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Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 1:21 PM
Subject: National Quality Strategy Released Today

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to inform you that Secretary Sebelius today released the National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health Care. As you know, the Strategy was called for under the Affordable Care Act and is the first effort to create national aims and priorities to guide local, State, and national efforts to improve the quality of health care in the United States.

Thank you very much for your commenting on the draft of this document. Your feedback and input was essential to the development and refinement of the final version.

The National Quality Strategy will promote quality health care that is focused on the needs of patients, families, and communities. At the same time, the Strategy is designed to move the system to work better for doctors and other health care providers – reducing their administrative burdens and helping them collaborate to improve care. The Strategy presents three aims:

Better Care: Improve the overall quality, by making health care more patient-centered, reliable, accessible, and safe.

Healthy People & Communities: Improve the health of the U.S. population by supporting proven interventions to address behavioral, social, and environmental determinants of health in addition to delivering higher-quality care.

Affordable Care: Reduce the cost of quality health care for individuals, families, employers, and government

To help achieve these aims, the Strategy also establishes six priorities to help focus efforts by public and private partners. Those priorities are:

- Making care safer by reducing harm caused in the delivery of care.
- Ensuring that each person and family is engaged as partners in their care.
- Promoting effective communication and coordination of care.
- Promoting the most effective prevention and treatment practices for the leading causes of mortality, starting with cardiovascular disease.
- Working with communities to promote wide use of best practices to enable healthy living.

- Making quality care more affordable for individuals, families, employers, and governments by developing and spreading new health care delivery models.

The National Quality Strategy is designed to be an evolving guide for the Nation as we continue to move forward with efforts to measure and improve health and health care quality, and I hope that you will use it to guide your efforts to improve the quality and safety of health care services.

To read the National Quality Strategy, please go to

<http://www.healthcare.gov/center/reports/quality03212011a.html>.

Supporting documents are available at

<http://www.ahrq.gov/workingforquality/>. We look forward to our continued collaboration with you to make the National Quality Strategy a reality.

Carolyn