When I am seeking medical treatment, don’t I want to be informed about who the best providers are and go to them for my care?

How come I can get quality information about common items such as automobiles or appliances, but not about healthcare?

When I am seeking medical treatment, don’t I want to be informed about who the best providers are and go to them for my care?

**Maine citizens deserve answers to these questions**

We can make a difference. Maine’s leading consumer, labor and purchaser organizations are banding together under this single vision to promote publicly available healthcare quality measures so that every person in Maine can meaningfully engage in their own healthcare decisions.
To consumers, healthcare providers, legislators and other interested parties. Maine’s leading consumer, labor and purchasing organizations have come together under a single vision to promote publicly available measures of healthcare quality. The Alliance for Quality Healthcare Information, created in February of 2004, is promoting this message in every available forum in order to ensure that consumers have the right information at the right time in readable and understandable venues so that they can make more informed choices about the healthcare that they seek.

Listed below are the statewide participants in this initiative.

Statewide Participants
Representing over 300,000 people in Maine

- AARP Maine
- Health & Work Outcomes
- Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust (MMEHT)
- Local S6, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM/AW)
- The Institute for Self-Directed Care
- Maine Education Association Benefits Trust
- Bath Iron Works
- Teamsters Union Local # 340
- Maine People’s Alliance
- State Employee Health Commission
- University of Maine System
- University of Maine Professional Staff Association (UMPSA), MEA & NEA Affiliate
- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) Maine

For more information, contact Maureen J. Kenney at 442-5346
Leapfrog Group For Patient Safety and Rewarding Higher Standards
Selected Citations For Leapfrog’s Statistically-based Statements

Every year, up to 98,000 people die in America's hospitals as a result of mistakes that are preventable.

Source: The Institute of Medicine: To Err is Human: Building a safer health system. 1999.

Medical mistakes are the fifth leading cause of death in America, causing more deaths than car accidents, breast cancer and AIDS.


More than 11 people are killed every hour in America due to medical mistakes.

Source: Statistic based on the following data: The Institute of Medicine: To Err is Human: Building a safer health system. 1999. Additional estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 47, No. 25.

In 2004, Maine hospitals reported 15 deaths due to Medical errors, 5 instances where a patient lost some form of body function, and 3 cases where surgery was done on the wrong person or body part.

Source: Portland Press Herald, 2/3/05

While death is the most tragic outcome, medical mistakes cause other problems as well. They lead to permanent disabilities, extended hospital stays, longer recoveries and/or even additional treatments.

Medical experts estimate that more than one million medication mistakes happen every year in U.S. hospitals.


More than four million patients are admitted to ICUs each year in the U.S. and 500,000 of these patients die.


Simple mistakes cause serious medication errors. For example, sometimes a decimal point is not seen on a prescription order. This type of mistake can result in patients being given 10 times as much medication as they should have been.

Healthcare Information Advocate
Train the Trainer Certificate Program
“There is a growing recognition that our ability to control costs and improve healthcare quality will require an effective partnership with informed and engaged consumers.”

– Dr. Judith Hibbard
Introduction

• No one likes feeling sick and powerless, especially when it comes to their own health.
• At those difficult times, people may reach out to someone like you – someone whose life and work involves helping co-workers and others deal with the many questions posed by today’s healthcare and benefits system.
• This training program is designed to help you help others. It will change how you look at healthcare.
• It will also enable you to be a resource for others – regardless of whether you have had any experience as a trainer.
• The goal is not to become a trainer, but to give you the knowledge, tools, and instructions to make it possible for you to feel more competent about this complex subject.
• When you are done with all modules, you will have the option to become a certified Health Information Advocate. It involves a simple quiz and results in a certificate of completion.
Program and Train-The-Trainer Objectives

The Healthcare Information Advocates program goals are to:

• Help consumers feel more informed and empowered about their health care;
• Enable people to act upon healthcare quality information and better manage their own healthcare encounters;
• Provide information and tools for selecting high-quality, effective treatments; and
• Increase the number of Maine people who are informed healthcare consumers.

When consumers are engaged, they get better care for themselves and participate in the activities that improve the quality of care for all!
Program and Train-The-Trainer Objectives

The Healthcare Information Advocates The Train-the-Trainer program goals are to:

• Provide you with hands-on experience with the course and the many healthcare quality tools available to consumers today;
• Train you well enough so that you can train others following the same training program outline; and
• Enable you to be a valuable information resource for your organization and community.
Tips for Trainers Starting Out

• Each of the six modules (in addition to this trainer-the-trainer session) is designed to be presented in about 45 minutes.
• If desired, more than one module can be presented in a single session.
• There is no “homework,” so it is possible to complete the course in one full day - if the modules are presented back-to-back.
• Prepare for each session in advance. Checklist items include:
  – Arrange for computer stations with internet access
  – Power point projector
• Remember, you are not alone.
• Be pleasant and be yourself.
• When asking questions, be patient listening for responses.
• Stay on track, but don’t rush through the module.
Training Course Outline

Why Should I Even Care about Healthcare Quality?
Module 1 – This session introduces the Certificate Program, “Informed Consumerism.” It explains why healthcare quality matters and demonstrates healthcare quality varies.

Empower Yourself
Module 2 – Learn how to prepare yourself to get safer healthcare; review some common healthcare questions and how to navigate around the leading sources of diagnosis and symptom specific information, such as WebMD.
Module 3 – Become familiar with the tools and techniques offered by a whole host of resources available to help healthcare consumers make better choices.

How to Select a Doctor or Hospital
Module 4 – Learn how to use and understand the hospital and physician practice information available on the Maine Health Management Coalition website. A step-by-step process, resources, interview questions, and other information will be provided.

Talking with Your Doctor
Module 5 - This session provides tips to enable consumers to make the most of the interaction with providers. Participants will learn what questions to ask and how to care for their own safety. Patient/Provider interaction materials will be distributed.

Putting It Into Practice
Module 6 - Certification Exam
Why Should I Even Care about Healthcare Quality?
Module 1: Purpose of Today’s Training

• To identify individuals whose primary function is to help employees and their families regarding benefits and healthcare questions and enhance their knowledge and understanding about:
  – the growing movement toward “Informed Consumerism” in America regarding healthcare
  – the sources of information available to healthcare consumers and how to use these tools
• To assist participants to be of greater assistance to employees and family members when asked questions regarding healthcare
• To become knowledgeable enough about the information that you could educate others following the same training program outline
• When you are done with all modules, you will have the option to become a certified Health Information Advocate. It involves a simple quiz and results in a certificate of completion.
Where Do We Fit?
What makes healthcare consumers empowered?

They are …

• Familiar with the health plan benefits available to them
• Capable of finding and using basic information that is relevant to their health status
• Able to determine when and how to access appropriate healthcare services (PCP, ER)
• Confident in asking questions of their providers
• Willing to make an active selection of healthcare providers based on multiple sources of information
• Able to self-manage their chronic illness (such as diabetes, asthma, heart conditions)
Why should consumers care?

Because all healthcare is not created equal!

• Where you go often determines how well you’ll get and how quickly you’ll get well!
• Today we’ll review some reputable information sources that demonstrate this point.
5 Minute Review & Take-Away

• Read through the three flyers provided
  – Leapfrog citations regarding the status of healthcare quality in the United States
  – MHMC Pathways to Excellence flyer
  – Alliance for Quality Healthcare Information (AQHI) flyer

• Highlight some key points in the flyers that really captured your attention.

• Break into small groups and discuss some of the key points:
  – Why isn’t all healthcare created equal?
  – What is the goal of the AQHI? If they achieve their goal, why will this make a difference?

• Agree upon your biggest “take-away” from this list of facts.
Summary / Demonstration

• Reassemble as one big group
• Small group leaders report out the surprising information their group found in the flyers
• List them on the board
• Do you think all employees will find the same information surprising
Empower Yourself - Part 1
Module 2: Purpose of Today's Training

- To review three nationally regarded disease-specific websites that employees and their families may find useful.
- To understand how to prepare yourself to obtain safer healthcare and avoid medical errors.
Module 2: Purpose of Today's Training

- Please review these nationally regarded disease-specific websites that employees and their families may find useful:
  - Drkoop.com … Internet Health and Wellness Network is dedicated to “providing trusted information and guidance to consumers” (not affiliated with C. Everett Koop)
  - WebMD.com … products and services are focused on “promoting more informed decision-making, increased efficiency and higher quality patient care at a lower cost”
  - MayoClinic.com … mission is to empower people to manage their health by providing useful and up-to-date information and tools that reflect the expertise and standard of excellence of Mayo Clinic

Your Task:
visit all three web pages and search for information on the following:
- **Diagnosis**: Joint Pain / Inflammation
- **Symptom**: joint swelling
- **Medication**: Ibuprofen
Provides technical information and graphics

Scroll down left column to get to drug search to find information on specific medications.
Provides links to articles in the Health Guide A-Z database on specific diagnoses, provides ability to understand specific symptoms.
Provides links to articles written by Mayo Clinic Staff on specific diseases and medications, with search engine for specific symptoms.
Summary / Demonstration

- Select a specific diagnosis, symptom and medication of your choosing
- Visit all three websites and try to find information on each of the above items
- Be prepared to take the instructor through at least one of the websites (using the criteria you define above)
- Talk about the things you can do to get safer health care.
Empower Yourself - Part 2
Module 3: Purpose of Today's Training

- To familiarize yourself with many of the tools and techniques at a whole host of resources available to help healthcare consumers make better choices.
AHRQ – Consumer Information

• What is AHRQ?

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) mission is to improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of healthcare for all Americans. Information from AHRQ's research helps people make more informed decisions and improve the quality of health care services. AHRQ was formerly known as the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research.

AHRQ supports more than 90 projects in a multi-year effort to improve patient safety by identifying factors that put patients at risk; using technology to reduce and prevent errors; developing approaches to reducing errors and improving safety in diverse healthcare settings and geographic locations; and disseminating research results and improving patient safety education for clinicians and providers.
http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer
Leapfrog Group Patient Safety

- Who is Leapfrog?
  - The Leapfrog Group is a national organization made up of more than 160 companies and organizations that buy health care, working to initiate breakthrough improvements in the safety, quality and affordability of healthcare for Americans.
  - Leapfrog is a voluntary program aimed at mobilizing employer purchasing power to alert America’s health industry that big leaps in health care safety, quality and customer value will be recognized and rewarded.
http://www.leapfroggroup.org/
What Does Leapfrog Do? Four Leaps!

- Leapfrog asks hospitals if they have in place four ‘leaps’ in quality and safety practices. These leaps were chosen because scientific evidence shows that they reduce unnecessary deaths and injury.
  1. **An RX for RX** – choose a hospital that requires its staff to use computers to order medications, tests and procedures. This is called a Computerized Physician Order Entry system (CPOE).
  2. **Practice and Results Make Perfect** – select a hospital with lots of experience and the best results for specific procedures, surgeries or conditions. This is known as Evidence Based Hospital Referral (High risk procedures).
  3. **Sick People Need Special Care** – choose a hospital with an intensive care unit (ICU) that is staffed by doctors and other caregivers who have special training in critical care. These are doctors are called ‘intensivists’.
  4. **Leapfrog Quality Index** – Select a hospital that has a high Leapfrog Quality Index. This means it has put in place 27 procedures to reduce preventable medical mistakes.
JCAHO – Quality Check

• **Who is the Joint Commission?**: The nation's leading standards-setting and accrediting body in health care; focused on improving the quality and safety of care provided by health care organizations.

• **What is Accreditation?** A distinction given to an organization when its performance meets or exceeds the Joint Commission's standards and quality expectations.

• **Why use Quality Check?** Quality Check is one source of accreditation and comparison information that a person can use to determine whether a health care organization will meet his or her needs.
http://www.jcaho.org
Summary / Demonstration

• Visit the organization web sites discussed today
  - Leapfrog web site www.leapfroggroup.org
  - AHRQ: http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer
  - Joint Commission www.jcaho.org

• Read through some of the information provided
• Select one that really gets your attention and discuss
• Be prepared to take the instructor through this web site and explain what it means to you
How to Select a Doctor or Hospital
Module 4 : Purpose of Today's Training

• To familiarize yourself with the Maine Health Management Coalition (MHMC) website

• To learn how to access and compare information about physicians and hospitals available on the web site.
  - Information available to compare hospitals:
    • 5-year trend data on inpatient costs
    • Measures of patient safety
      - Medication safety
      - Infection control
      - Patient safety practices
    - Pathways to Excellence (PTE) program
      • Office SYSTEMS to manage patient information
      • Clinical GUIDELINES to prevent and manage chronic illness
      • MEASUREMENTS of results of patient care
The Maine Health Management Coalition (MHMC) is a coalition of employers, hospitals, health plans, and doctors working together since 1994 to improve the quality of healthcare in Maine. Quality care means providing the right care at the right time in the right amount. It also means ONLY providing care that is needed, effective and safe.
Maine Health Management Coalition

Employers
11 Private Employers
4 Public Purchasers

Providers
9 Hospitals
8 Physician Groups

Health Plans
4 Health Plans

Bringing the purchaser and provider communities together in a partnership to measure and report on the value of healthcare services to inform employer and employee decisions

Value = Quality / outcomes + Change in health status + Employee / patient satisfaction + Cost
Among The 3,500 MHMC Survey Respondents

Many Report Activated Behaviors and Attitudes

- Nearly all (92%) are confident that they can tell their doctor their concerns even when the doctor does not ask.
- Over three-quarters (78%) “Always” or “Sometimes” bring a list of questions to discuss when they go to the doctor.
- Over half (58%) say they are “Always” comfortable asking their doctor questions about healthcare quality and medical errors.
- Fewer (43%) say they “Always” tell a doctor or nurse about any drug allergies, even when they are not asked.
- Most “Agreed” (37%) or “Strongly Agreed” (60%) that they are responsible for managing their own health.
- The vast majority (94%) agreed that “people have to be informed and take active steps to avoid poor quality medical care.”
And Have Seen Quality Information Within a Given Time Period*

