

Indiana State Department of Health
Indiana Healthcare Quality Improvement Regional Collaborative Project
Questions and Answers

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Regional Collaborative Project Questions and Answers

There is an ISDH sponsored regional collaborative and a CMS / QIO sponsored national collaborative. Which should the facility participate in?

ANSWER: The facility will benefit by participation in both collaborative projects. The regional collaborative was designed to be a mechanism to assist with implementation of other projects such the national collaborative. Regional collaborative projects will be provided QAPI project materials and resources developed by state partners and other collaborative projects. The regional collaborative project will include in-person meetings to ensure the opportunity to improve interaction and coordination. The CMS / QIO national collaborative will include webinars or conference calls providing training or information. The QIO may also be able to provide support to individual facilities. The ISDH and QIO (QSource) are coordinating schedules and activities of the two projects to prevent duplication and improve the benefit to participants.

Will QAPI become mandatory for nursing homes?

ANSWER: Yes. While they have not announced an effective date or standards, CMS has indicated their intent to extend the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) process to nursing homes. CMS already requires QAPI for several other types of providers. CMS has developed and released a number of documents for nursing homes in preparation of implementation. A purpose of the collaborative projects is to assist facilities with implementing QAPI requirements.

Does a facility have to enroll or participate in one of the collaborative projects?

ANSWER: No. There is no requirement to participate. The projects are intended to assist facilities with complying with expected QAPI requirements. Every facility will have to demonstrate that they have a quality improvement process in place to assess and coordinate care. The facility's program must include projects meeting QAPI standards and include an accepted process improvement system. The two collaborative projects are designed to assist facilities in complying with those requirements. So, while a facility is not required to participate in a collaborative, our goal is for the projects to be valuable to the facilities.

Why is the ISDH requiring one of the first projects of a regional collaborative to be a healthcare associated infection prevention project?

ANSWER: One of the initial goals of the regional collaborative project is to provide training in the development of QAPI projects. QAPI projects should be short projects and focus narrowly on an output. The ISDH included infection prevention as one of the initial projects for all regional collaborative groups because there are a number of projects related to healthcare

associated infections such as a hand hygiene project that would be good initial demonstration projects. Besides being good potential projects in infection prevention, there are significant infection prevention issues that need addressing. Data continues to demonstrate a significant number of facilities not meeting infection prevention standards. In addition, in the past year issues such as Ebola Virus Disease and MERS-CoV have highlighted the need for implementation of improved infection prevention and control measures.

Who from the facility should participate in the collaborative projects?

ANSWER: The ISDH recommends that facilities include a number of participants representing a variety of care levels. Facilities will likely want to change participants based on the project or topic. For instance, if the collaborative is discussing Alzheimer's and dementia care, the facility might want to include the Alzheimer's Unit Director, a staff nurse, and certified nurse aide. If the collaborative is discussing QAPI plans that are a higher administrative discussion, it might be appropriate for the Administrator and Director of Process Improvement to participate. The ISDH hopes that the facility will not get locked in on specific individuals but include a number of staff based on facility needs and collaborative activities.

My facility is located in an area that does not have a regional collaborative. What are my options?

ANSWER: The National Nursing Home Quality Care Collaborative is available to all facilities. In fact, the goal is to have 75% of Indiana's nursing homes participating in that collaborative. The ISDH Regional Collaborative Project includes seven collaborative projects that cover a little over half of the state. We began with seven because it was a manageable number to implement at one time. Our goal is to eventually have active regional collaborative projects throughout the state available to all nursing homes. For those facilities not in an area with a regional collaborative, you might want to begin discussions with healthcare and organizational partners in the area about setting up a collaborative.

May the regional collaborative and participating facilities pick their own projects?

ANSWER: A regional collaborative is expected to pick their own projects based on needs assessments of its participants. Under the QAPI process, facilities are to conduct ongoing needs assessments, identify quality issues, and develop a project to address that issue. As facilities identify quality issues, other facilities likely have the same issue so the collaborative is a great resource for assisting in development of quality improvement projects.

Will surveyors be checking facility's progress or efforts with the collaborative projects?

ANSWER: Not at the present time. Once QAPI requirements are implemented, it is expected that state surveyors will be reviewing a facility's QAPI plan and projects to determine compliance with regulations.

Can facilities do more than two QAPI projects?

ANSWER: The intent is that facilities and collaborative groups will do more than two QAPI projects. The number of projects should be based on the number of identified quality issues. As collaborative groups develop QAPI projects, the project plans will be compiled and made

available to assist in the development of project plans. The ISDH only required two projects in order to receive the initial funding support.

Who should be contacted with questions, concerns or difficulty with a QAPI project?

ANSWER: Each collaborative has a sponsoring organization with a contact person. Facilities should regularly communicate with their contact person. A facility may also contact the QIO as their scope includes assistance with QAPI implementation. Facilities are always welcome to contact the ISDH. We are partnering with the University of Indianapolis Center for Aging & Community. We will process assistance in addressing questions or concerns.