



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) What is IU Health Quality Partners (IUHQP)?

It is a clinically integrated provider group; it is not a contracted health insurance plan network where physicians receive a set fee for service.

2) What is clinical integration?

Clinical integration is collaboration among healthcare providers to develop active and ongoing clinical initiatives that are designed to control costs and improve the quality of healthcare services. Participation in an effective clinical integration program provides physicians the ability to contract collectively with employers and benefit plan administrators who recognize the value of high quality healthcare.

3) What are accountable care organizations (ACOs) and how does clinical integration align with them?

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 and the resulting changes being implemented by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) focuses on ACOs as a way to provide quality healthcare while managing costs. Most experts believe that CMS will adopt ACOs as an alternative to fee-for-service reimbursement in 2011 with some programs being implemented in 2012.

ACOs are intended to:

- coordinate, manage, and streamline the continuum of care, particularly for inpatient and ambulatory care, to ensure the highest level of patient outcomes.
- identify and implement a standard set of quality measures.
- pursue efficiency processes to drive down healthcare costs.

In addition to this legislation, the healthcare landscape is being shaped by employers and insurance plans that are focusing more on pay for performance, and looking for standardized report cards to demonstrate quality patient outcomes. It is anticipated that these payors will follow CMS' lead and look at ACOs as an alternative to traditional fee-for-service reimbursement models.

IU Health Quality Partners recognizes that healthcare providers are the central player in addressing healthcare reform. Our clinical integration program supports many healthcare system quality initiatives by directly engaging physicians in supporting quality care and patient safety with reportable data.

4) Why should I join IU Health Quality Partners?

As a member of Quality Partners, you will become part of a physician-directed program that is helping lead the movement toward clinical integration in Indiana. There are several ways that you will contribute to its success.

- Collaborate to a much higher degree with physicians who are focused on quality of care, not quantity.
- Have the opportunity to help identify and develop quality metrics to provide best practice pathways of care; these quality measures can be viewed in an interactive online database.
- Help eliminate inefficiencies to reduce cost.
- Gain economic benefit for delivering high-quality healthcare services.
- Help introduce a new product to the marketplace that focuses on value and best practice delivery which could drive business to your practice.



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- Continue your independent status, while having visibility to and participation in the clinical integration process.

5) What will I need to participate in IU Health Quality Partners?

Membership is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will:

1. Sign a Network Participation Agreement, Business Associate Agreement, and Peer Review Agreement. These agreements specify the details associated with participation in the program.
2. Collaborate with your physician colleagues in the development and adoption of clinical initiatives that will enhance the quality, service, and cost-effectiveness of patient care.
3. Hold yourself and your colleagues accountable for compliance with the initiatives of the program, including disciplinary and remediation efforts should physicians not meet the benchmarks set by the IU Health Quality Partners Steering Committee.

6) What clinical initiatives will IU Health Quality Partners include?

The physician committee selected a number of physician practice measures for both ambulatory and inpatient care. You will be encouraged to participate in the measure selection process for your specialty. In addition, you will be expected to log in and review your data in IU Health Quality Partners' clinical integration platform on a monthly basis at a minimum.

7) By agreeing to participate in IU Health Quality Partners, will I be required to abandon medical staff appointments at non-IU Health hospitals or

admit patients only to IU Health hospitals and ambulatory care facilities?

No, IU Health Quality Partners is a non-exclusive organization with no limitations on your ability to admit patients to non-IU Health sites, or maintain contracts with health plans, another non-IU Health clinical integration program, or IPA affiliation. However, the legal requirements of clinical integration require that we capture sufficient quality data that represents a meaningful sample of your practice. If a very high volume of your care is delivered at non-IU Health facilities, it may be difficult for you to report on care delivered in those facilities and, therefore, to meet the quality standards of the program.

8) By agreeing to participate in IU Health Quality Partners, will I have to abandon my current payer contracts?

