



News Release

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
News Division

202-690-6343
media@hhs.gov
www.hhs.gov/news
Twitter [@HHSMedia](https://twitter.com/HHSMedia)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 23, 2014

HHS Secretary announces \$840 million initiative to improve patient care and lower costs

New initiative will support networks that help doctors access information and improve health outcomes

Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell today announced an initiative that will fund successful applicants who work directly with medical providers to rethink and redesign their practices, moving from systems driven by quantity of care to ones focused on patients' health outcomes, and coordinated health care systems. These applicants could include group practices, health care systems, medical provider associations and others. This effort will help clinicians develop strategies to share, adapt and further improve the quality of care they provide, while holding down costs. Strategies could include:

- Giving doctors better access to patient information, such as information on prescription drug use to help patients take their medications properly;
- Expanding the number of ways patients are able communicate with the team of clinicians taking care of them;
- Improving the [coordination of patient care](#) by primary care providers, specialists, and the broader medical community; and
- Using electronic health records on a daily basis to examine data on quality and efficiency.

“The administration is partnering with clinicians to find better ways to deliver care, pay providers and distribute information to improve the quality of care we receive and spend our nation’s dollars more wisely,” said Secretary Burwell. “We all have a stake in achieving these goals and delivering for patients, providers and taxpayers alike.”

Through the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative, HHS will invest \$840 million over the next four years to support 150,000 clinicians. With a combination of incentives, tools, and information, the initiative will encourage doctors to team with their peers and others to move from volume-driven systems to value-based, patient-centered, and coordinated health care services. Successful applicants will demonstrate the ability to achieve progress toward measurable goals, such as improving clinical outcomes, reducing unnecessary testing, achieving cost savings and avoiding unnecessary hospitalizations.

The initiative is one part of a strategy advanced by the Affordable Care Act to strengthen the quality of patient care and spend health care dollars more wisely. [For example](#), the Affordable Care Act has helped reduce hospital readmissions in Medicare by nearly 10 percent between 2007 and 2013 –

translating into 150,000 fewer readmissions – and quality improvements have resulted in saving 15,000 lives and \$4 billion in health spending during 2011 and 2012.

Building upon successful models and programs, such as the Quality Improvement Organization Program, Partnership for Patients with Hospital Engagement Networks, and Accountable Care Organizations, the initiative provides opportunities for participating clinicians to collaborate and disseminate information. Through a multi-pronged approach to technical assistance, it will identify existing health care delivery models that work and rapidly spread these models to other health care providers and clinicians.

“This model will support and build partnerships with doctors and other clinicians across the country to provide better care to their patients. Clinicians want to spend time with their patients, coordinate care, and improve patient outcomes, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services wants to be a collaborative partner helping clinicians achieve those goals and spread best practices across the nation,” said Patrick Conway, M.D., deputy administrator for innovation and quality and CMS chief medical officer.

Practice Transformation Networks. CMS will award cooperative agreements to group practices, health care systems, and others that join together to serve as trusted partners in providing clinician practices with quality improvement expertise, best practices, coaching and assistance. These practices have successfully achieved measurable improvements in care by implementing electronic health records, coordinating among patients and their families, and performing timely monitoring and interventions of high-risk patients to prevent unnecessary hospitalization and readmissions. Practice Transformation Networks will work with a diverse range of practices, including those in rural communities and those that provide care for the medically underserved.

Support and Alignment Networks. CMS will award cooperative agreements to networks formed by medical professional associations and others who would align their memberships, communication channels, continuing medical education credits and other work to support the Practice Transformation Networks and clinician practices. These Support and Alignment Networks would create an infrastructure to help identify evidence-based practices and policies and disseminate them nationwide, in a scalable, sustainable approach to improved care delivery.

By participating in the initiative, practices will be able to receive the technical assistance and peer-level support they need to deliver care in a patient-centric and efficient manner, which is increasingly being demanded by health care payers and purchasers as part of a transformed care delivery system. Participating clinicians will thus be better positioned for success in the health care market of the future - one that rewards value and outcomes rather than volume.

HHS encourages all interested clinicians to participate in this initiative. For more information on the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative, please visit:

<http://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Transforming-Clinical-Practices/>

###

Like [HHS on Facebook](#), follow HHS on Twitter [@HHSgov](#), and sign up for [HHS Email Updates](#)
Follow HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell on Twitter [@SecBurwell](#)