

Healthcare Quality Watch

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NEWS BRIEFS FOR
MANAGERS AND
OPINION LEADERS



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IPRO Authors Analyze Birth Registry Data

Experts at the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and in IPRO's Managed Care Department have co-authored an article that takes a critical look at current practices and potential barriers to accurate and complete data collection by birth registrars at hospitals across the state of New York. In a 2013 survey of 127 hospital-based birth registrars conducted by IPRO on behalf of NYSDOH, only 53 percent of respondents indicated that their facilities provide registration training and only 26 percent reported medical or clinical background as a requirement for registrars. The study, "Barriers in Accurate and Complete Birth Registration in New York State" appeared February 5, 2015 in the online edition of *Maternal and Child Health Journal* published by Springer. Thomas A. Melnik of the NYSDOH is principle author, and IPRO co-authors are Cemile G. Guldal, Jeanne Alicandro, MD and Paul Henfield. For more information, visit the Journal website at <http://link.springer.com/journal/10995>

IPRO Tools Garner National Attention

Two drug safety tools developed by IPRO quality improvement experts are drawing national attention. The Managing Anticoagulation in the Peri-procedural Period (MAP) tool for hospitals helps clinicians determine when to stop the use of warfarin before surgeries and other invasive procedures. IPRO's Anticoagulation Discharge Communication (AC-DC) audit tool is used across care settings to maximize communications regarding anticoagulation drug use among patients who are discharged or transferred from one setting to another. The tools were developed by IPRO's drug safety team, under the

leadership of Senior Director Darren Triller, PharmD. They're featured in a recent edition of *QIO News*, a national newsletter distributed by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Both documents are available at <http://atlanticquality.org/initiatives/drug-safety-ny>.

IPRO Database Builders Seek User Input

IPRO's eServices Department is seeking input on new features it is considering for the hospital quality improvement website it created and recently took over from The Commonwealth Fund. The website, located at www.whynotthebest.org, examines the performance of 5,723 hospitals in the U.S. on a variety of cost and quality issues and includes tools and resources for quality improvement teams to use to address performance shortcomings. Among the innovations now under consideration are:

- Member Discussions—threaded conversation forums ("discussion boards") on various topics for the registered members and staff of WhyNotTheBest. This could facilitate sharing of best practices, discussions around data findings, and help create a community of practice around quality improvement,
- Live Chat—a capability to allow instant messaging between WhyNotTheBest staff and registered members,
- Member Profiles—registered members could create professional profiles, share reports, bookmark other members' reports, and list which measures or improvement activities they're working on,
- Clinical Data Dashboard & Registry—automated extraction of pertinent measure data directly from an

electronic health record/electronic medical record into a secure clinical data measures dashboard, useful for disease registries, quality management and reporting. This could also be used for regulatory reporting requirements,

- Personalized Measure Tracker—a simple application that allows users to create measures, track personal data, and invite other registered members to collaborate on the same measure(s). Automatic run charts would be included. This could be used to track individual quality improvement activities at specific locations,
- High-Level Data Summaries/Visualizations—user-friendly high-level visualizations of WhyNotTheBest data analyses (full data range only, not individual providers). This would provide summary statistical information regarding each data measure currently published on WhyNotTheBest, such as range, confidence intervals, national averages, and overall trending.

The complete survey tool is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W5FGRHJ>. In addition, the IPRO eServices team can be reached at support@ipro.us.

Feds Find Widespread Support for QIO Activity

A recent survey of hospitals' attitudes toward Medicare-funded Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) finds widespread support for the technical assistance offered by the groups. The Office of the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a long-awaited report at the end of January 2015 that addresses overlapping responsibilities of three groups of contractors funded by Medicare. The contractors discussed in the OIG-HHS report are the state-based QIOs (recently restructured as 14 regional Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization contractors), the regional Hospital Engagement Network (HEN) contractors and the regional Community-based Care Transition Program (CCTP) contractors. The survey included 410 hospitals enrolled in Medicare in 2013—of which 93 percent of hospitals responded to a written QIG-HHS questionnaire. All hospitals responding to the survey said they derive benefit from working with QIOs; with a majority of respondents citing the value QIOs provide in connecting hospitals on similar projects, defining clinical measures to track, and developing and explaining comparative data reports. A copy of the report, *Quality Improvement Organizations Provide Support to More than Half of Hospitals but Overlap with other Quality Improvement Programs* is available at <http://go.usa.gov/lupm>.

HHS Announces Payment Learning Network

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has launched a new virtual learning network aimed at increasing the use of value-based purchasing and alternative payment models. HHS recently announced a goal of tying 30 percent of Medicare fee-for-service payments to quality or value through alternative payment models by 2016, with a goal of tying 50 percent of such payments through alternative models by 2018. The Health Care Payment Learning and Action Network is open to providers, employers, states, consumers and others and will address "core issues such as beneficiary attribution, financial models, benchmarking, quality and performance measurement, risk adjustment and other topics,"

according to an HHS announcement. Most meetings will be held via teleconferences and webinars; information from in-person meetings to be held in Washington DC will be shared with all participants. A Network kick-off event is scheduled for March 25, 2015. Registration to participate in the Network is available at <http://innovationgov.force.com/hcplan>.

Quality Data Should Include Race—Federal Report

While finding substantial progress in narrowing disparities in quality measure performance across the nation, authors of a new federal report are urging more emphasis on data elements that support analysis on the basis of race and ethnicity. *The 2015 National Impact Assessment of CMS Quality Measures Report*, released by CMS in March finds that discrepancies in quality measure performance were "much less pronounced" in 2012 than they were in 2006, although such differences persist across settings and reporting programs. Authors find more narrowing of disparities during this period among Hispanics, Blacks and Asians when compared to national performance data and less narrowing for American Indians/Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders. Authors argued that standardizing race and ethnicity data collection will improve recognition of disparities and that public reporting will have positive impact on transparency and the effort to decrease disparities. The report, which was prepared by Health Services Advisory Group, Inc., is available at <https://www.cms.gov>.

Save The Date:

IPRO's Annual Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday June 2 at the LaGuardia Marriott Hotel in East Elmhurst, NY. The event includes a complimentary buffet and presentations by leading figures in healthcare quality improvement. For advance registration, contact Joan Ragone at IPRO's Lake Success Office (516) 326-7767, ext 262 or e-mail her at jragone@ipro.org.

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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 30 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.