

*The National Quality Strategy is a national effort to align public- and private-sector stakeholders to achieve better health and health care for all Americans.*

## About the National Quality Strategy

The National Quality Strategy (NQS) was first published in March 2011, and is led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in coordination with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Established as part of the Affordable Care Act, the NQS serves as a catalyst and compass for a nationwide focus on quality improvement efforts and a national approach to measuring quality.

Improving health and health care quality can only occur if all sectors of the health care community make it a priority. Knowing this, the NQS seeks to unite providers; payers; academic institutions; nonprofit organizations; local, State, and Federal governments; and others in committing to this shared strategy.

## How the National Quality Strategy Works

The NQS concurrently pursues three aims to provide better, more affordable care for the individual and the community:

- **Better Care:** Improve the overall quality of care, by making health care more patient-centered, reliable, accessible, and safe.
- **Healthy People/Healthy Communities:** Improve the health of the U.S. population by supporting proven interventions to address behavioral, social, and environmental determinants of health, in addition to delivering higher quality care.
- **Affordable Care:** Reduce the cost of quality health care for individuals, families, employers, and governments.

To advance these aims, the NQS focuses on six priorities for health and health care quality that have an impact on most Americans:

- Making care safer by reducing harm caused in the delivery of care.
- Ensuring that each person and family members are engaged as partners in their care.
- Promoting effective communication and coordination of care.
- Promoting the most effective prevention and treatment practices for the leading causes of mortality, starting with cardiovascular disease.
- Working with communities to promote wide use of best practices to enable healthy living.
- Making quality care more affordable for individuals, families, employers, and governments by developing and spreading new health care delivery models.



## What You Can Do

The NQS supports the sharing of best practices in health and health care quality improvement at the national, State, and local level, and will provide opportunities for the entire Nation to benefit from such collaboration. Share your programs with us by visiting [www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality](http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality) or submitting comments to [NQStrategy@ees.hhs.gov](mailto:NQStrategy@ees.hhs.gov).

## National Priorities Partnership Focus

The NQS's relationship with the National Priorities Partnership (NPP) and the Measures Application Partnership, both convened by the National Quality Forum, advances efforts to help achieve better health and health care for all Americans.

In 2012, the NQS will continue to collaborate, coordinate, and consult with the NPP on efforts related to the private sector and State, regional, and local communities.

The NQS will also focus on:

- Building on the adoption of action-oriented initiatives for the NQS priorities. In 2011, the public-private **Partnership for Patients** was adopted for the first priority (making care safer) and the **Million Hearts Campaign** was adopted for the fourth priority (promoting the most effective prevention and treatment practices).
- Establishing plans to address the three cross-cutting strategic opportunities identified by the NPP and listed below:
  1. Identify a national strategy for data collection, measurement, and reporting
  2. Develop organizational infrastructure at the community level that assumes responsibility for improvement efforts
  3. Reform payment and delivery systems

Collaboration between the NQS and NPP continues on a consistent basis through regular meetings and participation in decisionmaking processes.

