

Primary Care Quality Improvement Plans

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a Quality Improvement Plan?

A. A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is a formal, documented set of commitments that a health care organization makes to its patients/clients/residents, staff and community to improve quality through focused targets and actions. QIPs are used in many sectors to assist organizations in delivering quality programs and services.

Q. When does my organization need to submit their QIP?

A. All QIPs must be submitted by April 1, 2014. Organizations will be able to submit their QIPs via the QIP Navigator between March 1 and April 1 each year.

Q. I have questions about completing my QIP. Where can I find answers?

- A. There are four areas where you can find support and guidance for the completion of your organization's QIP.
- I. There is a comprehensive Guidance Document available on the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care's [website](#)
 - II. The [QIP Navigator](#) has built-in help functions (see Question mark icons) to guide you through the process and provide you with helpful examples
 - III. An extensive suite of resources is available on the [Resources page](#) of the QIP Navigator
 - IV. You can contact an HQO QIP specialist at QIP@hqontario.ca

Q. What is the submission process for 2014/ 15 Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)?

A. Hospitals and primary care organizations are to submit their 2014/15 quality improvement plans via QIP Navigator, Health Quality Ontario's convenient online tool, by April 1, 2014. To access the QIP Navigator, please [click here](#).

Long-term care (LTC) organizations and community care access centers (CCACs) are to submit their QIPs via email, using the templates provided on the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care's [website](#). Long-term care and CCAC quality improvement plans consist of a Narrative and a Workplan. The Narrative is to be submitted as an MS Word document, while the Workplan is to be submitted as an MS Excel spreadsheet. Both documents should be emailed to QIP@hqontario.ca by April 1, 2014.

Q. Who is required to submit a QIP to HQO?

- A. The following organizations are required to develop QIPs and submit them to HQO by April 1 of every year:
- All public hospitals in Ontario
 - Inter-professional team-based primary care models - specifically, Family Health Teams (FHT), Nurse Practitioner-led clinics (NPLC), Community Health Centres (CHC), and Aboriginal Health Access Centres (AHAC)
 - Community Care Access Centres (beginning in 2014)
 - LTC homes are encouraged to submit QIPs by April 1, 2014. However, they will not be required to submit annual plans until 2015.

Q. Where can I find the QIP guidance materials?

A. Guidance materials are posted on the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care's website and include the guidance document, the indicator technical specifications document, and a FAQ. [Click here](#) to visit the ministry's QIP website.

Q. Are there indicators that I am expected to include in my QIP?

- A. The [Indicator Technical Specifications](#) document describes a set of priority indicators for each sector's QIP. Each organization should review the priority indicators for their sector and determine which are relevant to them.

To support this process, your organization should also review its current performance against provincial benchmarks/theoretical best for all priority indicators. Additional indicators, relevant to your organization's quality improvement goals, can also be included in your QIP.

Q. Can changes be made to a QIP after it has been submitted to HQO?

- A. Although the QIP becomes read-only once it has been submitted through the QIP Navigator, organizations can still make updates to their QIPs after they have been submitted. For example, an organization may alter their change strategy if an improvement initiative was not effective. If amendments are made to a plan after April 1, HQO recommends that the most current version of the QIP be posted on the organization's website and that any changes be made apparent to the public.

Please note that any changes that are made to a QIP after the April 1 deadline will not be considered in the QIP analysis report that HQO develops each year.

Q. What questions should I use to survey my patients?

- A. Survey questions have been provided to support data gathering. In order to support practices and primary care organizations in their quality improvement efforts, Health Quality Ontario is developing a primary care patient experience survey. Following pilot-testing, this survey and an accompanying implementation guide will be available to all primary care practices in Ontario. Implementation of the survey will be the responsibility of practices and/or organizations either on their own or in collaboration with other practices or organizations. For more information about HQO's primary care patient experience survey, please contact patientexperience@hqontario.ca

Q. How is current performance calculated for survey results?

- A. To calculate current performance, add the number of respondents who responded "same day" and "next day", and divide this sum by the number of respondents (do not include non-respondents or respondents who answered "not applicable/ don't know/ refused"). For example:

Formula for calculation = Numerator/Denominator X 100

Numerator: "same day" + "next day"
Denominator: Total number of respondents, minus number of "not applicable" (Don't know/ refused) responses

Q. One QI project can take consume team resources for the better part of a year. How is it possible to follow through on QI projects for all of the priority indicators (plus additional indicators) in one year?

- A. HQO recognizes that it takes focus and resources to work on QI projects and that setting priorities can often be a challenge. Organizations are not necessarily required to actively work on improvements in all areas. Organizations are encouraged to carefully consider the target they wish to reach for each priority indicator; the gap between current and target performance; the complexity of the problem; and the human, financial and temporal resources required to achieve the targets they have set. When those issues have been considered, organizations will be able to prioritize QI projects and develop improvement plans for the year. In many cases, organizations will choose to focus their energy and resources on one or two indicators.

QIP Navigator – Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the QIP Navigator?

