

ABMS Patient Safety Physician Education QI Fund Project

The 2008 American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Patient Safety Physician Education Program was offered as a QI Fund Project to HMO IPAs. The purpose of the program is to provide physicians with the tools and knowledge needed to improve patient safety and the quality of care offered in their practices.

The 2008 contract with HMO IPAs included a QI Fund payment based upon the percentage of physicians in the IPA who complete the ABMS Patient Safety Physician Education Program by 11/30/2008.

The 20-hour continuing medical education course focused on three main areas:

- Patient Safety Scenarios
 - Medication errors, hand-offs, team work
 - Physician-specific scenarios (for example, there are modules specifically for improving safety in a surgical setting)
- Patient Safety Curriculum and QI Fundamentals
 - Systems, Communication, Epidemiology, Safety Culture
- Patient Safety Improvement Activities
 - Physicians were asked to construct a mini-quality improvement activity for their own practice. Suggested activities included hand hygiene, daily goals, and medication reconciliation

BCBSIL's final results for the 2008 QI Fund Patient Safety Project are summarized as follows:

- A total of 604 unique HMO physicians completed the Program prior to the deadline of November 30, 2008. (This number represents 7.4% of the 8,202 HMO physicians credentialed from 1/01/08 - 11/30/08.)
- 456 of the 604 physician completions (76%) were PCPs
- IPA performance for the 2008 ABMS) Patient Safety Physician Education Program was:
 - 30 of the 79 HMO IPAs (38%) met a payment threshold.
 - 17 (22%) earned the maximum payment
 - 4 (5%) earned 75% of the maximum payment
 - 3 (4%) earned 50% of the maximum payment
 - 6 (8%) earned 25% of the maximum payment
 - 49 of the 79 IPAs (62%) did not meet the minimum payment threshold
- IPAs were given two opportunities to meet a payment threshold for this QI Fund Project through a "PCP-only" rate or an "All Specialties Combined" rate. IPAs earned the higher of the rate for PCPs and the rate for all physician specialties.
 - 25 IPAs met their highest payment threshold through the "PCP-Only" option.
 - 5 IPAs met their highest payment threshold through the "All Specialties Combined" option.

In a post-course survey conducted by ABMS, 95% of respondents said that the program "provided techniques to improve patient safety" in their practice, and 83% said that they would apply the techniques they learned during this program in their own practices.

Identified Barriers

- Physician Barriers:
 - Didn't have time
 - Did not want to participate in CME program

- CME requirement just passed
- \$100 fee (discounted from \$145 for BCBSIL physicians)
- Wouldn't authorize release of data to BCBSIL
- 20-hr estimated seat-time
- IPA Barriers:
 - \$100 fee
 - Difficult to motivate physicians to participate in CME program
 - Affiliated physicians not credentialed with IPA
- BCBSIL Barriers:
 - Physicians didn't enter full or correct medical license number, or included special characters (hyphens, spaces, etc.)
 - Difficult to track who completed the full program

2008 was the first year of the Patient Safety Physician Education QI Fund Project so a goal was not identified.