

OASIS Alert

Quality Improvement: USE HHQI CAMPAIGN TO BOOST YOUR OASIS OUTCOMES

Share your agency's data to improve everyone's measures.

Every service your clinicians and other staffers perform has one common goal: to provide top-notch, quality care to your patients. However, creating a high-performing agency isn't as easy as it sounds.

That's where the Home Health Quality Improvement (HHQI) National Campaign wants to step in, says **Eve Esslinger**, project coordinator for CMS contractors **WVMI** and **Quality Insights of Pennsylvania** in Harrisburg.

Objectives: The HHQI campaign is designed to "unite home-health stakeholders and health care organizations, reduce avoidable hospitalizations, and improve medication management," according to the campaign Web site.

Through "Best Practices Intervention Packages" published each quarter, the campaign will focus on:

- Risk assessments,
- Emergency care plans,
- Fall prevention programs,
- Increased initial visits,
- Remote patient monitoring,
- Triage,
- Improved medication management, and
- Physician communication.

Registered agencies have access to free resources, tools, and other data that will help them improve the quality of their care in these areas -- making it simpler to excel across all OASIS C outcomes.

While some agencies may feel they've tackled all the training and education they need, the newness of OASIS C makes now the perfect time "revisit their practices for identifying and planning for risks," Esslinger points out.

For instance, using tools provided for free by the campaign, agencies could hone their processes for spotting who's at risk for hospitalization and then reducing the likelihood that the patient will be admitted.

Practical application: Introducing the campaign's resources can also help you better pinpoint where your staffers or procedures have gotten slack, and where they could use some extra flexibility.

Try this: Take a look at your hospitalization rate, Esslinger encourages. If the rate is high, use the campaign's tools to find where you're going wrong and get back on track. If your rate is low, use the tools to examine your policies and procedures to ensure they support your outcomes, she says.

The campaign's leaders hope its best practices packages will also help you educate patients about managing their medications and understanding their individual role in their own care plan.



Get started: The campaign has issued its first best practices package, which takes aim at an important topic, Introduction and Fundamentals of Reducing Avoidable Hospitalizations. The next package will focus on falls.

More than 4,000 agencies have joined the campaign so far, Esslinger reports. You can register for the campaign and log in for your best practices package at www.healthquality.org.

Resource: Get a glimpse of the types of tools offered through the campaign with "Refer To This Checklist To Reduce Falls Risk" on the next page.