

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Program is one of the largest federal programs dedicated to improving the quality of health care at the community level. **Hospital Quality Improvement Contractors (HQICs)** are strategic partners of the QIO Program that support this mission within hospital settings. Their initiatives are designed to improve health care quality, access, value and equity for people with Medicare.

Health care quality is the overarching goal. The QIO Program and HQICs connect and convene the right people to help solve the nation's most pressing health care challenges, one community at a time.

## What are HQICs?

**Data-driven.** It's the data that help hospitals measure progress toward quality improvement (QI) gains. Hundreds of thousands of patients and families benefit from CMS-supported QI projects that make today's hospital stays safer and improve the quality of hospital care.

**Dynamic and collaborative.** HQICs partner with small, rural and critical access hospitals and facilities that care for vulnerable and underserved patients. Their quality improvement consulting and expertise – offered at no cost to the hospitals – help hospital leaders and clinical teams develop local QI projects designed to:

- Reduce opioid misuse and adverse drug events.
- Increase patient safety with a focus on preventing hospital-acquired infections.
- Refine care coordination processes to reduce unplanned admissions.

HQICs also share their QI resources to assist hospitals with pandemic responses and emergency preparedness.



### Local.

- Provide no-cost quality improvement consulting to help leadership teams understand and implement Medicare and other federal health care guidelines.
- Engage with hospital leaders and stakeholders to help tailor national QI priorities to local conditions.
- Support health equity through patient and family engagement.
- Coordinate goal setting, communication, QI resources and crisis response by facilitating partnerships with community, state and local organizations.

### Measurable.

- Help gather, analyze and interpret health care data to inform decisions that impact patients, families, partners and communities.
- Visualize data to help hospitals track progress toward local and national quality goals.
- Demonstrate how hospital processes can evolve in response to real-time data.

### Sustainable.

- Create and spread learning opportunities for today's evidence-based best practices.
- Develop peer and community networks for learning, collaboration and sharing.
- Teach and coach QI processes and techniques for lasting change.

## To Learn More

The four-year HQIC program will remain active through October 2024. Please visit [QIOProgram.org](https://QIOProgram.org) to learn more about HQIC partners and QI initiatives.



**HQIC**  
Hospital Quality Improvement Contractors  
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES  
iQUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP