

# Hospital Quality Improvement (HQI) Initiative

## An innovative approach to build high-reliability hospitals in rural and underserved areas

In support of the Network of Quality Improvement and Innovation Contractors 12th scope of work, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services named nine organizations, including TMF Health Quality Institute, as Hospital Quality Improvement Contractors (HQICs) for the CMS Quality Improvement Program. The new CMS Hospital Quality Improvement (HQI) initiative builds on the achievements from CMS' previous initiatives, Hospital Improvement Innovation Network and Hospital Engagement Networks, with a keen focus to improve patient safety, quality and outcomes in rural, critical access and vulnerable populations.

### Background

TMF's core mission is to strengthen the quality of health care for patients with measurable results. Since 1984, TMF has been under contract with CMS as a Quality Improvement Organization, improving care for Medicare beneficiaries through cooperative efforts with the health care community. Our longtime experience in this field enables us to understand the ongoing and increasingly unique challenges faced by hospitals today. TMF has the necessary partnerships, resources and staff to support quality improvement initiatives. Our team includes subject matter experts with the in-depth knowledge and insight necessary to achieve high-quality outcomes in the hospital setting and across the care continuum.

As an HQIC, TMF will collaborate with participating hospitals to focus on reducing all-cause patient harm and readmissions in rural, medically underserved and vulnerable populations. TMF will facilitate health care transformation by working with participating hospitals to identify, use and spread evidence-based practices, and through the systematic use of quality improvement science. As an organization with a history of strong connectedness to hospital organizations, TMF will leverage our ability to support hospitals by committing to challenging goals and remaining in on-going action to adapt and test practices in support of achieving those goals.



Figure 1. TMF HQI Initiative's Technical Expert Panel

### Goals and Areas of Focus

In alignment with the CMS Rural Health Strategy, TMF's initiative focuses on engaging rural and critical access hospitals and hospitals serving vulnerable populations. TMF provides quality improvement and technical assistance support to address opportunities in the following areas:

- ▶ Patient safety
- ▶ Patient and family engagement
- ▶ Leadership engagement
- ▶ Health care disparities
- ▶ Public health emergencies

For the three goals set by CMS, TMF will support each hospital in achieving the following measurable improvements:

1. Improve behavioral health outcomes, including a focus on decreased opioid misuse
2. Increase patient safety
3. Increase quality of care transitions

**We invite you to join us by selecting TMF as your hospital's HQIC.** By choosing TMF, some of the many benefits you and your hospital will receive include:

- ▶ Customized technical assistance, actionable data to include social determinants of health data, analytics support, and a deep understanding of rural communities and vulnerable populations
- ▶ Access to a nationally leading organization, Safe & Reliable Healthcare (S&R), on High-Reliability Organization principles that provide expertise and proven tools and resources to ensure our work with small, rural hospitals is transformative, effective and sustainable
- ▶ The opportunity to join a community of practice to learn about best practices and obtain access to evidence-based resources and tools
- ▶ The opportunity to collaborate with stakeholders committed to quality improvement, including other hospitals, post-acute care providers, state hospital associations, trade associations and community-based organizations
- ▶ Support from an organization with experience collaborating and assisting providers during the COVID-19 pandemic

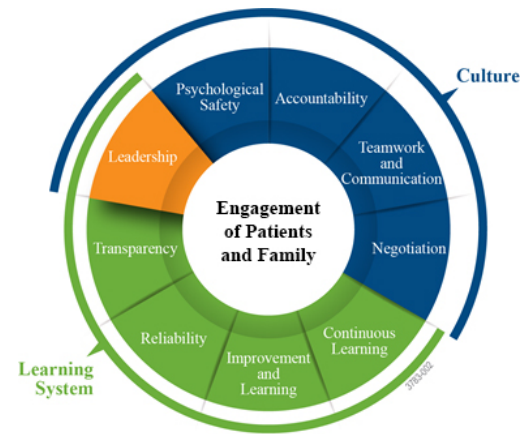


Figure 2. TMF's approach to high-reliability assessment is anchored in S&R's framework for safe, reliable and effective care.

## Next Steps

To take part in this important quality improvement initiative, please complete and return the Letter of Participation to [hqic@tmf.org](mailto:hqic@tmf.org) by **March 15, 2021**. TMF quality improvement specialist will reach out to eligible hospitals to answer any questions, provide additional information and assist in registration. You may also contact TMF directly at 512-334-1642 or [hqic@tmf.org](mailto:hqic@tmf.org) and we will respond by the next day.

Your hospital and providers work hard every day to provide safe reliable quality care. TMF invites you to partner with us to work to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, economy and quality of services delivered to the patients you serve.