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Editorial

A New Generation of Quality Advocates

By David B. Nash, MD, MBA
Editor-in-Chief

As I reviewed the articles for this issue of *Prescriptions for Excellence in Health Care*, I found myself wondering about the future of the National Quality Forum and the important priorities established by the National Priorities Partnership (NPP). Who will advance the agenda for high-quality, safe, patient-centered health care in the future?

The answer to my question became apparent when I attended the 2nd Annual American Medical Student Association Quality and Safety Institute. Over the course of this 3-day event, more than 20 medical and premedical students learned about cultural barriers to quality, tools to measure quality, and strategies to advance projects at their home institutions. The timely and informative sessions were taught by faculty from the Jefferson School of Population Health, Drexel University College of Medicine, The National Board of Medical Examiners, New York Hospital Cornell Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and Christiana Care (DE).

The bottom line is that quality and safety can no longer be "electives" in a medical school curriculum. While most current faculty lack knowledge and expertise in this field, today's students will ensure that this critical information becomes part of the standard medical school curriculum of the future. Moreover, they will put the information to use in their professional lives – following the fine examples set forth by the authors in this issue.

The lead article, *"Practical Ideas for Patient and Family Engagement in Health Care,"* offers hospitals and health systems several practical, easily applied suggestions for involving patients and families in their health care. The following article, *"Care Coordination in the Context of a Population Health Management Model,"* describes the breadth and depth of this relatively new field as it relates to the NPP goal of care coordination.

The third article, *"Leapfrog: Unique and Salient Measures of Hospital Quality and Safety,"* describes a successful, high-impact health care reform initiative that originated in the private purchaser sector. The goal of "eliminating overuse while ensuring the delivery of appropriate care" is addressed in terms of reduction of unwarranted procedures in the final article, "*Applying Appropriateness Methods to Address Overuse While Ensuring the Delivery of Appropriate Care: The Example of Cardiac Revascularization.*"

I hope that these articles will inspire readers to become advocates for the NPP's National Priorities and Goals within their organizations and, equally important, will champion the case for quality and safety in medical school curricula.

As always, I am interested in your feedback; you can reach me by e-mail at: david.nash@jefferson.edu or visit my blog at: nashhealthpolicy@blogspot.com.

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