

Useful Resources for Health Care Quality Information

Resources for understanding health care quality

- **Glossary of Health Care Terms**

<http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/tools.cfm?tooltpe=glossary>

This web-based glossary defines important health care terms used by health care professionals, such as adverse effect or diagnostic test.

For a free copy, call 1-800-358-9295.

- **Guide to health care quality: how to know it when you see it**

www.ahrq.gov/consumer/guidetoq/index.html#Contents

This booklet by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has information and resources to help people get quality health care.

- **Your Guide to Choosing Quality Health Care**

www.ahrq.gov/consumer/qntool.htm

This guide was developed by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to help people make health care decisions using information about quality. The guide is based on research about the information people want and need when choosing health plans, doctors, treatments, hospitals, and long-term care.

Resources on comparing health care quality

- South Central Pennsylvania Aligning Forces for Quality public reporting site www.aligning4healthpa.org/communitycheckup
- In addition to the local Web site, these government Web sites can be used to compare the quality of care within another state, county, city or zip code. The purpose of these Web sites is to help people use information about quality to make good decisions about their health care.
 - **For hospital care:** www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov
 - **For nursing home care:** www.medicare.gov/NHCompare
 - **For home health care:** www.medicare.gov/HHCompare
 - **For kidney dialysis facilities:** www.Medicare.gov/dialysis
- **National Committee for Quality Assurance's Report Cards**
www.ncqa.org/tabid/60/Default.aspx
The National Committee for Quality Assurance provides quality report cards that include comparisons of health plans, doctors and more.

*Much of this chapter was adapted from the National Business Group on Health's "Communication Toolkit: Using Information to Get High Quality Care."

<http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/benefitsttopics/communications/topic1.cfm>

Resources for choosing a doctor

- **Aligning Forces for Quality South Central Pennsylvania public report:**
www.aligning4healthpa.org/communitycheckup

- **American Medical Association's Doctor Finder**

<http://webapps.ama-assn.org/doctorfinder/home.jsp>

This Web site can help you find information about licensed doctors in the United States.

- **Administrators in Medicine's DocFinder**

www.docboard.org

This Web site can help you find information from state government licensing boards on the licensing background and disciplinary information of doctors and other health care providers.

Resources for getting safe care

- **The Joint Commission**

www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/SpeakUp

This Web site of the Joint Commission includes a series of patient safety brochures. Topics include how to prevent mistakes in surgery, in medical tests, and in medications. For brochures, call 1-877-223-6866.

- **Having surgery? What you need to know**

www.ahrq.gov/consumer/surgery/surgery.htm

This guide is for people who are having non-emergency surgery. The purpose is to help people be better informed about issues they should consider and questions they should ask before surgery. For a copy, call 1-800-358-9295.

- **American College of Surgeons**

www.facs.org/public_info/ppserv.html

This Web site offers patient information on topics that include choosing a surgeon, getting a second opinion, questions to ask when you are having surgery, and information about a number of operations. It includes a brochure that tells how doctors and patients can help make sure that the correct operation is performed on the correct part of the patient's body.

- **Your Medicine: Play it Safe**

www.ahrq.gov/consumer/safemed/safemed.htm

This guide provides information on how to take medicines safely. It answers questions about getting and taking medicines and has forms to help people keep track of their medicines. For a copy, call 1-800-358-9295.

- **Being MedWise helps us use medications safely**

www.bemedwise.org

This Web site provides tips on how to prevent medication mistakes and is run by the National Council on Patient Information and Education.

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<http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/benefitsttopics/communications/topic1.cfm>

Resources for health and health care information

- **Health Finder**

www.healthfinder.gov

Health Finder is run by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is an on-line health library that looks at treatments for hundreds of different health conditions.

- **Medline Plus**

www.medlineplus.gov

Medline Plus is a comprehensive source of health information designed to help answer consumer health questions. It brings together up-to-date information from several government agencies devoted to health care and health research.

- **Next steps after diagnosis: finding information and support**

www.ahrq.gov/consumer/diaginfo.htm

This guide provides general advice as well as tips and resources to help you learn more about a specific health problem or condition. It was written by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. For a copy, call 1-800-358-9295.

Resources summarizing medical research studies

- **Effective Health Care Program**

www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov

This Web site is sponsored by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. The Effective Health Care Program produces summaries for patients that tell about effective treatments for selected health conditions. These summaries are based on expert reviews of medical research.

- **Cochrane Collaboration**

<http://apps1.jhsph.edu/cochrane/library.htm>

The Cochrane Collaboration is an international not-for-profit organization that reviews medical research studies about health care treatments. This Web site has easy-to-understand summaries of the findings of its reviews, which are available in the “Cochrane Library.”

- **National Guideline Clearinghouse**

www.guideline.gov

This government Web site has technical medical information written for doctors and other health care professionals, and also has links to resources that are written for patients. To find this information, click on “Resources” and then click on “Patient Resources Links.”