

# Quality Improvement Organization Priorities Going Forward



## Alliant | GMCF... Working with You to Make Health Care Better.

### Leading rapid, large-scale change in health quality

In August 2011, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services gave the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Program an updated charter for leading change.

Here are some of the highlights with this new effort:

- **Goals are bolder.** Providers that work with their QIO will contribute to improved cardiac health, 20% fewer avoidable hospital readmissions, and a 40% national reduction in health care-acquired conditions.
- **The patient is at the center.** By including the voice of the beneficiary in all their activities, QIOs are leading the way to patient-centered care.
- **All are welcome.** QIOs are breaking down organizational, cultural and geographic barriers. Initiatives are open to providers at all levels of clinical performance that make a commitment to improvement.
- **Everyone teaches and learns.** Through Learning and Action networks, QIOs are accelerating the pace of change and rapidly spreading best practices.
- **Greater value is fostered.** QIOs will support CMS' new value-based purchasing programs with technical assistance to providers that includes sharing best practices, assisting with data analysis and conducting improvement activities.

### A major force and trustworthy partner for improvement

From August 2011 through July 2014, health care providers and other quality stakeholders who participate in QIO initiatives can:

- **Deliver Beneficiary and Family Centered Care.** QIO Program improvement initiatives result in safer, more effective patient care, lead to better health for popula-

tions and communities, and drive lower health care costs through improvement. QIOs also fulfill CMS' obligation to protect the rights of Medicare beneficiaries by reviewing complaints about quality and appeals about the denial or discontinuation of health care services.

- **Improve Individual Patient Care.** QIO patient safety initiatives in hospitals will reduce central line bloodstream infections by implementing the Comprehensive Unit-Based Safety Program (CUSP), then expand to encompass catheter-associated urinary tract infections, Clostridium difficile and surgical site infections. All Medicare-participating hospitals also will receive QIO technical assistance with reporting inpatient and outpatient quality data to CMS.

In nursing homes, work initially targets pressure ulcers and physical restraints, then evolves to address other health care-acquired conditions, such as falls and catheter-associated urinary tract infections.

In communities, reducing Adverse Drug Events (ADEs) will improve health outcomes. Alliant | GMCF will partner with physician practices and health care organizations to monitor and educate high-risk patients.

- **Integrate Care for Populations and Communities.** QIOs are bringing together hospitals, nursing homes, patient advocacy organizations and other stakeholders in community coalitions. Goals are to build capacity for improving care transitions and to support the coalition's success in obtaining grant funding through Section 3026 of the Affordable Care Act.
- **Improve Health for Populations and Communities.** QIOs are assisting physician practices that want to use their electronic health record system to coordinate preventive services and report related quality measures to CMS. Practices also can participate in a learning network focused on reducing patient risk factors for cardiac disease. QIOs will partner with their local Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center (REC) to promote health IT integration into clinical practice.



# Partners in Improving the Quality of Health Care Across All Settings

The Department of Health and Human Services has established a national strategy for quality improvement in health care. These six priorities have great potential for rapidly improving health outcomes and increasing the effectiveness of care for all populations. They include:

1. Making care safer by reducing harm in the delivery of care.
2. Ensuring that each person and family are engaged as partners in their care.
3. Promoting effective communication and coordination of care.
4. Promoting the best possible prevention and treatment of the leading causes of mortality, starting with cardiovascular disease.
5. Working with communities to promote wide use of best practices to enable healthy living.
6. Making care more affordable for individuals, families, employers and governments by reducing the costs of care through continual improvement.



## WE ARE ALLIANT | GMCF: MAKING HEALTH CARE BETTER

As the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Georgia, Alliant | GMCF works to develop and implement evidence-based improvement projects to meet national health care goals on behalf of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and to continually improve the quality of care. Alliant | GMCF has served as Georgia's Medicare Quality Improvement Organization since the program's inception in 1970.

We are a team of clinicians and other health care professionals working with physician practices, hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies and other health care providers to protect and improve the processes and outcomes for Georgia's 1.2 million Medicare consumers.

## Learn more and become involved

The QIO Program invites all health care providers and health quality stakeholders – including patients and their families – to be a part of its new improvement initiatives.

To express an interest, contact Alliant | GMCF at:  
1-800-982-0411 or [www.gmcf.org](http://www.gmcf.org)

More information about QIOs is available at:  
[www.cms.gov/qualityimprovementorgs](http://www.cms.gov/qualityimprovementorgs)

