

Healthcare Quality Watch

APRIL 2012

**NEWS BRIEFS FOR
MANAGERS AND
OPINION LEADERS**


Improving Healthcare
for the Common Good®

IPRO's Annual Meeting Set for June 5th

IPRO's 28th Annual Membership Meeting will be held June 5, 2012 from 12:30PM to 3:00PM. at the LaGuardia Marriott Hotel in East Elmhurst, New York. Included will be presentations of this year's Quality Awards, recognizing outstanding contributions by healthcare providers from across the state. Registration check-in begins at 11:30AM, followed by a complimentary luncheon at 12:30PM. To learn more about IPRO's Quality Awards, visit www.ipro.org/index/ipro-quality-award. To register for the event, visit <https://www.regonline.com/annual-meeting>. The LaGuardia Marriott Hotel is located at 102-05 Ditmars Boulevard, East Elmhurst, NY 11369. The hotel phone number is (718) 565-8900.

Researchers Urge More Infection Reporting

Most U.S. states still don't require monitoring and reporting of surgical site infections and of the 21 states that do, only eight make the information easily accessible to consumers. That's the conclusion of researchers at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, who conducted their nationwide survey last fall. Researchers found that for the eight states with robust public reporting programs, the data only address two to seven procedures. Few states require reporting of infections following colon surgery, despite the fact that these surgeries have the highest infection rates. And only one state—Ohio—requires reporting of complications following gall bladder surgery, despite its being among the most common surgeries in the U.S. The researchers argue that widespread mandatory public reporting of surgical infection rates will incentivize hospitals to improve performance and attract patients. They cite the dramatic decline in hospital death rates that took place in New York 20 years ago, following public reporting of hospital-specific mortality rates for coronary artery bypass

surgery. The study by Martin Makary, MD, MPH and colleagues is available online at the website of the *Journal for Healthcare Quality* (www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-JHQ.html).

IPRO Reaches Highest External Satisfaction Rates

IPRO's latest surveys of collaborator and customers demonstrate the highest rates of satisfaction the organization has ever achieved. Collaborators are defined as provider representatives who work closely with IPRO on quality improvement initiatives at the state and federal level. With nearly a thousand surveys sent out last fall, IPRO achieved a 35% collaborator response rate, garnering best-ever scores for overall impression of working relationships, ease of access to assistance, responsiveness to questions/issues and respectfulness and professional courtesy. As for the customer survey—conducted via telephone interviews—IPRO achieved positive scores (4, 5 or 6) from 100% of customers interviewed, in such areas as staff knowledge, effectiveness, willingness to use IPRO again and willingness to recommend IPRO to another organization. IPRO has been conducting formal collaborator and customer satisfaction surveys since 2004.

CDC Anti-Smoking Campaign Gets Personal

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has launched an aggressive, multi-media anti-tobacco educational campaign. Described as "ground-breaking," the 12-week *Tips From Former Smokers* campaign features highly-explicit, first-person videos featuring real-life victims describing the ravages of illnesses caused by smoking, including cancer, heart attack, stroke, asthma and Buerger's disease. Outreach includes television, radio, highway billboards, magazines, newspapers, theatres and social media. The social media vehicles will include Facebook,

Twitter and YouTube—underscoring the goal of direct outreach to young people. The campaign website includes a wealth of educational information, including rotating personal testimonials. The campaign goal is to reduce smoking prevalence to 17% or lower over five years. The *Tips from Former Smokers* campaign is closely aligned with the *Million Hearts* initiative. For more information on the CDC campaign, visit www.cdc.gov/quitting/tips. To learn more about the *Million Hearts* initiative, click on the campaign icon located on the IPRO home page at www.ipro.org.