No. At this time, you may maintain agreements with health plans with which IU Health Quality Partners does not contract. If IU Health Quality Partners does decide to engage in negotiations with a payer, we will seek a collectively-negotiated, quality-enhanced fee schedule – and, in many cases, additional pay-for-performance incentives. Participation in IU Health Quality Partners requires your participation in all clinically integrated health plan contracts that it enters, and you will not have the ability to opt out of these health plan agreements and still remain in the IU Health Quality Partners program.

9) Will participation in the IU Health Quality Partners require me to change the way I practice medicine?

Yes. Participation in the quality and care management initiatives will require significant time and attention from you and your office staff.



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In return, you will be eligible to obtain financial rewards for your achievements through the clinical integration program. The amount of any incentive payments will depend on both your personal score and the overall score of the organization. This latter component highlights the importance of physicians working together in an interdependent manner to improve care.

10) Do I have to use electronic medical records (EMR) to participate in IU Health Quality Partners?

An ambulatory EMR is not a prerequisite for this program. At a minimum, you must have access to high speed internet and process claims electronically. IU Health Quality Partners is working with software vendors who have streamlined the data collection process to make it as easy as possible on practice operations. You may need to perform additional steps if your practice does not currently collect the quality measures selected by the physician steering committee.

11) Has the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) clarified the meaning of clinical integration?

As defined by the FTC, a “qualified clinically integrated arrangement” is: *...an arrangement to provide physician services in which: 1. all physicians who participate in the arrangement participate in active and ongoing programs of the arrangement to evaluate and modify the practice patterns of, and create a high degree of interdependence and cooperation among these physicians, in order to control costs and ensure the quality of services provided through the arrangement; and 2. any agreement concerning price or other terms or conditions of dealing entered into by or within the arrangement is reasonably necessary to obtain significant efficiencies through the joint arrangement.*

(Statements of Antitrust Enforcement Policy in Health Care by the FTC and the U.S. Department of Justice, Statement 8).

For more information, visit this website.
<http://www.ftc.gov/reports/hlth3s.htm#8>.

12) What does it cost to participate in IU Health Quality Partners?

There is no membership fee or charge for physician participation in IU Health Quality Partners. The only investment will be your time and energy.

13) What benefit do hospitals, and in particular, IU Health, provide in the development of a clinical integration program?

Partnering with a hospital can provide distinct advantages to a network of independent physicians in the development of clinical integration. In instances where the hospital shares the same quality vision as the physicians, the hospital can be a powerful ally in the program development by:

- 1) collaborating with physicians in the development of clinical integration initiatives based on existing inpatient quality measures.
- 2) lending financial assistance and personnel in the implementation of inpatient and outpatient initiatives that provide true community benefit and are not tied to the volume or value of referrals.
- 3) demonstrating to payors and the community as a whole that clinical integration is both legitimate and valuable.

14) Will IU Health Quality Partners profile my performance?

We understand that some patient cases are more complex than others. You will only be measured against those member physicians who are handling similar medical cases. In addition, the process is collaborative with your regional peers and not punitive.



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15) Why is IU Health pursuing this initiative?

IU Health is a private, nonprofit organization that owns or is affiliated with more than 20 hospitals and health centers throughout Indiana and is closely tied to the Indiana University School of Medicine. IU Health combines resources, research, staff and administrative procedures for the greater benefit of our patients and the community at large.

IU Health Quality Partners is just another way that IU Health is working to help physicians provide the best care to patients throughout Indiana, while rewarding those physicians for their commitment to quality measures. As reimbursement for health services shifts from the fee for service model to a new model based on increased value and transparency, IU Health sees an immediate need to align physicians around the state in a collaborative relationship through data and infrastructure.

16) I am a member physician of IU Health Quality Partners. Where can I find my patient data?

The Quality Partners physician data portal is located at www.qualitypartners.org. You will need to complete an access request form provided by IU Health Quality Partners for access to this site. You will receive your log in credentials soon after, with instructions for accessing your data.

For more information about IU Health Quality Partners, please contact:

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