



THE NATIONAL URGENCY FOR OPIOID STEWARDSHIP

The opioid epidemic in America is an urgent public health crisis with devastating consequences. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly two million Americans have a prescription-related opioid use disorder (OUD), and 46 people die from a prescription opioid-related overdose every day—more than a four-fold increase since 1999. These staggering statistics demand coordinated commitment from healthcare organizations and communities to improve opioid stewardship so that patients can be assured safe and effective pain management that reduces their risk of OUD and overdose.

Our nation faces an urgent an escalating public health crisis in the opioid epidemic. *The National Quality Partners Playbook™: Opioid Stewardship* is a critically important tool for frontline providers to more safely and effectively manage patients' pain.

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Prescription opioids are powerful medications to help manage pain. These drugs, which include oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine and methadone, benefit many individuals, including those undergoing active cancer treatment, those receiving palliative or end-of-life care, and some with acute pain. However, prescribing opioids for long-term, chronic non-cancer pain without fully understanding the addictive properties of opioids has contributed to widespread misuse. Clear connections also have emerged between the use of prescription opioids and the use of illicit opioids such as heroin, which is growing across the nation.

NQF'S FUNDAMENTAL ACTIONS TO SUPPORT OPIOID STEWARDSHIP

The National Quality Forum's *National Quality Partners (NQP) Playbook™: Opioid Stewardship* provides essential opioid stewardship guidance for healthcare organizations and clinicians across care settings. Developed with input from more than 40 experts and national stakeholders from the public and private sectors, the *NQP Playbook™* identifies seven fundamental actions to support high-quality, sustainable opioid stewardship programs:

- 1. Promoting leadership commitment and culture**, including allocating resources and support from organizational leaders.
- 2. Implementing organizational policies** to support evidence-based approaches to multimodal pain management.
- 3. Advancing clinical knowledge, expertise, and practice** to ensure clinicians are trained in and understand the science of pain, evidence-based pain management strategies, and patient communication techniques.
- 4. Enhancing patient and family caregiver education and engagement** so they are fully informed about risks and benefits of appropriate pain management options and are active participants in decisions about pain management plans.
- 5. Tracking, monitoring, and reporting performance data** on opioid prescribing, patient-reported outcomes, adverse events, and the use of prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) to identify opportunities for improvement and assess the impact of opioid stewardship efforts.
- 6. Establishing accountability** to articulate clear expectations for creating, promoting, and maintaining a culture of opioid stewardship.
- 7. Supporting collaboration with community leaders and stakeholders** to achieve maximum impact.

The *NQP Playbook*[™] is an important step that will help us establish urgency around developing a comprehensive program for better pain treatment—one that will lead to sustainable approaches to preventing and mitigating against our current national substance abuse emergency.

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The *National Quality Partners (NQP) Playbook*[™] includes examples for implementation, potential barriers and suggested solutions, and sample tools and resources for each fundamental action area. Implementation examples—organized by basic, intermediate, and advanced—offer approaches based on anticipated level of resources and effort. The goal is for organizations to determine which approaches are best for them based on their own organizational context. Healthcare organizations and leaders may find the *NQP Playbook* content relevant across care settings, including acute, ambulatory, and home and community-based care.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The *NQP Playbook* encourages healthcare organizations to develop realistic measurement strategies to assess key areas such as clinician prescribing patterns and the use of non-pharmacologic pain management options. In addition, the *NQP Playbook* identifies important drivers of change that can impact and advance opioid stewardship—including licensure, education, accreditation, payment, reimbursement, workforce management, and the use and integration of PDMPs into electronic health records—and urges federal entities, accreditation agencies, and partners in quality improvement to support action in these areas.

Download the *NQP Playbook* in the **NQF Store**. Questions? Contact National Quality Partners at nationalqualitypartners@qualityforum.org

NATIONAL QUALITY PARTNERS[™] OPIOID STEWARDSHIP ACTION TEAM

NQF gratefully acknowledges the **National Quality Partners Opioid Stewardship Action Team** members for providing technical consultation as NQF developed and produced the *NQP Playbook: Opioid Stewardship*.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Trinity Health
- Aetna
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
- American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- American Nurses Association
- American Physical Therapy Association
- American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
- Appriss Health
- BlueCross BlueShield Association
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Council of Medical Specialty Societies
- Dental Quality Alliance
- Elevating Home
- Geisinger Health System
- Harborview Medical Center
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- HealthPartners
- Henry Ford Health System
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