Watchdog Promotes Cooperative Anti-Fraud Effort

A recent decision by federal authorities to promote closer cooperation among Medicaid anti-fraud contractors is resulting in an increase in dollars saved, according to a new report from the Office of the Inspector General (IG) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The IG's Office examined savings achieved by the federal Medicaid Integrity Program, created by Congress in 2005 to attack fraud, waste and abuse in state-based healthcare services for the poor. The Program created two groups of contractors: Review Medicaid Integrity Contractors—Review MICs—that identify potential overpayments and Audit Medicaid Integrity Contractors—Audit MICs—that focus in on specific targets based on initial review findings and after additional analysis by state and federal authorities. Analysis by the IG's Office for a six-month period ending in June 2010 found that "collaborative audits" including input and cooperation from all involved parties accounted for \$6.2 million of a total of \$6.9 million in identified overpayments. The IG's Office said the \$6.2 million was recovered via seven collaborative audits, as opposed to the \$700,000 in overpayments identified by 35 audits conducted in isolation. The U.S. Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which manages the Medicaid Integrity Program, has endorsed the IG's Office findings, noting that while it had assigned only 8 collaborative audits in the first 6 months of 2010, it had assigned 83 such audits for the 18 months since the IG's review period. IPRO is identified in the report as one of only two Audit MIC contractors currently operating nationwide. To access the report, *Early Assessment of Audit Medicaid Integrity Contractors* (March 2012, OEI-05-10-00210), visit the IG website at <http://oig.hhs.gov>.

HealthGrades® Characterizes Best-Performing Hospitals

Commercial report card developer HealthGrades® believes it has isolated the essential characteristics of the "100 Best Hospitals" it identifies in a publication it released this spring. The list is based on analysis of up to ten years worth of hospital-specific Medicare mortality and complication data. The essential characteristics seen as correlating with superior performance include: (1) long c-suite tenure (nearly two-thirds of high-performing hospitals report an average tenure for senior managers of more than five years); (2) positive operating margins (most high performance facilities report operating margins greater than 2 percent, with a third reporting margins greater than 4%); (3) achievement orientation (8 of 10 hospitals report a strong interest in obtaining external awards); and (4) community commitment (more than half of the high-achieving institutions believe their patients take publicly-available hospital report cards seriously). Additionally, most of the top-performers believe that physician buy-in is essential to their success and that the critical measures of that success are quality

outcomes and unique service offerings. In terms of performance from 2008 to 2010, HealthGrades® claims high-performers had 30% lower risk-adjusted mortality than other hospitals when evaluated for 17 procedures and diagnoses. Fully 87% are non-profit institutions, while 7% are for-profit and 6% are government-owned. To review the list and associated documentation, visit the HealthGrades® website at www.healthgrades.com.

Hospitalists Win Prestigious Quality Award

The Society of Hospital Medicine—a Philadelphia-based national association representing hospitalists—is the winner of the 2011 John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Award for Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality at the National Level. The Society is the first national medical association to win the award, which was established in 2002 by The Joint Commission and the National Quality Forum in memory of John M. Eisenberg, MD, MBA. In its March announcement of the award, the Society describes three "signature" mentoring programs that couple hospital teams with physician champions in order to improve outcomes at the local level. These include Project BOOST, which is focused on reducing 30-day readmissions at 110 hospitals; the Glycemic Control Mentored Implementation Program, which aims to prevent hypoglycemia at 115 hospitals; and the Venous Thromboembolism Prevention Collaborative, now underway at 71 institutions. For more information on the Society's quality improvement initiatives, visit www.hospitalmedicine.org/thecenter.

Are you a Member of IPRO?

If you are an actively practicing NYS-licensed physician, join online at www.ipro.org/membership. All new members will receive a personalized certificate of membership via US mail. There is no charge to join. Members of IPRO receive announcements and e-mails, newsletters on a variety of subjects, IPRO eNews, invitations to conferences, opportunities for collaborations and other useful information.

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An electronic version of *Healthcare Quality Watch* is available; subscribe at <http://ipro.org/ipro-qw>.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please forward them to the Editor, Spencer Vibbert, at svibbert@ipro.org.

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IPRO is a national organization providing a full spectrum of healthcare assessment and improvement services that foster more efficient use of resources and enhance healthcare quality to achieve better patient outcomes. For more than 25 years, IPRO has been highly regarded for the independence of its approach, the depth of its knowledge and experience, and the integrity of its programs. IPRO holds contracts with federal, state and local government agencies and corporate clients, in more than 33 states and the District of Columbia. A not-for-profit organization, IPRO is headquartered in Lake Success, NY.