A. The QIP Navigator is an online tool designed to streamline the QIP development and submission process. QIP Navigator was developed by HQO in partnership with the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care, the Ontario Hospital Association, the Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario, and the Association of Ontario Health Centres. The QIP Navigator was launched last year for hospitals and was expanded this year to serve the primary care sector. It will be further expanded in the coming year to serve other sectors of Ontario's health system.

Q. Where can I receive QIP Navigator training?

A. The Tutorial page has a [video tutorial](#) on how to use the QIP Navigator.

Q. What are the QIP Navigator's technical requirements?

- I. High speed internet connection
- II. One of the following supported Internet browsers
 - a. Internet Explorer 7, 8, 9, 10
 - b. Chrome 27, 28, 29
 - c. Firefox 21, 22, 23
 - d. Safari 3, 4, 5
- III. The following Office and Adobe software:
 - a. MS Office 2007 (Word and Excel) or more recent versions
 - b. Adobe Reader 9 or a more recent version

Q. I cannot access the QIP Navigator due to my organization's firewall. How do I turn off the firewall?

A. Please contact your IT administrator to disable your firewall or allow access to the QIP Navigator [website](#).

Q. Where do I get login details for the QIP Navigator?

A. Each organization received an email with their unique login and password on December 10, 2013. Emails were sent to each organization's Chief Executive Officer, as well as organizational Quality Leads. For privacy reasons, users are asked to change their QIP Navigator password following the first log-in. Please contact the quality lead of your organization to retrieve the required login details.

Q. I forgot my Navigator password. How can I retrieve it?

A. There is reset password function built into the QIP Navigator. Completing this process will email a temporary password to the individual to which the account is registered.

Q. In what formats will QIP Navigator accept our organization's logo?

A. The image formats supported are: .jpg, .jpeg, .gif and .png. The file size limit is 512k.

Q. Can more than one user access the QIP Navigator at the same time?

A. Yes. The QIP Navigator is a collaborative space, and as such, more than one user can be logged in and working on different aspects of the QIP at once. Please note that if two users are working in the same area of the QIP Navigator, only the most recently saved data or input will be saved.

Q. I see a "corporation number" when I log in to my organization's QIP. What is that?

A. The identification number that you see when you log-in to your QIP is an administrative number that HQO uses to track QIP submissions. It is also used to prepopulate information within the QIP. For hospitals, this should be the same as the hospital number provided by the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care.

Q. Who will have administrative access to the submitted QIPs?

A. All raw data will be stored on Health Quality Ontario's database. Saved data is private and only visible to those individuals who have access to the QIP Navigator. Data will only be retrieved for analysis after QIPs are formally submitted by April 1, 2014.

Q. Is the data from my QIP visible to the general public or to other organizations?

A. Hospital QIPs will be posted on the "Sector QIPs" tab of the QIP Navigator, as will those of consenting primary care organizations. Organizations are responsible for posting their QIPs publicly on their websites and/or on other public forums. The general public will not have access to the QIP Navigator and will thus not be able to access your organization's QIP through the site.

Q. How do I export documents from the QIP Navigator?

A. In order for the QIP Navigator to recognize that an indicator is "active," and thus available for export, there must be data entered into that indicator's fields. This will save organizations the time of deleting blank indicators prior to exporting the Workplan as an Excel spreadsheet. Indicator definitions can be copied and pasted into the Workplan (e.g., as additional indicators) and can be found in the ministry produced [Indicator Technical Specifications](#). Please note: any changes you make to the exported document(s) will have to be re-entered into the QIP Navigator. There is no uploading function.

Once exported, you can save both the Workplan and Narrative as PDFs and post them on your website or share them at meetings. To view a brief tutorial on how to export your QIP Workplan and print it, please [click here](#).

Q. I would like to include materials that are already in other documents within the Narrative, (tables, graphics, etc.). What is the best way to input these into the Navigator?

A. While on the Narrative page, the text editor does have a "paste from Word" icon. Clicking this icon will allow you to paste documents from MS Word and keep whatever formatting may be in place. If you want to add more complex or detailed graphics to your Narrative (for public posting), you may want to consider exporting the Narrative to Word, adding graphics, and then posting the document. For the purposes of HQO's analysis, detailed graphics are not required.

Q. What is the purpose of the "Internal QI Note" field of the QIP Narrative?

A. This collaborative space was requested by users and quality leads. It is for organizations to track internal notes that may assist in the development of QIP Narratives. For example, brief notes that describe when outbreaks and other challenges occurred throughout the year, or when renovations started and how they affected the daily routine. These internal notes are meant to help teams document certain issues throughout the year, enabling them to provide context later. Internal notes will be exported but can be erased prior to submission or posting. If the Internal QI note field is left blank, it will not be exported.

Q. Who do I contact if I have more questions?

A. Please contact QIP@hqontario.ca with any questions you may have about the QIP composition and submission process. Questions about legislative and/or policy requirements related to the MOHLTC Guidance Materials or broader *Excellent Care for All Act* (ECFAA) questions should be directed to the Ministry of Health & Long-Term care (ECFAA@ontario.ca)