

Get to know the AHRQ Quality Indicators

PSI

Patient Safety
Indicators

IQI

Inpatient Quality
Indicators

PQI

Prevention Quality
Indicators in Inpatient
Settings

PDI

Pediatric Quality
Indicators

PQE

Prevention Quality
Indicators in Emergency
Department Settings

BETA MHI

Maternal Health
Indicators

About AHRQ Quality Indicators (AHRQ QIs)

The AHRQ QIs are standardized, evidence-based health care quality measures that can be used with readily available hospital inpatient administrative data. AHRQ offers freely available QI software distributed in either SAS or Windows format. First developed in 1999, and updated yearly, the software has been refined to include risk-adjustment and updated to account for annual changes in ICD-10-CM coding guidance. Risk adjustment was developed with HCUP all-payer claims data, which has ~98% of all US claims.

Patient Safety Indicators (PSIs)

PSIs provide information on potentially avoidable safety events that represent opportunities for improvement in the delivery of care at the hospital level.

- Use patient data found in a typical hospital discharge abstract or data set.
- Detect potential safety problems that occur during a patient's hospital stay.
- Risk adjusted for patient characteristics, conditions, or procedures, which vary by indicator.

Inpatient Quality Indicators (IQIs)

IQIs identify issues of quality of care inside hospitals, including utilization of procedures such as overuse, underuse, and misuse and inpatient mortality for surgical procedures and medical conditions at the hospital level.

- Use patient data found in a typical hospital discharge abstract or data set.
- Include volume indicators for procedures where outcomes may relate to the number of times the procedure is performed.
- Risk adjusted for patient characteristics, conditions, or procedures, which vary by indicator.

Prevention Quality Indicators (PQIs) in Inpatient Settings

PQIs identify issues of access to outpatient care, including appropriate follow-up care after hospital discharge at the area level.

- Use patient data found in a typical hospital discharge abstract or data set.
- Can help identify area level health care quality problem areas for further investigation.
- Can be used for public reporting and benchmarking.
- Can provide a check on primary care access or outpatient services in a community and trends over time.
- Population-based and risk adjusted for age and sex.

Prevention Quality Indicators in Emergency Department Settings (PQEs)

The PQEs are area level measures of visits to the emergency department (ED) (treat and release ED visits and inpatient admissions through the ED) that may be associated with a lack of access to quality care in other settings.

- Reflect availability of community health resources (e.g., medical care, dental care) or disease burden at the area level.
- Not intended as a measure of quality of care provided in the ED.
- Identify targets for public health improvement, disparities or gaps in care, and the impact of health system interventions.
- Population-based and risk adjusted for age and sex.

Pediatric Quality Indicators (PDIs)

PDIs focus on potential safety events for pediatric patients at the hospital level and potentially preventable hospitalizations among pediatric patients at the area level.

- Use patient data found in a typical hospital discharge abstract or data set.
- Identify the prevalence of hospitalizations for conditions that might have been prevented with good outpatient care.
- Area level PDIs are population-based and risk adjusted for age and sex.
- Hospital-level PDIs are risk adjusted for patient characteristics, conditions, or procedures, which vary by indicator.

BETA Maternal Health Indicators (MHIs)

The MHIs are area level measures that aim to broadly address healthcare quality in the domain of maternal health and identify opportunities to reduce complications during the peripartum period.

- Identify severe maternal morbidity (SMM) and mortality that could potentially be prevented by high quality health care.
- Include three area level measures related to severe maternal morbidity and in-hospital death.
- Intended for use at the area level and not as accountability measures.
- Not currently risk-adjusted.

Download AHRQ QIs Specifications

PSI

https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/PSI_TechSpec

PQI

https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/PQI_TechSpec

PQE

https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/PQE_TechSpec

IQI

https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/IQI_TechSpec

PDI

https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/PDI_TechSpec

BETA MHI

https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/MHI_TechSpec

Major Users of the AHRQ Quality Indicators (QIs)

The AHRQ QIs were designed for use by program managers, researchers, and others at the Federal, State, and local levels interested in healthcare quality measurement.



State & Local Health Agencies

- State agencies use the AHRQ Quality Indicators (QIs) in their public reporting on hospital quality to assess quality of care and increase transparency regarding health care performance.
- The AHRQ QIs also help inform the development of policies related to access to and availability of care.



Hospitals, Health Systems and State Hospital Associations

- State hospital associations, state data associations, hospitals and hospital systems use the AHRQ QIs to benchmark their hospitals' performance against other hospitals or to state and national averages.
- State hospital associations use the AHRQ QIs to assess hospital quality and primary care access.
- Hospitals and hospital systems nationwide use the AHRQ QIs to assist quality improvement efforts in acute care hospital settings.
- Researchers, quality improvement officers, hospital administrators and community health planners use AHRQ QIs to assess clinical areas appropriate for further, more in depth analysis and to assess hospital safety, quality, patient experience, cost, and utilization.



Payors

- The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) uses AHRQ QIs as the foundation for measures developed for consumers, hospitals, healthcare practitioners, health policy leaders and others use to inform decisions and actions to achieve safer, higher quality and more affordable health care.
- Insurers and business groups use the AHRQ QIs to compare hospital performance rates and assess relative safety, quality, and affordability.

AHRQ QIs Mailing List

Sign up for free notifications about new and updated AHRQ QIs and associated software tools by registering at https://subscriptions.ahrq.gov/accounts/USAHRQ/subscriber/new?topic_id=USAHRQ_39.

User Tools and Support

- Free software to compute AHRQ QIs, available for SAS® and Windows®
- Detailed user guides and technical specifications for each module
- Parameter estimates, benchmark data tables, and methodology to create composite measures
- Guidance for designing AHRQ QIs reports
- Answers to frequently asked questions
- Access to AHRQ QIs Technical Support by email at QIsupport@ahrq.hhs.gov



AHRQ QIs Web Site:
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