



QIO Impact in Iowa

The Iowa Foundation for Medical Care, the Quality Improvement Organization for Iowa, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, is working toward a health care system in which every person receives the right care every time. IFMC works with providers to evaluate and improve health care quality in home health agencies, hospitals, physician offices and nursing homes. IFMC works to promote best practices, identify gaps in care, accelerate technology adoption and improve care systems and processes. IFMC also performs Medicare utilization review for appropriateness of care and responds to Medicare beneficiary quality of care complaints.

More than 95 percent of participants in a recent survey of Iowa health care organizations and agencies said IFMC helps Iowa health care professionals provide better care. According to survey results, IFMC ranked first out of 53 QIOs nationwide when it came to satisfaction with the organization.

IFMC received 98.8 percent in satisfaction, 92 percent in value and 98 percent in knowledge. IFMC ranked second in the nation with a 96 percent overall score on the survey.

Home Health Care

IFMC works directly with Iowa's home health agencies through training and promotion of best practices. In support of the national Home Health Quality Initiative, IFMC provided Outcome Based Quality Improvement training to more than 450 home health professionals from Iowa's 175 agencies.

Since August of 2005, IFMC has reached professionals in over 80 percent of Iowa home health agencies through workshops, teleconferences, regional quality forums, and other educational activities. Using IFMC's trainings and resources home health agencies helped their patients:

- Be better able to get in and out of bed
- Have less pain when moving around
- Be better able to take their oral medications correctly
- Be better able to walk or move around
- Have less difficulty in breathing

Reducing Cost

Home health agencies working with IFMC have reduced acute care hospitalizations by nearly 1 out of every 13. If every agency across the country did the same, we could save Medicare over \$6.8 billion a year.

IFMC also provides resources to raise awareness of the importance of immunization. In November 2005, only 79 percent of agencies responding to a survey incorporated immunization assessment into their admission processes. In a follow-up survey in November 2006, 90 percent of agencies responding reported they are including this important information in their admission processes to help increase immunization rates for their patients.

IFMC staff assists home health agencies to develop a plan of action to address their Acute Care Hospitalization rates. Over 60 percent of Iowa agencies have completed a plan of action to reduce avoidable acute care hospitalization. Iowa home health agencies currently working with IFMC to reduce avoidable acute care hospitalization rates have shown a 22 percent improvement, while the statewide rates have worsened by 8 percent.



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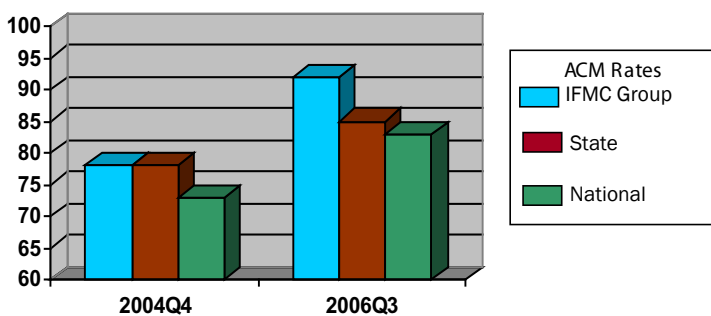
Hospitals

IFMC works with hospitals throughout Iowa to improve systems of care, with a focus on culture change, health information technology and treatments for conditions that affect large numbers of patients. IFMC helps hospitals improve quality of care for the treatment of heart attacks, heart failure, surgical care and pneumonia.

Publicly reported performance measurement is an important component of IFMC's hospital quality improvement efforts. IFMC assists Iowa hospitals to ensure their publicly reported data is accurate and submitted in a timely manner. As of March 2007, 92 of Iowa's 116 acute care hospitals are publicly reporting quality of care data on CMS's Hospital Compare Web site at www.hospitalcompare.gov.

IFMC helps hospitals ensure the right care is provided to every patient, every time. When patients receive all the recommended care for which they are eligible, based on their condition the aggregated data is referred to as Appropriate Care Measures. The ACM is based on the 10-measure starter set publicly reported through the Hospital Compare Web site.

Hospitals working closely with IFMC have improved their ACM rates twice as much as other Iowa hospitals and hospitals nationally.



Hospitals working with IFMC on improving care for patients with pneumonia are now providing a pneumococcal vaccination to 92 percent of their patients, up from 66 percent, a relative rate of improvement of 39 percent.*

IFMC's Surgical Care Improvement Project focuses on improving surgical care by significantly reducing surgical complications through reduction of surgical infections, reduction of post-operative blood clots and use of appropriate surgical site hair removal recommendations. All hospitals working with IFMC on SCIP have reviewed their current processes, instituted risk assessments and standing orders. Data on the success of this project will be available late fall 2007.

Rural and Critical Access Hospitals are an important part of Iowa's health care system. IFMC is working with more than 35 percent of these facilities to increase patient safety and accelerate the use of health information technology.

IFMC is assisting selected CAHs to prepare for the implementation of bar coding or computerized physician order entry. Nineteen of the 20 hospitals participating in this project have shown improvement in their readiness assessments.

In the Patient Safety project CAHs from across the state completed a survey to help them understand their current patient safety culture. Participants are provided with education, resources and tools to help them analyze and address gaps and barriers in their culture and improve patient safety.

* Relative rate of improvement shows the percent change between two periods of time. To calculate the relative rate, subtract the initial rate from the current rate, then divide by the initial rate.

