Achieving Buy-in for Quality Initiatives

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Are you part of a large anesthesiology practice or a small one? As you know, all anesthesia practices are not the same. Each of your experiences may be different when it comes to adopting quality initiatives or participating in quality reporting. The Anesthesia Quality Institute (AQI) offers the following guidance to help your practice in the world of quality.

Educate clinicians. Practices—whether large and small—must be familiar with quality initiatives, both for federal mandates (e.g. MIPS) and internal benchmarking. Practices will find it beneficial to educate clinicians on the benefits of quality reporting beyond the requirement to participate in MACRA.

Effective approaches include webinars, discussions at staff meetings, and presentations that include real-world examples. AQI also provides monthly webinars called Quality Reporting Office Hours that review quality reporting topics and NACOR® updates as well as a live Q&A session at the end of the presentation.

Assemble a quality strategy implementation team. For larger practices, it is crucial to make sure the team leading the work represents clinicians, financial leaders, executive leaders, and IT specialists. These diverse perspectives can generate a more realistic, timely, and executable strategy.

The team should analyze data, assess risk, gauge technological constraints, and solicit opinions from key stakeholders. To ensure the group is successful, practices should allow time for the team to meet regularly before, during, and after quality strategy implementation.

In smaller practices, one person might oversee several of the roles outlined above and have many responsibilities. It is crucial every person in the practice understands the importance of their role and how their duties fit into the big picture.

Create a strategic plan for quality initiatives. With a defined, yet flexible plan, a practice will be able to successfully begin quality initiatives. The strategic-implementation team should take ownership of creating the plan, considering these tasks along the way:

- **Data submission**
  - Identify submission schedule (AQI recommends monthly)
  - Verify file format

- **Data review**
  - Look at practice level and individual provider

- **Data utilization**
  - Benchmark data for local analytic reports
  - Contract negotiations
  - Use for local quality improvement
  - MIPS reporting provider

- **Education**
  - Identify and seek training for areas in need of improvement

- **Repeat cycle**

Examine the current reporting infrastructure. Practices should assess their existing capabilities to capture (EHR or paper) and analyze data.

In addition to meeting quality reporting requirements outlined by CMS, reporting data helps practices demonstrate quality and value metrics, and guides improvements in their practices. Practices can use the data to renew hospital contracts, develop business opportunities, and objectively demonstrate quality to hospitals and third-party payers.

AQI’s NACOR portfolio, which includes Quality Concierge®, Quality Reporting, Benchmarking, and Basic, plays a role in helping practices assess clinical outcomes, benchmark their results, and promote patient safety across the specialty.

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