NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY STAKEHOLDER TOOLKIT

This toolkit can be used by organizations to showcase their alignment and support of the National Quality Strategy

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES • USA

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY

Better Care. Healthy People/Healthy Communities. Affordable Care.

INTRODUCTION

This Stakeholder Toolkit can be used by private and public organizations to advance the mission of the National Quality Strategy (NQS). This toolkit contains a variety of approved materials for organizations to use and tailor to their specific needs.

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS TOOLKIT?

- Print and distribute the content to your stakeholders
- Link to the content on your Web site
- Use the NQS logo on your Web site (with a link to the NQS Web site) to indicate your organization's alignment to the NQS
- Place one of the banner graphics on your Web site (with a link to the NQS Web site) to indicate your organization's alignment to the NQS
- Use one or more of the NQS priority or levers icons on your Web site or materials and briefly explain how your organization aligns to the NQS using one or more of the priorities/levers
- Insert specific slides from the briefing slides into internal and external presentations to show how your organization aligns to the NQS
- Tailor social media content (blogs, tweets) to describe your organization's alignment to the NQS and link to the NQS Web site

The toolkit contents will be updated on a periodic basis and posted to www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality.

Questions? Contact us at NQStrategy@ahrq.hhs.gov.

CONTENTS

National Quality Strategy Fact Sheet *click to view*

National Quality Strategy Levers Fact Sheet *click to view*

2014 Annual Progress Report Announcement *click to view*

Priorities in Action *click to view*

National Quality Strategy Logo, Priority Icons,
and Lever Icons *click to view* (email NQStrategy@ahrq.hhs.gov to be sent these graphics)

Graphics for Use on Your Organization's Web Site *click to view*
(e-mail NQStrategy@ahrq.hhs.gov to be sent these graphics)

Newsletter Template *click to view*

Briefing Slides *click to view*

Blog Entry #1—The National Strategy for Quality Improvement in
Health Care Provides a Fresh Take on Health Care Triple Aims *click to view*

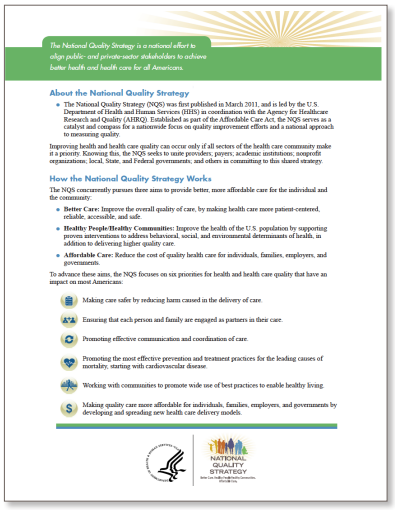
Blog Entry #2—Five Facts about the National Quality Strategy and
What It Is Doing to Help Provide High-Quality Care for All Americans *click to view*

Blog Entry #3 - Using Levers to Align to the National Quality Strategy *click to view*

Social Media Announcements *click to view*

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY FACT SHEET

The National Quality Strategy fact sheet lists the three aims, six priorities, nine levers, and ongoing implementation activities of the Strategy. The 508-compliant PDF of the fact sheet can be downloaded here (www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/nqs/nqsfactsheet.pdf) and posted to Web sites or printed and distributed at in-person events.



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 occur only 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 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.

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY LEVERS FACT SHEET

This National Quality Strategy fact sheet outlines nine National Quality Strategy levers that represent core business functions, resources, and/or actions that stakeholders can use to align to the Strategy.

The 508-compliant PDF of the fact sheet can be downloaded here (http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/reports/nqsleverfactsheet.pdf) and posted to Web sites or printed and distributed at in-person events.

National Quality Strategy: Using Levers to Achieve Improved Health and Health Care

About the National Quality Strategy

The National Quality Strategy is the first-ever national effort backed by legislation to align public- and private-sector stakeholders to achieve better health and health care for all Americans. The Strategy serves as a guiding force in the multitude of quality improvement efforts across the Nation, fostering alignment across national, Federal, State, and private-sector stakeholders to improve health and health care quality for all Americans.

Using Levers to Align to the National Quality Strategy

Stakeholders can align to the National Quality Strategy by adopting one or more of the three aims and/or six priorities. Stakeholders can now align to the Strategy in a new way, using one or more of the nine "levers" described below. Each lever represents a core business function, resource, and/or action that stakeholders can use to align to the Strategy. In many cases, stakeholders may already be using these levers but haven't connected these activities to National Quality Strategy alignment.

National Quality Strategy Alignment

Each lever description below includes one example for adoption, but every lever can be applied to a variety of organizations in a number of settings.

Payment | Public Reporting | Learning and Technical Assistance | Certification, Accreditation, and Regulation | Consumer Incentives and Benefit Designs

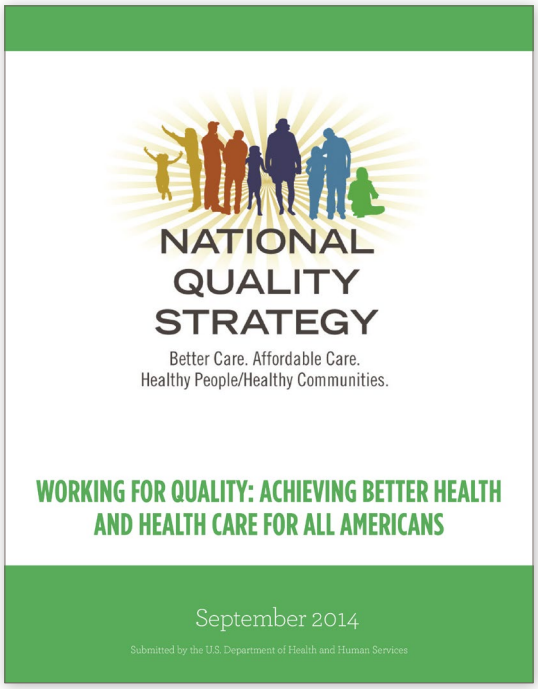
Measurement and Feedback | Health Information Technology | Workforce Development | Innovation and Diffusion

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT TO CONGRESS

The National Quality Strategy Annual Progress Report to Congress provides details on implementation activities by the private and public sectors, efforts to align quality measures, and successes in the six priority areas, including patient safety, community health, and affordability.

Use the announcement copy and graphic to promote the availability of the report in email listserv messages, Web sites, social media, or other communications channels that reach stakeholders.



ANNOUNCEMENT COPY

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the 2014 Annual Progress Report on the National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health Care. The National Quality Strategy is an initiative led by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) on behalf of HHS. The report provides details on implementation activities by the private and public sectors, efforts to align quality measures, and successes in the six priority areas, including patient safety, community health, and affordability.

Since the Strategy was first released in 2011, the private and public sectors have continued to implement activities that improve the delivery of health care services, patient health outcomes, and population health, as directed by the Affordable Care Act.

To review the annual progress report and other materials, visit http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/reports/annual-reports/nqs2014annlrpt.pdf.

PRIORITIES IN ACTION

Link to the National Quality Strategy's Priorities in Action, (http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/priorities.htm) which feature promising and transformative quality improvement programs, and describe their alignment to the NQS' six priorities. Updated monthly, these programs represent private sector, Federal, State, and local efforts.

- Making care safer by reducing harm caused in the delivery of care.
- Ensuring that each person and family is 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.

You can find the Priorities in Action on the Working for Quality site by visiting: http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/priorities.htm

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY LOGO, PRIORITY and LEVER ICONS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Pair the National Quality Strategy logo and related artwork, including the six priority icons and nine lever icons, with a link to the Working for Quality Web site (www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality) on your Web site or other marketing materials. Let us know when and how your organization uses NQS graphics by dropping us a note at NQStrategy@ahrq.hhs.gov.

LOGO

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY

Better Care. Healthy People/Healthy Communities. Affordable Care.

CALLOUT BOX EXAMPLE

Our organization aligns to the National Quality Strategy by using health IT to improve health care quality.

