



Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Grant Program (Rural Quality)

The Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Grant Program (Rural Quality) focuses on improving the quality of care provided in rural primary care settings for chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular disease).

The ultimate goal of this program is to improve health outcomes through enhanced chronic disease management by utilizing an electronic patient registry system; tracking and reporting specific health indicators using nationally accepted performance measures; assessing the need for and implementing additional quality improvement measures; and participating in technical assistance through monthly conference calls and peer-learning workshops with fellow Rural Quality grantees that are facilitated by a quality improvement specialist.

The Rural Quality program began in FY 2006 as a 2-year pilot and has increased to a 3-year grant program beginning in FY 2010. The first year is dedicated to choosing and implementing an electronic patient registry, training staff, and identifying an initial patient population of focus. Grantees collect data on patients with a diagnosis of diabetes mellitus during the second year and spread to cardiovascular disease during the third year.

Funding

In FY 2010, HRSA has awarded \$5.8 million in funding to support 59 grantees under the Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement program.

Key Program Accomplishments

Since the start of the program in FY 2006:

- 129 providers in rural underserved areas have been supported through the Rural Quality Program
- Over 40,000 patients with a diagnosis of diabetes mellitus or cardiovascular disease have been monitored through an electronic patient registry
- Many providers have continued tracking patients and performing quality improvement activities beyond their project period and after Federal funding has ceased
- During the 2009-2010 project year, grantees reported adopting 369 clinical benchmarks and estimated earning \$368,491 in project revenue due to implementation of the quality improvement project.
- The Peer Learning Workshop was held in July 2010, and focused on patient self-management, sustainability, and information technology.