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Finally, an extra set of hands

In September 2015, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched a promising 4-year program called the "Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative" to lighten the load for family physicians.¹ The central figures in this program are skilled and trained quality improvement advisors (QIA) who will work directly with physicians and their staffs to assist with the heavy lifting of practice improvement. The Oklahoma Physicians Research and Resources Network has used QIAs, which it calls practice enhancement assistants (PEAs), for more than 20 years to help Oklahoma family physicians improve various aspects of their practices, including testing processes, diabetes care, and preventive services. The PEAs have been enormously helpful.²

For this new CMS program, the feds awarded \$685 million to 39 national and regional collaborative health care transformation networks and supporting orga-

nizations to develop peer-based learning networks to facilitate practice improvements.¹ The program is designed to help more than 140,000 primary care physicians improve their practices by providing an extra set of skilled hands.

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) have teamed up to assist with this national effort. ABFM will cover the cost for the first 6000 family physicians who enroll in one of the regional Practice Transformation Networks to use their newly developed

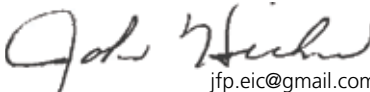
chronic disease registry called PRIME. This registry will extract clinical quality data from diverse electronic health records and report back to practices. The registry will meet the new federal quality measures reporting requirements and will also be a path for maintenance of certification.

The CMS Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative is a great opportunity to get that extra set of skilled hands you need to help meet new quality mandates and make your office more efficient and enjoyable for you, your staff, and your patients. Contact the ABFM (www.theabfm.org) to find out which organization is running the Practice Transformation Network in your area.

The new CMS initiative is a great opportunity to get that extra set of skilled hands you need to help meet new quality mandates.

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Transforming clinical practice initiative awards. CMS Web site. Available at: <https://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2015-Fact-sheets-items/2015-09-29.html>. Accessed December 15, 2015.

2. Nagykaldi Z, Mold JW, Robinson A, et al. Practice facilitators and practice-based research networks. *J Am Board Fam Med.* 2006;19:506-510.


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