



AHRQ: Your Science Partner for Quality Improvement

State Healthcare Quality Improvement Workshop

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Margie Shofer

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality



What AHRQ Does

- Funds and produces a broad base of scientific research
- Creates tools to make evidence-based decisions
- Promotes improvements in clinical and health systems practices and informs public policy



AHRQ Mission

To improve the quality, safety, efficiency and effectiveness of health care for all Americans



Using Evidence in Health Decision Making- Quality

National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Reports

- NHQR/DR mandated by Congress
- National Healthcare Quality Report - annual report on national trends in the quality of health care
- National Healthcare Disparities Report – annual report on health care disparities related to racial/ethnic and socioeconomic factors
- State Snapshots- reports focusing on quality and disparities in each state.



Using Evidence -Efficiency

Limiting reimbursed drugs to 3/month caused individuals with chronic illnesses to forgo filling prescription drugs necessary to keep them healthy, and caused an increase in other services such as hospital stays and nursing home admissions.

Source: Fortess, Soumerai, McLaughlin et al, *Journal American Geriatric Society*, June 2001



Using Evidence -Efficiency

- Eliminating dental reimbursement for adult emergency services increased hospital emergency room department use by 12 percent.
- Emergency departments were used to treat a range of problems from abscesses and cysts to periodontitis and broken teeth

Source: Cohen, Manski and Magder et al, *Journal of the American Dental Association*, June 2002



Using Evidence- Safety

Motorcyclists in States without universal helmet laws are more likely to die during hospitalizations, sustain severe traumatic brain injury, be discharged to long-term care facilities and lack private health insurance.

Source: Coben, Steiner and Miller, Accident Analysis and Prevention, January 2007



Using Evidence -Safety

- Extended-duration work shifts pose safety hazards for interns
- Eliminating extended work shifts and reducing the number of hours interns work per week can reduce serious medical errors in the intensive care unit.
- In the first year following implementation of the ACGME duty-hour standards, interns commonly reported noncompliance with these requirements.

Sources:
Barger, LK et al, *Extended work shifts and the risk of motor vehicle crashes among interns*, New England Journal of Medicine, January 2005
Landrigan CP et al, *Effect of reducing interns' work hours on serious medical errors in intensive care units*, New England Journal of Medicine, October, 2004
Landrigan CP et al, *Interns' compliance with accreditation council for graduate medical education work-hour limits*, Journal of the American Medical Association, September 6, 2005



Using Evidence - Effectiveness

Treating Gastric Reflux (GERD)

- Medicines called proton pump inhibitors (PPI) (for example the "purple pill", Nexium) work better than other medicines such as Tagamet and Zantac in treating GERD. But PPIs are more likely to cause side effects such as headache or diarrhea.
- Studies show that, overall, each PPI works about as well as another for relieving symptoms.

Source: Comparative Effectiveness of Management Strategies For Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease, AHRQ Publication No. 06-EHC003-EF, December 2005



Using Evidence - Effectiveness

Pay for Performance Guide for Purchasers

- Includes 20 questions for purchasers to address when considering pay for performance, and reviews options and any available evidence that may inform their decision making.
- Also discusses potential effects and unintended consequences of pay for performance.



Using Evidence - Effectiveness

Consumer Financial Incentives: A Decision Guide for Purchasers

- Reviews application of incentives to 5 types of consumer decisions: (1) Selecting a high value provider, (2) Selecting a high value health plan, (3) Deciding among treatment options, (4) Reducing health risks by seeking preventive care, and (5) Reducing health risks by decreasing or eliminating high-risk behavior




Sharing Health Innovations

- New initiative to share and learn about innovative ways to improve quality of health care delivery comprised of
 - A searchable collection of innovations in health care delivery.
 - An array of opportunities to learn about innovation and the adoption process and to participate in learning networks with people who share similar challenges.
- Website - <http://www.innovations.ahrq.gov/>

 **Health Care Innovations**



 **Selective State-Based Projects**

- Medicaid Medical Directors Learning Network
- Medicaid Care Management Learning Network
- NGA Policy Academy on Quality
- Health Information Technology state projects

 **Staying in Touch**

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