* Wisconsin study asked similar, but not identical questions immediately after the report was out. Maine asked “in the past 12 months…”
MHMC: Inpatient Hospital Costs

- MHMC data is available (see handout)
- All Maine hospitals were compared to see how much they varied from expected costs for specific diagnoses
  - A subgroup of inpatient hospitalizations was used representing the types of patients admitted to virtually all Maine Hospitals (for example: maternity, gall bladder surgery, hip replacement, hysterectomy, GI obstruction, heart attack)
  - Exclusions
    - Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Rehabilitation
    - Cardiac was also excluded since only 2 hospitals had enough volume to compare (MMC & E MMC)
    - After all exclusions, ~50,000 inpatient records from 1997-2002 were used to analyze payment variations
- The “payment variance” shows how much above or below the state average each hospital is
MHMC Hospital Cost Data Sheet

Total Variance in Inpatient Payments Compared to MHMC Norm

Source: Maine Health Information Center, March 25, 2004
Key to MHMC Hospital Inpatient Cost Measure:

Amount of variation in inpatient payments across all Maine hospitals (% above and below this state average).

- at least 20% below state average
- 11-19% below state average
- 10% below to 10% above state average
- 11-19% above state average
- at least 20% above state average
MHMC: Safety Measures

MHMC safety data is available when you go to the home page, select Hospitals radio button, click “view results.”

• **Medication Safety Criteria:**
  – This measures how well hospitals do in checking new prescriptions when a pharmacist IS on duty and when a pharmacist IS NOT on duty

• **Infection Control Criteria:**
  – This measures how well hospitals do giving antibiotics for pneumonia, as well as how well they follow national guidelines for giving antibiotics prior to specific surgeries.

• **General Safety Effort Criteria:**
  – This measures how well hospitals focus on preventing medical mistakes by working with staff to find and correct those actions that lead to mistakes.
MHMC Safety Measures

• Ratings for MHMC Safety Measures (Medication Safety, Infection Control and Patient Safety Practices):
  How well has each hospital implemented recommended quality and safety practices?

  - Fully implemented
  - Good progress
  - Good early stage effort
  - Willing to report publicly; does not meet criteria for higher categories
  - Did not disclose this information
  - Not Applicable - does not apply

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See what MHMC shows consumers

• Visit the MHMC website at www.mhmc.info

• Under the header “View Measures of Healthcare Quality”, select “Maine Doctors” and choose distance / zip code, then click on “view results”

• Read the disclaimer, then look at the measures

• Reference the MHMC PCP PTE Guidelines explanations on the following pages
Why the Stars?

Because at the detailed level, each measure was developed at a different time, and each measure has a different “key” to explain the scoring ... the stars are a way of summarizing these three separate measures using the same symbol.

Key to **Office Systems Scores**
- Practice has **well-developed** clinical office systems for managing your care.
- Practice has **made good progress** in using clinical office systems for managing your care.
- Practice has **made some progress** in using clinical office systems for managing your care.
- Practice has **made initial efforts** in working on clinical office systems for managing your care.
- Practice did not complete survey, or survey shows no progress in this subsection.

Key to **Clinical Care Guidelines Scores**
- + = statistically above state average
- AVG = statistically not different from state average
- - = statistically below the state average
- n/a = too few cases to measure

Key to **Measurements of Results of Patient Care**
- Yes = provided data to MHMC
- No = did not provide data to MHMC
Here's an example of the detailed report you can get on individual practices at www.mhmc.info.

### Explanation of Measures:

1. **Office SYSTEMS** to manage patient information - Allow doctors to collect, retrieve, and use information to improve patient care. A star is given for overall scores of 1/2 pie or above.

2. **Clinical GUIDELINES** to prevent and manage chronic illness - National standards about check-ups and tests to keep you well and to manage chronic long term medical conditions (such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma). A star is given for practices with an average score for all measures that are at or above Maine's average.

3. **MEASUREMENTS** of results of patient care - Whether or not a practice measures "clinical outcomes" -- actual results of patient care. A star is given for each practice who submitted "meaningful information" on a good portion of their practice.
Summary / Demonstration

- Visit the MHMC web site at www.mhmc.info
- Research your own physician practice or hospital and see what information you can find out
- Be prepared to take the instructor through this web site and explain what it means to you
- Discuss: What does it mean to be a 3-star practice?
Talking With Your Doctor
Module 5: Purpose of Today's Training

- To help you learn what questions to ask your doctor or healthcare professional
- To understand the patient’s role in preventing medical errors
- To understand chronic illness management
- To learn how to develop an action plan for your health
Quick Tips for Talking to Your Doctor

• Give Information. Don’t wait to be asked!

• Get Information.

• Take Information Home

• Once You Leave the Doctor's Office, Follow Up

See handout from AHRQ
Tips about reducing medical errors

• Remember “patient safety” is not always understood by consumers to be the same as “medical errors”
  – The former term is more commonly used by hospitals to describe medical error prevention efforts

• National consultant Judith Hibbard suggests:
  – There are some recommended patient safety actions that most people will not be comfortable doing (e.g. asking is a doctor or nurse has washed his or her hands, or choosing a hospital based on whether it has a computerized medication system)

• Remember your role in preventing medical errors.
  – Review Speak-Up brochure
  – “We want you to speak up. Help prevent errors in your care.”
    • [http://www.jcaho.org/general+public/gp+speak+up/speakup.pdf](http://www.jcaho.org/general+public/gp+speak+up/speakup.pdf)

• Look at Dirigo Hospital Safety guide
Several weeks ago, I was taken to the Emergency Room in the early morning with acute appendicitis. We didn’t know that was what it was, but we knew something serious was going wrong.

The ER doctor diagnosed me with food poisoning, gave me drugs and basically, walked away.

The medicine didn’t help the pain, and although we insisted I didn’t have food poisoning, the doctor wasn’t willing to consider any other possibilities.

At around 2:00 p.m., the ER doctor came to advise us they were sending me home; they didn’t know what else to do for me. At that point, I was afraid – very afraid.

At around 9:30 pm, they took me to surgery. They still didn’t know what the problem was, so it was ‘exploratory’.

The next morning, my primary care doctor and the surgeon were beaming and practically high-fiving that they’d made the right decision to operate. They got my appendix out just in time – it was very close!

If we had gone home, as the hospital suggested earlier that afternoon, this story might have had a very different ending.

When I tell people this story, they are amazed that I ‘dared to speak up’ like I did.

Read Sheila’s complete story on the handout.
A Message from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

Everyone has a role in making health care safe - physicians, health care executives, nurses and technicians. Health care organizations across the country are working to make health care safety a priority.

You, as the patient, can also play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team.

Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.

Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by JCAHO.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.
Informed Shared Decision Making

The MHMC member survey of employees outlined that nearly 50% of the participants indicated that they have a condition that requires on-going medical management. If you are someone who has an on-going condition, you should speak with your physician about shared information-giving and decision-making:

• **Step 1 - Disease-specific information giving**
  – Your healthcare providers should provide a list of the information/skills you need to be a good self-manager.

• **Step 2 - Arrange to receive this information and skills**
  – The doctor may use a motivational interviewing technique: Ask-Tell-Ask
  – And your doctor may ask: “Please let me know how you understood what I said about…”

* From The Improving Chronic Illness Care (ICIC) program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Institute [successful self-management plan](#).
More Informed Shared Decision Making

Other things you should look for include:

• **A team approach**
  - Physicians do not always have time to do adequate information-giving in the 15 minute acute visit. Look for teams in the primary care office with one or more team members responsible for information-giving.

• **Collaborative decision-making**
  - Plan an agenda for each visit. Rather than expect the doctor to tell you what to do, plan to make suggestions to them. See it as a partnership with your caregiver. For example, “I think it is important for me to take _____. What do you think?”

• **Collaborative goal-setting and action plans decision-making**
  - Regarding health-related behavior change, physicians should encourage patients, but do not have time to get involved in the lengthy process of agreeing on goals and doing follow-up. A primary care team is needed to engage in goal-setting, involving such caregivers as health educators, nurses, pharmacists, medical assistants, or promoters, who would engage in the collaborative process of assessing readiness (importance and confidence), discussing action plans, and conducting follow-up. The team needs to be trained in collaborative goal-setting.

• **Tools for encouraging healthy behavior change (action plans)**

Adapted from the *Patient-Self Management*, by Tom Bodenheimer, MD & Halsted Holman, MD
Sample Action Plan To Support Change

• The healthy change I want to make is:
  – Start a walking program

• My goal for the next month is:
  – To walk three times per week

• The steps I will take to achieve my goal are (what, when, where, how much, how often):
  – I will walk around my neighborhood for 15 minutes, directly after I get home from work on M W F

• The things that could make it difficult to achieve my goal include:
  – My sister may need to talk on the phone after work, and it might be too late to go after we talk.

• My plan for overcoming these difficulties includes:
  – I can ask my sister if she absolutely needs to talk that day. If I have to miss a regular walking time, I can make up that day by driving to the park on the weekend and walk for 15 minutes in the morning, then resume my regular plan the following week.

• Support/resources I will need to achieve my goal include:
  – I need to buy a new pair of sneakers and extra-cushioned socks so that my feet don’t get blisters. I would feel more comfortable walking if I had a dog with me. I can ask my neighbors if I can ‘borrow’ Sparky, their dog.