PRIORITY ICONS

Patient Safety

Person- and Family-Centered Care

Effective Communication and Care Coordination

Prevention and Treatment of Leading Causes of Mortality

Health and Well-Being

Affordable Care

NATIONAL QUALITY STRATEGY LEVERS

Measurement and Feedback
Provide performance feedback to plans and providers to improve care

Public Reporting
Compare treatment results, costs, and patient experience for consumers

Learning and Technical Assistance
Foster learning environments that offer training, resources, tools, and guidance to help organizations achieve quality improvement goals

Certification, Accreditation, and Regulation
Adopt or adhere to approaches to meet safety and quality standards

Consumer Incentives and Benefit Designs
Help consumers adopt healthy behaviors and make informed decisions

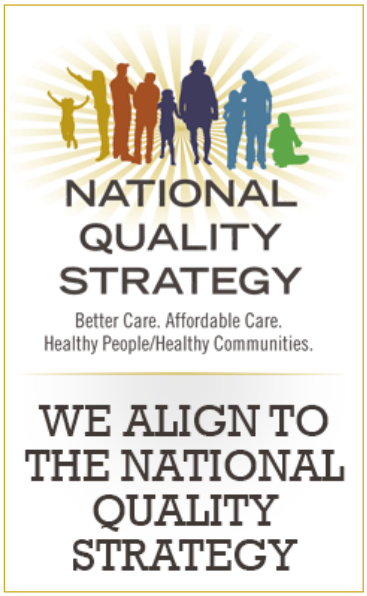
Payment
Reward and incentivize providers to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care

Health Information Technology
Improve communications, transparency, and efficiency for better coordinated health and health care

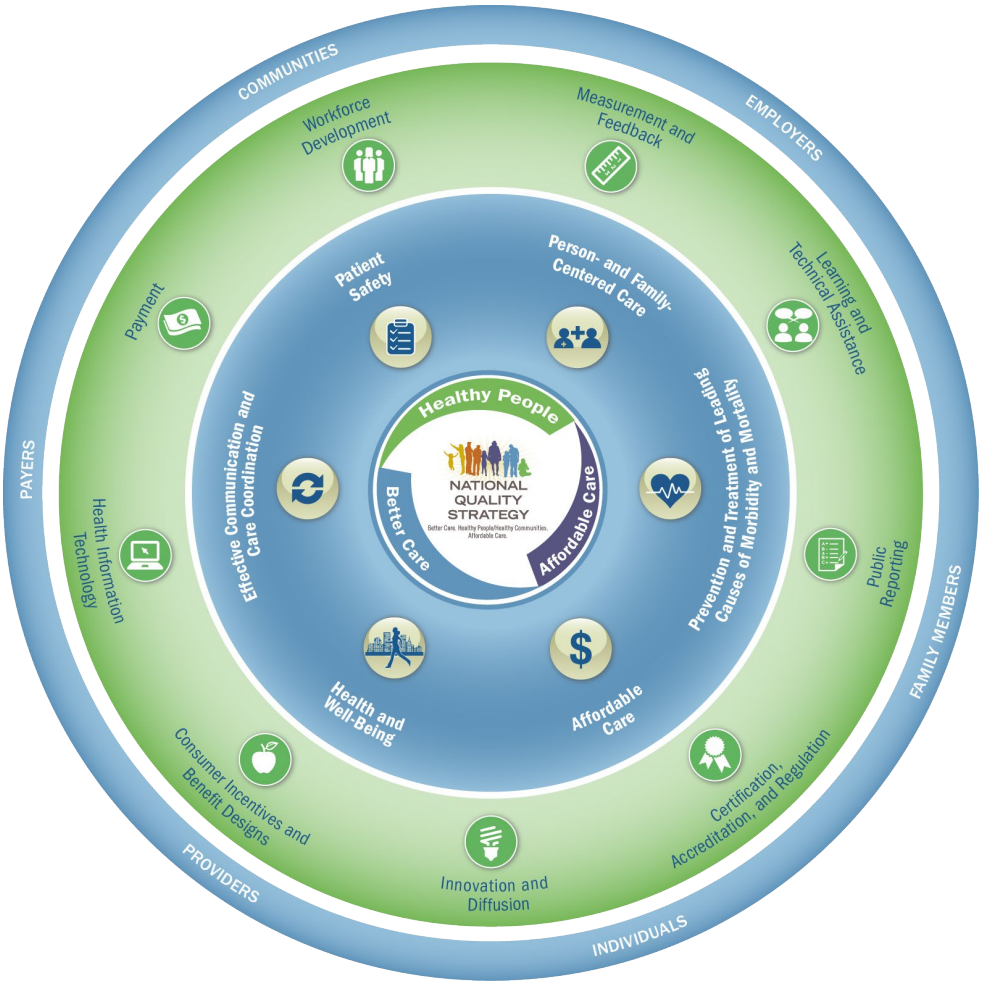
Innovation and Diffusion
Foster innovation in health care quality improvement and facilitate rapid adoption within and across organizations and communities

