



Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
Advancing Excellence in Health Care

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

[About the National Quality Strategy](#)

[Using Levers to Align to the National Quality Strategy](#)

[National Quality Strategy Alignment](#)

[National Quality Strategy Levers](#)

[What You Can Do](#)

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

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 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 activities.

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 Levers

Lever	Icon	Design	Example
Payment		Reward and incentivize providers to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care.	Join a regional coalition of purchasers that are pursuing value purchasing.
Public Reporting		Compare treatment results, costs, and patient experience for consumers.	A regional collaborative may ask member hospitals and medical practices to align public reports to the National Quality Strategy priorities.
Learning and Technical Assistance		Foster learning environments that offer training, resources, tools, and guidance to help organizations achieve quality improvement goals.	A Quality Improvement Organization may disseminate evidence-based best practices in quality improvement with physicians, hospitals, and home health agencies.
Certification, Accreditation, and Regulation		Adopt or adhere to approaches to meet safety and quality standards.	The National Quality Strategy aims and priorities may be incorporated into continuing education requirements or certification requirements.
Consumer Incentives and Benefit Designs		Help consumers adopt healthy behaviors and make informed decisions.	Employers may implement workforce wellness programs that encourage prevention and provide incentives for employees to improve health.
Measurement and Feedback		Provide performance feedback to plans and providers to improve care.	A long-term care provider may implement a strategy that includes use of Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement data to populate measurement dashboards for purposes of identifying and addressing areas requiring quality improvement.
Health Information Technology		Improve communication, transparency, and efficiency for better coordinated health and health care.	A hospital or medical practice may adopt an electronic health system to improve communication and care coordination.
Workforce Development		Investing in people to prepare the next generation of health care professionals and support lifelong learning for providers.	A medical leadership institution may incorporate quality improvement principles in their training.
Innovation and Diffusion		Foster innovation in health care quality improvement, and facilitate rapid adoption within and across organizations and communities.	Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation tests various payment service delivery models and shares successful models across the country.

What You Can Do

Learn more by visiting the [Working for Quality](http://WorkingforQuality.gov) site, and tell us about your efforts by submitting comments to NQStrategy@ahrq.hhs.gov.

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<http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/about/nqs-fact-sheets/nqs-fact-sheet-using-levers.html>

