

National Priorities Partnership Lauds Launch of National Quality Strategy

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Mar 25, 2011, 04:20 ET

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WASHINGTON, March 25, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The National Priorities Partnership (NPP) -- a collaborative of 48 leading private and public sector organizations -- welcomes the release of the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) landmark National Quality Strategy. NPP believes it is an important step in helping unite the nation around a set of specific priorities and goals that can accelerate efforts to improve care, make it more affordable, and make communities healthier.

"The NQS has the potential to galvanize efforts to sharply improve the quality of care in this country—one of the core goals of reforming healthcare," said NPP co-chair Bernard Rosof, MD and representative of the Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement, convened by the American Medical Association. "We are pleased to see so many of the Partnership's priorities and recommendations reflected in the Secretary's strategy. The Partnership is committed to helping our nation achieve the aims that are laid out in the National Quality Strategy."

NPP's role as an unique public-private resource took on new relevance in 2010, when the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) asked for input on the proposed National Quality Strategy. The [NPP submitted its recommendations](#) in October 2010 for consideration by the Secretary.

"We are thrilled to see much of our work reflected in the newly released National Quality Strategy," said Margaret E. O'Kane, co-chair of NPP and president of the National Committee for Quality Assurance. "By working together we can achieve the goals of the National Quality Strategy for quality driven, more affordable patient care and healthy communities."

The National Priorities Partnership-- Priorities in Action

For more than a decade, the National Quality Forum has brought stakeholders together to bring strong measurement into the service of patients and communities. Acting in its role as neutral convener, NQF brought together the National Priorities Partnership in 2007 with the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.


The NPP focuses on aligning public and private sector commitment around a specific set of national priorities for improving healthcare quality. Its belief is that both sectors play an instrumental role and can meet our national goals faster and better when public and private organizations work collaboratively and with shared priorities in mind. Within activities convened by the NPP, such as providing multi-stakeholder input to HHS, or through their own individual efforts, NPP participants are on the frontlines of making care safer, more efficient, and more patient- and family-centric:

- Patients.** The National Partnership for Women & Families promotes access to quality health care, and helps lead the *Campaign for Better Care*, which is working to ensure the health reform is implemented in ways that improve coordination and communication. "Every day, our health care system lets down the most vulnerable patients by failing to provide comprehensive, coordinated, patient- and family-centered care," said National Partnership President Debra L. Ness. "The results include a fragmented, burdensome system, patients who get sicker instead of better, and stress on families. We are delighted that the Administration is making a commitment to engage stakeholders in finding ways to improve care. We will do all we can to help advance the new Strategy."
- Employers.** Acting on behalf of their employees, businesses and other employers are critical members of NPP that can leverage their buying power in support of high-quality, affordable care. In support of making care safer – the first aim of the National Quality Strategy –, the National Business Group on Health produced a series of toolkits and other resources specifically designed to help businesses and their employees become more empowered savvy purchasers of safe care. "Employers see the NQS as a terrific opportunity for all the partners in NPP to accelerate our progress toward quality healthcare that Americans can afford," said Helen Darling, president of the National Business Group on Health.
- Providers.** Specific safety measures such as reducing healthcare-acquired infections and medication problems have been major focuses for hospitals and other providers. As members of NPP, providers welcome the National Quality Strategy as an opportunity to continually work with payers, patients, and policymakers on broad areas of national import. "As part of the National Priority Partnership, we are already rolling up our sleeves to tear down old barriers and begin to pull the levers of change which will work across our partnership as a community of patients, physicians and surgeons, hospitals, health plans, and purchasers to improve health care each day, every day," said Frank Opelka, MD, chair of patient safety, quality improvement and health policy for the American College of Surgeons. "We can build a new system that meets these aims."
- Communities.** As a regional consortium of medical, business and civic leaders to address healthcare safety and quality as imperatives, the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative—a member collaborative of the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement—developed Perfecting Patient Care, an approach to quality improvement using techniques adapted from manufacturing. One member of the consortium, WPAHS Allegheny General Hospital used that approach to identify best practices, eliminate variations from standards, and work to perfect patient care, resulting in the elimination of central-line associated bloodstream infections on one of its units. It was the first hospital unit in the country to demonstrate that infection elimination was possible.

The National Priorities Partnership, convened by the National Quality Forum, is a multi-stakeholder group including organizations representing the interests of consumers, purchasers, healthcare providers and professionals, state-based associations, community collaborative and regional alliances, government agencies, health plans, accreditation and certification bodies, and supplier and industry groups. <http://www.nationalprioritiespartnership.org>

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