

The Quality Connection

Who should pledge to Quality First?

Every nursing facility is encouraged to pledge, in order to create one voice that speaks to the profession's commitment to quality. All AHCA/NCAL affiliates have endorsed Quality First. The Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care, which includes national multi-facility corporations, has signed a code of conduct and ethical practices which pledges all of their facilities to Quality First.

Assisted living providers and MR/DD residential care facility providers are encouraged to pledge to Quality First. For more information on how the initiative applies to these special constituencies please log on to www.ahca.org or www.ncal.org.

How do I pledge?

An interested facility can pledge by accessing the AHCA/NCAL Web sites and clicking on the Quality First Logo. Those wishing to pledge can pledge online, download a hard copy form to fax or mail back or call 1-800-628-8140 and request that a hard copy pledge be mailed to you.

Quality First Principles

Continuous Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement

Public Disclosure and Accountability

Patient/Resident and Family Rights

Workforce Excellence

Public Input and Community Involvement

Ethical Practices

Financial Stewardship

Quality First Expected Outcomes (SNF)

Continued improvement in compliance with federal regulations

Demonstrable progress in promoting financial integrity/preventing fraud

Demonstrable progress in the quality of care outcomes/prevention of confirmed abuse and neglect

Measurable improvements in all CMS CQI measures

Higher customer satisfaction scores

Demonstrable improvement in employee retention and turnover rates

The National Commission

The charge of the National Commission for Quality Long-term Care is to evaluate the quality of long term care, identify factors influencing the ability to improve quality of care nationally, and make recommendations about national efforts that should lead to sustainable quality improvement. The goals of the Commission, among many priorities, are to report on long term care quality indicators and measures, and to assess improvements. For more information visit

www.qualitylongtermcare.commission.org

or call 202-783-1300.

Resource Web Sites

American Health Care Association - www.ahca.org

National Center For Assisted Living - www.ncal.org

Institute for Healthcare Improvements - www.ihl.org

The Quality Connection

Bridging Quality First and the CMS Nursing Home Quality Initiative



Delivering excellence is at the heart of establishing good relationships and trust with our customers - residents, families and the public. Achieving excellence is a continuous journey of self-evaluation and progress, which includes measuring and assessing performance, identifying opportunities for improvement and embedding the best practices into daily routines.

As a profession we all aspire to the highest standards of quality. Is there a way to get there together? Yes, two national initiatives – Quality First and the CMS Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI) – are helping nursing facilities all across the country turn aspirations into practice. The initiatives are different but complementary, and each can help guide your facility along your own, unique quality enhancement journey.

This brochure is designed to show the relationship between the Quality First and CMS' NHQI and to help you move forward to be a Quality First provider.

Quality Is The Highest Priority



The Quality Connection:

Bridging Quality First and the CMS Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI)

What Is Quality First?



The Quality First initiative is the first public commitment by long term care providers to voluntarily and collectively agree to work towards the highest standards of quality. Quality First promotes a family of measures to assess and improve performance, including standard profession measures, the NHQI quality measures, customer satisfaction, staff retention and other measures. Quality First providers pledge to achieve excellence in quality of care and services for all those served and to strengthen the public's trust and confidence.

What Is CMS' NHQI?

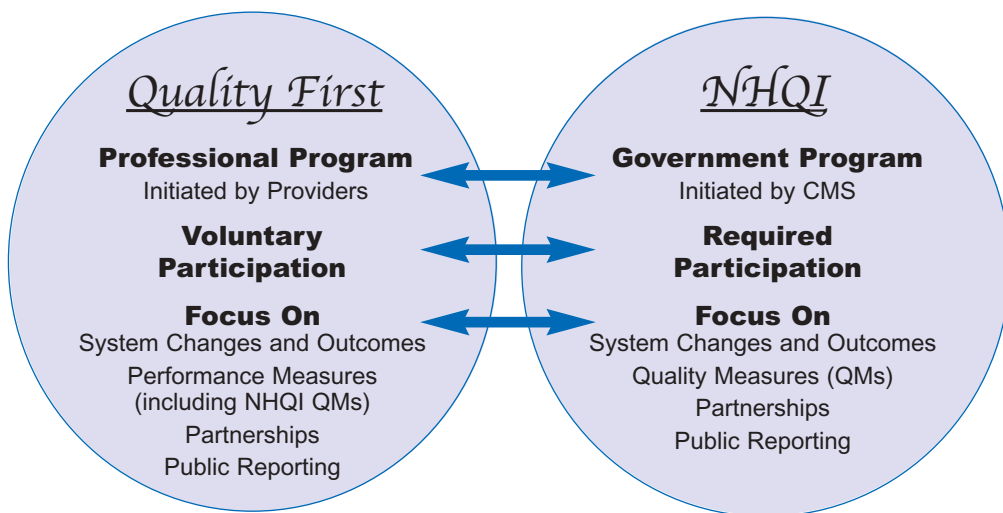
This federal initiative is designed to provide information to consumers about the quality of care in nursing facilities, and to support informed consumer decisions. On a quarterly basis, CMS publicly reports scores on 14 clinical quality measures for residents/patients.

Two Initiatives With Common Goals

Quality First - NHQI Goals

- Achieve excellence in the quality of care and services
- Emphasis on continuous quality improvement
- Publicly report results to strengthen public confidence and trust

How Quality First Relates to NHQI



Role of Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs)

The QIOs perform a pivotal role in the success of NHQI. Working under contract for CMS, the QIOs are a resource to help nursing facilities improve their clinical outcomes. The QIOs provide materials, quality improvement training, and technical support needed to improve targeted outcomes and serve as partners to advance collaborative quality improvement efforts at the state and national level.

Quality First: Getting Started

Assess

Identify your current programs and activities that meet the intent of the Quality First principles and outcomes.

Assess if you are systematically achieving outcomes.

Examine your mission statement.

Involve staff and share results.

Be objective and willing to acknowledge those areas needing improvement.

Consider the following data sources:

- Quality Indicators
- Quality Measures
- Resident/Patient Satisfaction
- Staff Satisfaction
- Recruitment and Retention Rates
- Regulatory Compliance
- Complaints
- Financial Indicators

Evaluate

Identify and quantify the list of indicators that allow you to monitor your facility's capabilities - include quality indicators and quality measures.

Identify areas of improvement.

Explore and benchmark process improvement activities.

Assess how these practices can be used to support your quality planning policies and procedures, resource allocation, clinical and management practices.

Sources:

- State and National QIO initiatives
- Best practices of high performing organizations
- State and National long term care associations
- American Medical Directors Association
- American College of Health Care Administrators
- National Association of Directors of Nursing in LTC
- Institute for Health Care Improvement
- American Society for Quality
- National Quality Forum

Act

Use your internal evaluation and benchmarking to develop an action plan that targets areas for improvement.

Define strategies for each area.

Provide leadership support for improvement priorities.

Identify teams and empower staff to implement.

Track and analyze data. Communicate results to staff and residents/patients.

Assess need to implement further improvements.

Celebrate successes!

Getting connected with your QIO is easy.

Contact your AHCA/NCAL trade association or go to www.ahqa.org for a directory of QIOs.

For additional information about QIOs and their activities go to www.medqic.org