

## Using Patient-Level Data to Improve Quality

### Background:

- Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation (Quality Corp) aligned practitioners, health plans, public and private purchasers, and patients to create a quality measurement report.
- Practitioners will have access to patient-level data aggregated from health plans to identify opportunities to improve care.

### Idea:

Quality Corp conducted a 2005 pilot program with four clinics and 12 health plans to collect patient-level data. With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Quality Corp expanded the program statewide. Patient-level data will be used to:

- Build patient registries,
- Improve population-based management,
- Identify variation in care, and
- Target quality measures.

### Action:

Quality Corp recruited state health plans, including Medicaid. A legal team determined that aggregating patient-level data was allowed under HIPAA rules. A measurement and reporting team identified Institute of Medicine-endorsed measures on diabetes, cardiovascular disease, asthma, depression and prevention. A clinical workgroup solicited practitioners' feedback about the reporting process. A key part of producing patient-level data for quality improvement was the development of a directory to map practitioners with medical groups and identify a contact at each group. To build this unique directory, Quality Corp:

1. Obtained a list of clinics from a partner health plan,
2. Merged it with a list from the State of Oregon Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research, and
3. Identified a contact at each clinic.





Willamette Valley, Ore.

To increase data usage, Quality Corp is working with quality improvement specialists to provide technical assistance to medical groups.

**Resources Needed:**

- Medical director and dedicated staff
- Legal consultation
- Data aggregator vendor
- Quality improvement specialists

**Results:**

- Recruited the eight largest health plans in Oregon: Shared patient-level data representing 70 percent of insured Oregonians.
- Developed practitioner directory: Directory representing 130 medical groups, comprising 332 clinics and 2,343 practitioners.
- Established validation process with four volunteer medical groups: Process rectified gaps and validated data.

**Advice:**

- Commit to quality improvement from the start.
- Emphasize that patient-level data should be used to improve quality, not fix past claims.
- Involve practitioners in decision-making.
- Be aware of legal implications when sharing patient-level data and the need for a secure Web site.
- Acknowledge the limitations of claims data.