✓ Lives Improved

As a result of quality improvement interventions in Iowa, it is estimated that:

- 98 percent of hospital patients with acute myocardial infarction received aspirin on arrival, aspirin on discharge and beta-blockers on discharge
- Left ventricular function assessments for improved treatment of heart failure were performed for 91 percent of patients with heart failure
- During the third quarter of 2006, 1,275 heart failure patients statewide received all of the recommended guideline-based therapy for their condition, relative rate of improvement of 17 percent



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Physician Offices

IFMC works with physicians and professional organizations to improve the quality of care provided by physicians across the state.

Through the Doctors' Office Quality – Information Technology project, IFMC works with selected small- to medium-sized physician offices to assist with selection, implementation and use of electronic health records. In 2006, 42 physician clinics representing 121 physicians enrolled in the Iowa DOQ-IT project. By April 2007 all had completed a practice readiness assessment and 33 percent had installed an EHR system.

After successfully assisting medical practices to implement EHR systems, IFMC helps them identify ways to use the EHR to improve the quality of care they provide their patients and to facilitate better management of care for patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes, coronary artery disease, heart failure and hypertension.

IFMC promotes preventive and chronic care best practices in the areas of immunization, mammography and diabetes care. The Practice Highlights electronic newsletter, distributed quarterly, helps keep more than 650 health care professionals up to date on these and other issues of importance. IFMC also provides consumer education materials to physician offices and directly to beneficiaries at a variety of events in Iowa.

Physician offices throughout Iowa have been able to increase the number of Medicare beneficiaries who receive recommended annual influenza immunizations and diabetes screenings. Approximately 6,445 more Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes are receiving an annual lipid profile, 3,440 more are receiving annual eye exams and 3,840 more are receiving annual Hemoglobin A1c. An increase of more than 22,600 Medicare beneficiaries reported receiving their annual influenza immunizations.

Beneficiary Protection

For more than 30 years, IFMC has been dedicated to protecting Medicare beneficiaries and ensuring they understand their Medicare rights. During 2006 IFMC successfully responded to and processed more than 850 Medicare medical review cases, including beneficiary complaints, coverage and discharge appeals, hospital admissions, continued stay and quality of care concerns.

IFMC's HelpLine is available to help beneficiaries and their representatives with appeals or quality of care concerns. For beneficiaries whose complaints were addressed through our medical record review process, 100 percent were satisfied with the process.



Lives Improved

As part of the case review process, IFMC ensures medical record documentation is complete and accurate. The preoperative history and physical examination is an important interaction between the patient and the physician. In this process the patient's medical condition is assessed to evaluate the patient's overall health status and determine any additional risk factors prior to surgery. A thorough history and physical can help identify and reduce surgical complications. In performing a review IFMC identified a facility that was not consistently documenting preoperative history and physical examinations. IFMC requested a Quality Improvement Plan to address how the facility was obtaining the history and physical examinations prior to performing surgical procedures.

The facility involved the anesthesia department and surgical nursing staff in quality improvement activities including quarterly monitoring of surgical charts, preoperative checklists and a process that provides a safety net. The new process prevents errors and ensures quality of care. A history and physical examination is now included on 100 percent of patients' charts prior to surgery.



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Nursing Homes

IFMC provides process improvement and clinical resources to help Iowa nursing homes improve the quality of care for residents with pressure ulcers, physical restraints, pain and depression. Since Medicare launched the Nursing Home Quality Initiative, Iowa nursing homes have shown improvement in each of these clinical areas.

Iowa nursing homes currently working with IFMC to improve pressure ulcer treatment have shown a relative rate of improvement of 20.8 percent, compared to the statewide relative improvement rate of 16.9 percent and the national relative rate of improvement of 9.3 percent. Looking closely at their use of physical restraints, the homes working with IFMC have decreased restraint usage by 49.5 percent; over twice the improvement rate of the state average of a 17.4 percent decrease and the national average of a 17.7 percent decrease.

Iowa's pain rates for long-term residents have steadily improved as well. Long-term residents in nursing homes working with IFMC showed relative improvement in their pain rates of 19.4 percent, compared to the statewide average of 16.2 percent improvement and the national average of 18.2 percent improvement.

Since August of 2005, IFMC has reached professionals in 99 percent of Iowa nursing homes through workshops, teleconferences, regional quality forums, and other educational activities. IFMC's training and resources distributed during these educational opportunities ultimately benefits Iowa's 27,000 nursing home residents.

About the Iowa Foundation for Medical Care

For more than 35 years, IFMC has been dedicated to the delivery of innovative health care value management solutions. A full range of flexible and customized services enables IFMC to address all aspects of health care needs.

IFMC is headquartered in Iowa with offices in Illinois, Maryland and Nevada. With 800 staff professionals, our services make a difference in the improvement of health care for more than 45 million lives nationwide. IFMC is an authority in health care value management for millions of patients across the country.

Care Management. IFMC ensures that patients receive the right care at the right place at the right time through its care management services, which the company administers for self-insured employers. IFMC's services include utilization management/review, case management/review, chronic care management, disease management and more. All these areas become increasingly important as concerns about spiraling health care costs continue to grow.

Quality Management. Since its creation in 1972, IFMC has focused on quality. A key part of this includes Quality Improvement Organizations, which are part of the Medicare system. The program works with consumers and physicians, hospitals and other care givers to refine care delivery systems. IFMC, which serves as the QIO for Iowa and Illinois, is the largest QIO in the country. Quality management has always been an important component, but with more tracking systems being developed, it is increasingly being quantified and reported.

Information Management. IFMC's advanced information systems offer health care data collection, validation, deployment and more. Over the years, IFMC has developed one of the largest groups of experienced health information experts in the country. Because of the work with the federal government, the experts at IFMC are actively involved in defining and supporting many health-related initiatives across the country. IFMC builds and manages proprietary disease management IT products and some of the largest health care data warehouses, allowing identification of best practices, which leads to better health care.