | [68th Annual Roy A. Bowers Pharmaceutical Conference](#). Linda Schwimmer, the Quality Institute President & CEO, will moderate the “Government Programs: Priorities, Legislative Impact and Other Areas of Focus Transitioning to Value-Based Care” panel from 4:10-5:10PM at the 68th Bowers Conference.

Shout Outs

Congrats to Quality Institute member, Bayer, for naming Scott Partridge as their new U.S. general counsel. [Read announcement here.](#)

Cheers to CarePoint Health – Medical Center Hoboken University Medical Center, which hosted a “Drink Some Pink” breast health happy hour earlier this month as a part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Partnering with the Athleta Store, the happy hour featured pink champagne, a Q&A with OB/GYN physicians associated with HUMC, and information on breast health and breast exams. [Read full article.](#)

Congratulations to Quality Institute member Aetna for the grand opening of their Aetna Better Health of New Jersey Healthcare and Resource Center, otherwise known as, Healthcare Central. Located in Newark, **the grand opening will take place on Tuesday, November 13 at 11am.**

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Health Care Policy 360
Health Matters Poll
Mayors Wellness Campaign
Medicaid 2.0
QI Collaborative
The Leapfrog Group



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