• My confidence level (scale of 1-10, 10 being completely confident that you can achieve the entire plan.) 8
Summary / Demonstration

- List what you would do on your next healthcare visit
- Think about your own health. Would you benefit from a Healthy Change plan?
Putting It Into Practice
Module 6: Certification Exam Purpose

• To test your knowledge of the topics covered today

• To demonstrate the cumulative importance of the different topics discussed

• Answer the questions on the next pages
Sample Certification Exam Questions

Module 1 (Overview) - Some skills a healthcare consumer may have include (circle all that apply):

A. Capable of finding and using basic information that is relevant to their health status
B. Able to determine when and how to access appropriate healthcare services (PCP, ER)
C. Confident in asking questions of their providers
D. Willing to make an active selection of healthcare providers based on multiple sources of information

Module 2 (Consumers) - The three consumer websites reviewed in Module 2 were (list in the spaces below):

A. 
B. 
C. 

Module 3 (Leapfrog) – What are the four “leaps” that Leapfrog asks hospitals if they have in place when measuring quality and safety?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

[Logo: Maine Health Management Coalition • www.mhmc.info]
Sample Certification Exam Questions

Module 4 (MHMC PCP) - A full pie for “Office Systems” scores means what?

A. Practice has made some progress in using clinical office systems for managing your care
B. Practice has made initial efforts in working on clinical office systems for managing your care
C. Practice has well-developed clinical office systems for managing your care

Module 5 (Doctor Visit) – List three things you can do to make your next doctor’s appointment successful.

A. 
B. 
C. 

Healthcare information you can trust
Maine Health Management Coalition • www.mhmc.info
Thank You.

Questions?

Jim Kupel
207-774-2345 x11
jimk@crescendocg.com
This brief FAQ reference guide will be helpful and informative. The purpose of this guide is to give you a way to hear employees’ concerns, field their questions, be responsive, and provide accurate answers when they are in need of your expertise.

FAQ 1: Who is the Maine Health Management Coalition and why is our organization involved with them?

The Maine Health Management Coalition (MHMC) is a coalition of private and public employers, hospitals, health plans, and physician groups that are committed to measuring and improving the value of health care in Maine. MHMC’s members offer health benefits to 250,000 residents.

FAQ 2: Where does MHMC they get their information? Why can I trust MHMC?

MHMC obtains its data from pooled claims data on over half a million individuals, as well as directly from physician practices and hospitals. In ALL cases, individual patient identifications are blinded so the data does not identify any individual patients or employees.

FAQ 3: What does it mean if my doctor is listed as “non-respondent?”

All primary care physicians were approached and some may have chosen not to participate. You are welcome to tell your physician that the practice was not listed, and ask them if they intend to participate in the Maine Health Management Coalition’s Pathways to Excellence Program in the future.

FAQ 4: If I decide to change physicians, how will I know if our health plan will cover my new doctor?

If you want to select a new physician, call your health plan, and let them know that you are interested in changing physicians. They can also let you know if that particular physician is open to new patients.

FAQ 5: When I am on the MHMC web site, is my privacy protected? If I contact MHMC, is my question confidential?

Absolutely! It is important to us, as your employer, that we protect the privacy and confidentiality of all our employees’ healthcare information. Names of patients are not collected, nor does MHMC make any attempt to determine the identity of website visitors. No physician practice, hospital, health plan or any others send us or MHMC personal information on individual patients or employees. Your inquiry is completely anonymous and any exchange with MHMC is totally confidential.
“Speaking Up” Saved My Life

I feel so blessed. Blessed because I have a wonderful and loving network of family and friends, blessed because I have a great job that provides great benefits, and most of all, because BIW goes to extraordinary lengths to educate us – you and me – about our rights as patients, and about the initiatives they support to improve the quality of healthcare in Maine.

Even with all the encouragement we get to live a healthy lifestyle, sometimes stuff just happens. Several weeks ago, I was taken to the Emergency Room in the early morning with acute appendicitis. We didn’t know that was what it was, but we knew something serious was going wrong.

The ER doctor diagnosed me with food poisoning, gave me drugs and basically, walked away. I know it doesn’t always work this way, but my family and I all had the same thing for dinner and I was the only one with searing abdominal pains and uncontrollable vomiting. The medicine didn’t help the pain, and although we insisted I didn’t have food poisoning, the doctor wasn’t willing to consider any other possibilities. She left at 7:00 a.m. and a new doctor came on duty. At around 2:00 p.m., the ER doctor came to advise us they were sending me home; they didn’t know what else to do for me. At that point, I was afraid – very afraid. I told him I was very concerned with that decision. I couldn’t believe they’d send me home when I felt like I was going to die!

He suggested they let the medication wear off to “see if the pain returned”. I told him that the pain had never gone away.

That got his attention because he sent me for a CT scan, and that’s when he knew they had incorrectly diagnosed me. The scan showed several abnormalities. He told us he needed to consult with a surgeon, but in the meantime, they’d admit me to the hospital and keep me comfortable.

At around 9:30 pm, they took me to surgery. They still didn’t know what the problem was, so it was ‘exploratory’.

The next morning, my primary care doctor and the surgeon were beaming and practically high-fiving that they’d made the right decision to operate. They got my appendix out just in time – it was very close!

If we had gone home, as the hospital suggested earlier that afternoon, this story might have had a very different ending.

When I tell people this story, they are amazed that I ‘dared to speak up’ like I did. I knew to do that because of all the exposure I’ve had to the quality improvement initiatives, the Power of Knowledge and Building Healthy Ways newsletters, correspondence, the hospital report card, etc. that BIW has sent to our homes to prevent things just like this from happening to their employees and families!

When we are told that 98,000 people are harmed by medical errors each year, I now snap to attention. When we receive guidance on how we should speak up for ourselves with medical personnel or bring an advocate to speak for you, it really means something to me and my family now. It is so easy to ignore the many pieces of mail we receive from BIW. I’m as guilty of not paying as close attention to some of it as many of us are.

If you have taken the time to read this, thank you. If there is one thing that I can impress upon you, it is this: Read everything you can get your hands on. BIW does a great job of keeping us informed. Don’t assume the doctors and nurses know everything and that you should trust them implicitly. Read! You, too, may be faced with a hospital stay, and you need to ask questions until you understand exactly what your treatment plan and options are.

Think about it – one small, informed decision is all it could take to save your life or the life of a loved one.

Sheila Hall, D49, BIW employee for 21 years
Everyone has a role in making health care safe - physicians, health care executives, nurses and technicians. Health care organizations across the country are working to make health care safety a priority.

You, as the patient, can also play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team.

Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.

Pay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

Ask a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.

Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by JCAHO.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.
Everyone has a role in making health care safe — physicians, health care executives, nurses and technicians. Health care organizations across the country are working to make health care safety a priority. You, as the patient, can also play a vital role in making your care safe by becoming an active, involved and informed member of your health care team.

An Institute of Medicine (IOM) report has identified the occurrence of medical errors as a serious problem in the health care system. The IOM recommends, among other things, that a concerted effort be made to improve the public’s awareness of the problem.

The “Speak Up” program, sponsored by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, urges patients to get involved in their care. Such efforts to increase consumer awareness and involvement are supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This initiative provides simple advice on how you, as the patient, can make your care a positive experience. After all, research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their health care are more likely to have better outcomes.
Speak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don’t understand, ask again. It’s your body and you have a right to know.

- Your health is too important to worry about being embarrassed if you don’t understand something that your doctor, nurse, or other health care professional tells you.
- Don’t be afraid to ask about safety. If you’re having surgery, for example, ask the doctor to mark the area that is to be operated upon, so that there’s no confusion in the operating room.
- Don’t be afraid to tell the nurse or the doctor if you think you are about to receive the wrong medication.
- Don’t hesitate to tell the health care professional if you think he or she has confused you with another patient.

Pay attention to the care you are receiving.

- Make sure you’re getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don’t assume anything.
- Tell your nurse or doctor if something doesn’t seem quite right.
- Expect health care workers to introduce themselves when they enter your room and look for their identification badges. A new mother, for example, should know the person to whom she is handing her baby. If you are unsure, ask.
- Notice whether your caregivers have washed their hands. Hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infections. Don’t be afraid to gently remind a doctor or nurse to do this.
- Know what time of day you normally receive a medication. If it doesn’t happen, bring this to the attention of your nurse or doctor.
- Make sure your nurse or doctor confirms your identity, that is, checks your wristband or asks your name, before he or she administers any medication or treatment.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis, the medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.

- Ask your doctor about the specialized training and experience that qualifies him or her to treat your illness (and be sure to ask the same questions of those physicians to whom he or she refers you).
- Gather information about your condition. Good sources include your doctor, your library, respected websites and support groups.
- Write down important facts your doctor tells you, so that you can look for additional information later. And ask your doctor if he or she has any written information you can keep.
- Thoroughly read all medical forms and make sure you understand them before you sign anything. If you don’t understand, ask your doctor or nurse to explain them.
- Make sure you are familiar with the operation of any equipment that is being used in your care. If you will be using oxygen at home, do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke near you while oxygen is in use.
- Your advocate can ask questions that you may not think of while you are under stress.
- Ask this person to stay with you, even overnight, when you are hospitalized. You will be able to rest more comfortably and your advocate can help to make sure you get the right medications and treatments.
- Your advocate can also help remember answers to questions you have asked, and speak up for you if you cannot.
- Make sure this person understands your preferences for care and your wishes concerning resuscitation and life support.
- Review consents for treatment with your advocate before you sign them and make sure you both understand exactly what you are agreeing to.
- Make sure your advocate understands the type of care you will need when you get home. Your advocate should know what to look for if your condition is getting worse and whom to call for help.

Know what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.

- Ask about the purpose of the medication and ask for written information about it, including its brand and generic names. Also inquire about the side effects of the medication.
- If you do not recognize a medication, verify that it is for you. Ask about oral medications before swallowing, and read the contents of bags of intravenous (IV) fluids. If you’re not well enough to do this, ask your advocate to do this.
- If you are given an IV, ask the nurse how long it should take for the liquid to “run out.” Tell the nurse if it doesn’t seem to be dripping properly (that it is too fast or too slow).
- Whenever you are going to receive a new medication, tell your doctors and nurses about allergies you have, or negative reactions you have had to medications in the past.
- If you are taking multiple medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to take those medications together. This holds true for vitamins, herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs, too.
- Make sure you can read the handwriting on any prescriptions written by your doctor. If you can’t read it, the pharmacist may not be able to either.

Use a hospital, clinic, surgery center, or other type of health care organization that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by the Joint Commission.

- Ask about the health care organization’s experience in treating your type of illness. How frequently do they perform the procedure you need and what specialized care do they provide in helping patients get well?

- If you have more than one hospital or other facility to choose from, ask your doctor which one offers the best care for your condition.
- Before you leave the hospital or other facility, ask about follow-up care and make sure that you understand all of the instructions.
- Go to Quality Check at www.jcaho.org to find out whether your hospital or other health care organization is accredited.

Participate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the health care team.

- You and your doctor should agree on exactly what will be done during each step of your care.
- Know who will be taking care of you, how long the treatment will last, and how you should feel.
- Understand that more tests or medications may not always be better. Ask your doctor what a new test or medication is likely to achieve.
- Keep copies of your medical records from previous hospitalizations and share them with your health care team. This will give them a more complete picture of your health history.
- Don’t be afraid to seek a second opinion. If you are unsure about the nature of your illness and the best treatment, consult with one or two additional specialists. The more information you have about the options available to you, the more confident you will be in the decisions made.
- Ask to speak with others who have undergone the procedure you are considering. These individuals can help you prepare for the days and weeks ahead. They also can tell you what to expect and what worked best for them as they recovered.
The single most important way you can stay healthy is to be an active member of your own health care team. One way to get high-quality health care is to find and use information and take an active role in all of the decisions made about your care. This card will help you when talking with your doctor.

Research has shown that patients who have good relationships with their doctors tend to be more satisfied with their care—and to have better results. Here are some tips to help you and your doctor become partners in improving your health care.

**Give information. Don’t wait to be asked!**

- You know important things about your symptoms and your health history. Tell your doctor what you think he or she needs to know.
- It is important to tell your doctor personal information—even if it makes you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable.
- Bring a “health history” list with you, and keep it up to date. You might want to make a copy of the form for each member of your family.
- Always bring any medicines you are taking, or a list of those medicines (include when and how often you take them) and what strength. Talk about any allergies or reactions you have had to your medicines.
- Tell your doctor about any herbal products you use or alternative medicines or treatments you receive.
- Bring other medical information, such as x-ray films, test results, and medical records.

**Get information.**

- Ask questions. If you don’t, your doctor may think you understand everything that was said.
- Write down your questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get asked and answered.
- You might want to bring someone along to help you ask questions. This person can also help you understand and/or remember the answers.
• Ask your doctor to draw pictures if that might help to explain something.
• Take notes.
• Some doctors do not mind if you bring a tape recorder to help you remember things. But always ask first.
• Let your doctor know if you need more time. If there is not time that day, perhaps you can speak to a nurse or physician assistant on staff. Or, ask if you can call later to speak with someone.
• Ask if your doctor has washed his or her hands before starting to examine you. Research shows that handwashing can prevent the spread of infections. If you’re uncomfortable asking this question directly, you might ask, “I’ve noticed that some doctors and nurses wash their hands or wear gloves before touching people. Why is that?”

Take information home.
• Ask for written instructions.
• Your doctor also may have brochures and audio tapes and videotapes that can help you. If not, ask how you can get such materials.

Once you leave the doctor’s office, follow up.
• If you have questions, call.
• If your symptoms get worse, or if you have problems with your medicine, call.
• If you had tests and do not hear from your doctor, call for your test results.
• If your doctor said you need to have certain tests, make appointments at the lab or other offices to get them done.
• If your doctor said you should see a specialist, make an appointment.

Remember, quality matters, especially when it comes to your health. For more on health care quality and materials to help you make health care decisions, visit http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/pathqpack.htm