Health care in America is poised to be the best in the world. Extraordinary medical and technical advances, committed healthcare workers, and rich resources represent the abundance of our system. Despite its promise, reports by the Institute of Medicine and others conclude that our system fails to consistently deliver the right care to all patients, all the time. Huge gaps exist between knowledge and practice. To become the best healthcare system in the world, we do not need a more dedicated group of healthcare workers. We already have outstanding nurses, doctors, pharmacists, allied professionals and healthcare workers. We need better systems and processes for our workers and patients, and more rapid dissemination of proven approaches.

To achieve this vision for quality health care in America, every healthcare system should embrace the following fundamental aims described by the Institute of Medicine: care should be safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable. Achieving these aims will require revolutionary transformation.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and its Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) are committed to partnering with healthcare institutions to transform American health care. Improvements in quality for Medicare beneficiaries are guided by CMS’ Health Care Quality Improvement Program (HCQIP), which seeks to accelerate improvement in quality and efficiency of care, add value to the healthcare system, and create workplaces to attract and retain dedicated employees.

Working with the QIO community, CMS developed the Medicare Quality Improvement Community (MedQIC) to support high-level transformational change with an all-new web-based Resource Center and Improvement Support Center coming online in 2005. The Improvement Support Center is being designed as a web-based workspace for providers and QIOs to manage their quality improvement work and communicate with their peers.

MedQIC is a place where healthcare professionals can find and share resources that others have used successfully, actions to take to implement strategies, and numerous support materials to assist with the work of transforming health care. It provides expertise and guidance to support the combined efforts of healthcare workers, institutions, improvement support organizations, purchasers, and regulators – as all are essential to achieve transformation. Improvement efforts may begin within any strategic area for any clinical setting or topic under the Medicare umbrella.

This document summarizes the structure used to organize content that is posted to MedQIC’s Resource Center. The structure focuses on Medicare priority healthcare settings (e.g., nursing homes) and topics (e.g., reducing pain), aligns directly with CMS’ HCQIP Strategies to Accelerate Change, and helps providers achieve the CMS vision to ensure the right care for every person, every time.

**HCQIP Strategies to Accelerate Change**

- **Measure and Report Performance**
  Measure performance to identify opportunities for improvement and to track progress. Report results to create comparative data for use in quality improvement, public reporting, pay-for-performance, and accreditation with appropriate provider consents.

- **Adopt Health Information Technology**
  Adopt health information technology to include effectively implementing electronic health records, e-prescribing, computerized physician order entry, or other technology that supports individuals in their processes and decision-making.

- **Redesign Processes**
  Implement changes to processes including care management, patient self-management, flow, and scheduling using a variety of methods such as lean and human factors design. Redesign processes to result in fundamental, rather than additive, changes.

- **Transform Organizational Culture**
  Create a patient-centered organizational structure, workforce, and environment that strive for perfection. Empower leaders and staff to create transformational change through open communication and teamwork.
CMS and its national partners have developed quality measures to focus the work of providers and QIOs in identified healthcare settings; these measures document improvements in healthcare quality. MedQIC fosters quality improvement by leading users to a set of strategies and actions that, when taken together, can transform care far more extensively than concentrating on one isolated, albeit well-implemented, action. The site content is organized so that CMS priority settings and topics are featured prominently, steps toward implementation support strategies, and users can see how resources relate directly to a strategy for change.

Achieving measurable quality improvement in the delivery of healthcare is crucial to achieving the right care for every patient, every time. A website can greatly facilitate this objective through great content and an interesting and intuitive interface. Providers can use the site to help actualize significant and continuing improvement in the quality and effectiveness of health care. With a diverse staff of physicians, nurses, statisticians, marketing experts, and other professionals, QIOs are uniquely qualified to help providers develop and implement quality improvement strategies.

MedQIC will grow as users develop, implement, share, review, and refine strategies, actions, and tools. Ultimately, MedQIC will provide the most useful and appropriate content to achieve transformational improvement in the quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries.