

Quality Improvement in Maternity Care

The Issue

Quality improvement initiatives are key to improving maternal and infant health outcomes, linking evidence-based knowledge and clinical practice.

ACOG, a leader in the national quality measurement arena, is actively engaged with the American Medical Association-convened Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement® (PCPI) in the development of maternity care quality measures. The PCPI process is the gold standard for development of evidence-based performance measures.

ACOG is also an active participant in the National Quality Forum (NQF), the consensus-based body involved in the endorsement of developed measures, as well as the Ambulatory Quality Alliance and the Surgical Quality Alliance, organizations that assist in the coordination and implementation of quality measures and initiatives.



What Is Needed

- Additional resources are needed to fully update, maintain and implement existing measures, and develop and test new measures, building on ACOG's and our partners' development of robust measures in ob-gyn.
- Widespread integrated use of health information technology (HIT) is integral to these efforts. HIT systems must collect measures across the episode of care for pregnancy and childbirth, integrating outpatient prenatal and postpartum data with labor and delivery records collected by hospitals and free-standing birth centers. ACOG supports the HIT requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Differences in local health care systems and populations may require regionalized quality improvement initiatives. California, Maryland, Ohio and Intermountain Health quality improvement collaboratives link hospital- and community-based medicine.
- Alternative health care delivery models, including a women's medical home, which integrate care throughout a woman's life and across care settings, may increase quality and efficiency.
- The Medicaid Adult Health Quality Measures Program, under the ACA, may improve maternity outcomes in the Medicaid program, which currently finances 42% of all US births. This program must be preserved.

What Else Must Congress Do?

Pass Making Obstetrics and Maternity Safer (MOMS) Campaign-endorsed legislation and provisions:

- Fund demonstration projects to maintain and improve current measures, develop new measures in ob-gyn, and expand data collection and aggregation initiatives; in consultation with national medical specialty societies, including ACOG (Sec. 931 of ACA).
- Continue funding for Adult Health and Children's Health Quality Measure Reporting programs within Medicaid, as created by Sec. 1139B of ACA and Sec. 401 of the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA), for dissemination and voluntary reporting of ob-gyn related quality measures.
- Coordinate measurement programs in the ob-gyn area and address gaps to ensure ob-gyn measures are fully addressed.
- Fund the development of regional quality improvement initiatives to research and pilot evidence-based quality improvement projects.
- Support the testing of a women's medical home through the CMS Innovation Center (Sec. 3021 of ACA).
- Create demonstration projects on maternity care delivery models, including the centering maternity care/group pre-natal care model and collaborative practice models.
- Fund a Maternity Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey to assess patient experience of care at the clinician/group, hospital, and health plan levels, building on the existing CAHPS for primary, dental, and surgical care.