



During its 10th Scope of Work as Alabama's Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) (August 1, 2011- July 31, 2014) , AQAF is shifting its focus from conducting smaller, more intensive efforts to leading large-scale initiatives that produce rapid, substantial and widespread improvement in health quality. With bold goals and actionable strategies, AQAF will play an important role in implementing the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Quality Strategy, supporting the patient safety goals of the Partnership for Patients, and improving health care for all Alabamians.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has set four major aims for the 10th Scope of Work:

- **Make care beneficiary- and family-centered** by actively engaging patients and their families in decision-making and empowering them to actively participate in managing their own health and health care.
- **Improve individual patient care** by reducing healthcare-associated infections in hospitals and achieving a 40 percent decrease in healthcare-acquired conditions in nursing homes.
- **Integrate care for populations and communities** by supporting transitions of care that reduce unnecessary re-hospitalizations.
- **Improve health for populations and communities** by leveraging the power of electronic health records (EHRs) for better data reporting and care management.

To achieve these aims and contribute to significant improvement in health quality, AQAF will support the formation and convening of learning and action networks; will provide critical technical assistance to providers, partners, and health advocates; and will accelerate the pace of improvement via the Care Reinvention through Innovation Spread (CRISP) model.

Shorter Projects, New Clinical Topics

Many quality improvement projects will be shorter (e.g., 18 months or less), providing AQAF with the flexibility to change clinical focus over time as needs and priorities for improvement evolve. To maximize impact, AQAFs also will be able to work with providers at every point on the performance spectrum.

To extend the reach of its current, successful nursing home project, AQAF initially will work with new groups of facilities on pressure ulcer reduction and physical restraint elimination. Over time, improvement initiatives will be introduced on such topics as catheter-associated urinary tract infections and falls.

Improvement initiatives with hospitals will continue to target health care-acquired infections, building on the base that AQAF established by supporting providers in reporting MRSA data and conducting unit-based MRSA projects. Topics will include central line-associated bloodstream infections, catheter-associated urinary tract infections, *Clostridium difficile* and surgical site infections.

On the community level, AQAF will bring together providers, patients and local leaders to reduce adverse drug reactions and to develop effective systems for coordinating care transitions.

AQAF as Change Agent

AQAF is bringing a renewed emphasis on collaboration and partnership to its quality improvement initiatives. It will be working with health care providers at all points on the performance spectrum, use the “voice of the patient” to inform its efforts, and engage top health care executives and governing boards in active support for improvement.

Building and Fostering Learning and Action Networks

An essential, evidence-based approach for rapid, wide-scale improvement, learning and action networks are driven by shared commitment, energy, and knowledge that allows providers to learn from each other as well as from AQAF. Components of these networks may include focused technical assistance, breakthrough collaboratives, and quality campaigns. In addition to health care providers, network participants may include Medicare Advantage plans, state and local health departments, patient advocacy organizations, and other health quality stakeholders.

Care Reinvention through Innovation Spread (CRISP)

Rapidly spreading innovation that has produced breakthroughs in clinical performance is crucial to health system transformation. By following the Care Reinvention through Innovation Spread (CRISP) model, AQAF will ensure that improvement interventions target the right personnel and meet their needs. Through CRISP, AQAF also will administer a local presence for powerful, new national-level collaboration tools and make certain that providers have access to and are leveraging AQAF-provided resources to spread improvement to other parts of their facility and system.