Workforce Development
Invest in people to prepare the next generation of health care professionals and support lifelong learning for providers

ADDITIONAL GRAPHICS FOR USE ON YOUR WEB SITE/IN MATERIALS



THE HOW IT WORKS GRAPHIC



SUGGESTED LANGUAGE

Improving health and health care quality can occur only if all sectors, individuals, family members, payers, providers, employers, and communities, make it their mission. Members of the health care community can align to the National Quality Strategy by doing the following:

- *Use one or more of the nine levers* **to identify** core business functions, resources, and/or actions that may serve as means for achieving improved health and health care quality.
- *Focus on the six priorities* **to guide efforts to improve** health and health care quality.
- *Adopt the three aims* **to provide better, more affordable care** for the individual and the community.

NEWSLETTER/WEB CONTENT TEMPLATE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Does your organization publish a newsletter or feature content on your site? Use these story ideas to design a newsletter story for internal or external use or Web site content highlighting what your organization is doing to align to the NQS.

1. Describe how your organization aligns to one or more of the six NQS priorities. List specific examples of which priorities you use and any associated results. Use the NQS Priorities in Action (http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/priorities.htm) as a guide if you need help getting started.
2. Explain how your organization is using one or more of the nine NQS levers to align to the Strategy. (The XXX lever helped our organization achieve XXX result.)

BLOG ENTRIES

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Does your organization's Web site have a column for publications and news? Post this content to your site, tag it with the designated keywords, and promote the content through social media channels, if available. Use keywords on social media and other Internet platforms to engage your stakeholders and share what your organization is doing to align with the NQS.

BLOG ENTRY #1

The National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health Care Provides a Fresh Take on Health Care Triple Aims

The National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health Care, commonly referred to as the National Quality Strategy or NQS, is the first-ever national effort to improve health and health care quality. The fundamental objective of the NQS, which was initially published in March 2011 and is updated annually, is to promote quality health care and improved health for patients, families, and communities.

The National Quality Strategy is to concurrently pursue three broad aims. These aims can be used to guide:

- Better Care: Improve the overall quality of care by making health care more patient-centered, reliable, accessible, and safe.

(Blog continued on next page)

- 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 government.

To advance the aims, the NQS focuses on six priorities that have great potential for rapidly improving health outcomes and increasing the effectiveness of care for all populations. These priorities encompass the range of quality concerns that affect most Americans. The six priorities are:

- Making care safer by reducing harm caused in the delivery of care.
- Ensuring that each person and family is engaged as a partner 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.

More information on the National Quality Strategy is available at http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality.

Tags: quality, quality improvement, national quality strategy, HHS, triple aims, better care, affordable care, healthy communities

BLOG ENTRY #2

Five Facts about the National Quality Strategy and What It Is Doing to Help Provide High-Quality Care for All Americans

The National Quality Strategy (NQS) is the first national effort to align public and private interests to achieve better health and health care for all Americans. The NQS, led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in coordination with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, was first published in 2011.

