

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4326

Quality Improvement in Medicare
It can be done, and here's how

Cosponsor H.R. 1046

Dear Colleague,

There's been a lot of talk these days about improving the quality of medical care. As a federally funded program and standard-bearer for health insurance, it makes sense that Medicare should lead the way in quality improvement.

H.R. 1046 would improve and modernize Medicare through contracts with Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs). QIOs would compete for contracts to provide quality assistance.

Examples of quality improvement assistance:

- facilitating adoption of procedures that encourage timely feedback from patients
- guidance on redesigning clinical processes, including use of health information technology (HIT)
- assistance in improving rural and frontier care, as well as reducing racial, ethnic, and gender disparities
- assistance in improving coordination of care among different providers
- instruction on collecting, submitting, and interpreting data
- technical assistance in beneficiary education

The bill would also improve how QIOs interface with patients and providers by providing detailed feedback, based on beneficiary complaints, to improve the quality of health care services. Each QIO will organize a 'Medicare quality accountability program' that collects patient feedback on the care they have received. Among other things, this program would educate Medicare beneficiaries of standard quality measures and their rights to voice quality concerns, remedy confirmed complaints, and help providers fix quality problems. Annual quality reports would be published in each state.

The American Health Quality Association supports this legislation. Please join us in ensuring that American seniors receive access to the highest quality medical care. Cosponsor H.R. 1046 today. For more information, please contact Josh Martin at 5-7772 or josh.martin@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,


Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress