



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign?**

The Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign represents an unprecedented combined effort of multiple organizations, both public and private, as well as individuals who are committed to continuous quality improvement in caring for frail, elderly, and disabled Americans in nursing homes nationwide. In North and South Carolina, The Carolinas Center for Excellence, the quality improvement organization for the Carolinas, is leading this important effort along with the vital support of its partners.

---

### **How did the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign get started?**

Leaders from long-term care provider organizations and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) began discussing the idea of a campaign with measurable goals, and proposed it to the former Administrator of CMS, Dr. Mark McClellan, in December 2005. Dr. McClellan encouraged the group to further develop its proposal. With this support, a coalition of providers, caregivers, advocates, and government experts worked together to develop the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign based on key quality improvement goals.

---

### **What is different about this campaign?**

This is the first time such a broad base of national partners with a stake in improving nursing home quality have come together in a national effort to coordinate combined resources, support, assistance, and commitment. The members are committed to providing Americans with an expectation of high quality care in nursing homes.

---

### **How can organizations get involved in this campaign?**

Organizations may participate in the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign in several ways. First, many organizations are already lending resources to launch this initiative. And as the campaign grows, more resources will be needed; however, the true "core" of this campaign is the **action** within our own state on the town and city level. To get involved [contact a CCME Care Improvement Specialist.](#)

---

## **What is the aim of the campaign?**

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes seeks excellence in the quality of life and quality of care for the more than 1.5 million American nursing home residents by enhancing choice, strengthening the workforce, and improving clinical outcomes.

---

## **Why is this campaign necessary?**

Many nursing homes in our state are already committed to providing quality care, and many already do so. Some may not know how to focus their attention on quality improvement around specific care or quality-of-life concerns. This is an opportunity to help those homes that want to improve to do so and highlight the nursing home community's commitment to quality of care and quality of life. The campaign also raises the visibility of quality in nursing home care to increase public confidence.

---

## **Are tools and technical assistance available to help providers improve their performance and meet their targets? If so, where do providers get those tools?**

Yes. Several tools already have been developed to assist providers' ongoing quality improvement efforts, and the [national campaign website](#) provides access to these tools and more.

- Materials from CCME may be accessed within this website; moreover, we offer our expertise to providers primarily through phone calls, group meetings, and formal collaborative improvement projects.
  - Providers' groups such as the American Health Care Association (AHCA), the American Association for Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA), and the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care have designed various tools to complement their Quality First initiative, which seeks to improve quality.
  - The American Medical Directors Association (AMDA) has produced Clinical Practice Guidelines designed to assist providers to establish "Best Practices" in their nursing homes.
  - Consumer groups such as the National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) offer tools through their Campaign for Quality Care.
  - The Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign's Technical Assistance Workgroup will continue to work to identify and develop additional tools and resources to help providers reach continuous quality improvement goals.
- 

## **How can a nursing home join the campaign?**

Homes can visit the campaign website at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org) to sign up for the campaign.

---

## **What are the goals of the campaign, and how will the campaign track nursing homes' progress in achieving the goals?**

In the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign, providers will voluntarily commit to track their progress on at least three of eight measurable quality goals. Four of the goals focus on clinical outcomes for those receiving care in nursing homes, and the other four goals address process-related organizational culture objectives. A provider must select at least three goals with at least one goal that is a clinical outcome measure and at least one goal that is process-related.

The clinical goals include reducing the use of physical restraints; reducing pressure ulcers among high-risk residents; and reducing pain for both short stay and longer-term residents. Data for these important clinical measures are collected via the Minimum Data Set (MDS). Providers submit MDS data quarterly to CMS. CMS then publicly reports on these quality measures on the Nursing Home Compare tool on [www.medicare.gov/nhcompare/home.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/nhcompare/home.asp).

The process-oriented goals encourage providers to set individual targets for continuously improving care quality in nursing homes and assessing resident and family satisfaction as well as staff retention and consistent assignment of staff. While the campaign will track these goals, too, the data for these four goals remain confidential and will not be publicly reported unless the provider elects to publish these process objectives. Those nursing homes that voluntarily elect to share their results for the process-related goals with the public will have these data listed on the website and can seek QIO assistance in developing trending reports. Providers not wishing to make their results public can monitor overall progress of the campaign, which will track the data in aggregate. Regular campaign updates showing progress in the aggregate will be posted on the campaign website at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org). In addition, the campaign will provide a listing of the homes participating in the campaign to allow consumers, providers and organizations (such as state and national associations) to track which homes have enrolled.

---

## **What types of quality issues should residents and their families care about?**

There should be a public expectation of quality in nursing homes. Older adults should seek aging services organizations that will provide quality of care and quality of life to meet their particular needs. Older adults and their loved ones should review information about nursing homes, talk with health care and long-term care professionals, ask others who have experience with nursing homes, etc. Consumers should also ask providers about their quality improvement initiatives, including this nursing home quality campaign, Quality First, accreditation, etc. After selecting a nursing home, family and friends should stay involved in the care of their loved one.

---

## **My nursing home already participates in CCME initiatives and is signed onto Quality First, so what more can I gain from participating in the campaign?**

The goals of the campaign are closely aligned with the work that CCME is doing with nursing homes. Nursing homes that are working with CCME are already working on at least five of the campaign goals; however, these nursing homes are not currently acknowledged for their

commitment to quality improvement and hard work. Nursing homes that are signed onto Quality First have already committed to the principles measured by the campaign. By signing onto the campaign, nursing homes are acknowledging their commitment to these goals and principles and getting public recognition for their dedication. Enrollment in the campaign only takes 1-2 minutes and will not involve any new work or change in current focus for those already committed to Quality First or to working with CCME; however, enrollment is not automatic. So please sign up at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org).

---