Specifically, the National Quality Strategy:

1. Provides a framework to guide local, State, and national efforts to measure and improve health and health care quality
2. Promotes quality health care that is focused on the needs of patients, families, and communities
3. Moves the health care system to work better for doctors and other health care providers by reducing their administrative burdens and helping them collaborate to improve care
4. Offers results of the latest evidence-based implementation efforts drawn from Federal and State agencies, local communities, providers, patients, businesses, employers, and payers
5. Serves as an evolving guide for health care quality improvement, which is critical given the changing face of the health care landscape

More information on the National Quality Strategy, including the 2014 Annual Progress Report, is available at www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality.

Tags: quality, quality improvement, national quality strategy, HHS

BLOG ENTRY #3

Using Levers to Align to the National Quality Strategy

Stakeholders can align to the National Quality Strategy by adopting one or more of the three aims and/or six priorities. Stakeholders can now align to the Strategy in a new way, using one or more of the nine "levers" described below. Each lever represents a core business function, resource, and/or action that stakeholders can use to align to the Strategy. Each lever includes one example for adoption, but every lever can be applied to a variety of organizations in a number of settings. Tailor the levers to meet your organization's messaging and goals for NQS alignment and health care quality improvement.

1. Measurement and Feedback —Provide performance feedback to plans and providers to improve care.
2. Public Reporting —Compare treatment results, costs, and patient experience for consumers.
3. Learning and Technical Assistance —Foster learning environments that offer training, resources, tools, and guidance to help organizations achieve quality improvement goals.
4. Certification, Accreditation, and Regulation —Adopt or adhere to approaches to meet safety and quality standards.
5. Consumer Incentives and Benefit Designs—Help consumers adopt healthy behaviors and make informed decisions.
6. Payment—Reward and incentivize providers to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care.
7. Health Information Technology—Improve communication, transparency, and efficiency for better coordinated health and health care.
8. Innovation and Diffusion—Foster innovation in health care quality improvement, and facilitate rapid adoption within and across organizations and communities.
9. Workforce Development—Invest in people to prepare the next generation of health care professionals and support lifelong learning for providers.

Learn more by visiting www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/about.htm/, and tell us about your efforts by submitting comments to NQStrategy@ahrq.hhs.gov.

Tags: quality, quality improvement, national quality strategy, HHS, levers, NQS alignment

SOCIAL MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR USE BY STAKEHOLDERS

Does your organization use Facebook or Twitter to connect with stakeholders? The following messages with shortened URLs that link to National Quality Strategy materials serve as approved, easy-to-use content on your social media channels.

FACEBOOK

Post a picture of a NQS priority or lever icon that your organization uses:

Include a caption to explain how your organization uses priorities and/or levers to improve health care quality. Share the story of how priorities and/or levers guided your organization on the path to NQS alignment.

TWITTER

Tag your NQS tweets by using the designated NQS hashtag: #qualitystrategy

1. Check out the National Quality Strategy's 2014 Annual Progress Report released earlier this year: http://1.usa.gov/1vIGqaC
2. Want to learn more about the first nationwide effort to improve health care? Learn about the National Quality Strategy's aims, priorities, and levers at: http://1.usa.gov/QtRvvb
3. Learn more about the National Quality Strategy's role in improving the Nation's health and health care: http://1.usa.gov/1w3aq1h
4. Align to the National Quality Strategy using the nine levers. Learn more at: http://1.usa.gov/1snMTpi
5. Check out eight HHS Agency-specific plans for improved care #qualitystrategy http://1.usa.gov/1j8VL1G

EXAMPLE TWEETS TO BE TAILORED FOR YOUR MESSAGING:

- (insert your organization here) is using the NQS (insert lever here) to improve care #qualitystrategy

- Read all about it! This edition of (your organization's newsletter) highlights what we are doing at (your organization) to align to the National #qualitystrategy

- Check out the (Lever or Priority in Action) on the (your organization) site! We're proud to align to the #qualitystrategy (Insert link here)

- The NQS Levers fact sheet is your step-by-step guide to #qualitystrategy alignment http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/reports/nqsleverfactsheet.htm

AHRQ Publication No. OM 15-0012-EF
July 2015