

# Accelerating Improvement, Reducing Burden and Achieving Greater Value in Health Care

**Policymakers are well aware of the challenges** facing America’s health care system. Reports from government watchdogs, think tanks and advocates detail the problems and suggest countless solutions. **Every year, hundreds of bills are filed—and billions of dollars are invested—to address a complex web of issues.**



Although there are no easy answers, there are policies that can **achieve cross-cutting goals** and improve care for millions of people. **Digitizing health care quality measures** is one solution, and it proposes to advance our collective goals including:



- ▶ Improved patient outcomes.
- ▶ Higher patient satisfaction.
- ▶ Lower costs.
- ▶ Reduced overuse, misuse, disparities and harm.
- ▶ Decreased provider burden.
- ▶ Less red tape.
- ▶ Increased transparency into value.

**Most of the system still collects data manually**, adding time, creating unnecessary work, mistakes and expenditures. Our failure to embrace and enable modern methods of data transmission affects every aspect of health care delivery in America. It’s time to develop an automated, accurate and timely quality measurement and reporting system that can maximize outcomes and capitalize on the technologies that are already commonplace in most industries.

Digital quality measures will:

- ▶ **Leverage health data** already captured in electronic health records and other clinical data sources, rather than manually entering the information into a separate system.
- ▶ Let providers engage in **rapid cycle improvement** as they see their own performance on important elements of patient care, such as beta-blocker treatment after a heart attack, controlling high blood pressure, comprehensive diabetes care, breast cancer screening and more.
- ▶ **Create the capacity for health plans** to more easily identify how many of their members receive recommended care for specific conditions, and preventive care such as immunizations and flu shots, smoking cessation and obesity counseling.
- ▶ **Drive alignment** of interoperability and health data exchange standards that make quality measures easier to deploy.
- ▶ **Promote knowledge sharing** across the continuum of care.

To accelerate adoption of digital quality measures in health care, we must create the right incentives. Implementing technologies that move away from paper-based reporting can be resource-intensive and time consuming. CMS has released a [strategic roadmap](#) that calls for all digital reporting in the next decade. **Congress can play its part in helping to reach this ambitious goal** by rewarding health care entities that take the lead in transitioning to digital quality measurement.