
Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL

What is the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative?

The Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative is a new model under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The initiative is designed to support 150,000 clinicians in sharing, adapting and further developing comprehensive quality improvement strategies, which are expected to lead to greater improvements in patient health and reduction in health care costs.

The initiative aligns with the criteria for innovative models set forth in the Affordable Care Act:

- Promoting broad payment and practice reform in primary care and specialty care,
- Promoting care coordination between providers of services and suppliers,
- Establishing community-based health teams to support chronic care management, and
- Promoting improved quality and reduced cost by developing a collaborative of institutions that support practice transformation.

What is the purpose of the model?

The purpose of the model is to engage clinicians in facilitating practice transformation. Through quality and process improvements, practice transformation tools and collaborative shared-learning networks, clinicians will be better positioned to provide high-quality care in a dynamic healthcare system. The Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative uses similar approaches as Partnership for Patients and Quality Improvement Organizations to support delivery of high-quality care that is evidence-based, efficient, coordinated, and patient-centered.

Information from this model will be used to promote broad and rapid dissemination of evidence-based and best practices that have the potential to deliver higher quality and lower cost care for Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries.

How is this model different from existing CMS Innovation Center models?

There are three ways in which this model is different from existing CMS Innovation Center models. First, unlike other existing models that focus on large-scale transformation among hospitals and physician practices, the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative is inclusive of a wide range of clinician types (nurse practitioners, physician assistants, clinical pharmacists, primary care physicians and specialty physicians). Second, the scope of the initiative is broader in reach than previous models, reaching an estimated 150,000 clinicians. Third, this is the first

model of its kind that ensures active participation and leadership at the clinician level to engage and facilitate practice transformation, whether through practice transformation networks or peer-to-peer collaboratives.

How many clinician practices will be supported under this model?

CMS envisions that more than 150,000 clinicians will benefit from this model.

When does the model start?

CMS announced the launch of the model on October 23, 2014.
CMS anticipates announcing awards in Spring/Summer 2015.

Whom do I contact for questions regarding the model?

Information about the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative is available at <http://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Transforming-Clinical-Practices/>. Specific questions that are not answered in the fact sheet or funding opportunity announcements should be directed to transformation@cms.hhs.gov.

Can a clinician practice apply for the model?

No. Clinicians are not eligible to apply for funding under the cooperative agreements. However, clinicians are highly encouraged to participate in the program through partnerships with the networks.

How do I apply for the model?

Instructions on how to apply for the model can be found in the funding opportunity announcement.

When can I apply for the model?

Eligible applicants can apply for the model beginning October 23, 2014. Applications will be accepted until January 6, 2015. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit a letter of intent by November 20, 2014.

How are the Practice Transformation Networks and Support and Alignment Networks different?

The Practice Transformation Networks will coach, mentor and assist clinicians in developing core competencies to assist in moving through various phases of health care transformation. The Support and Alignment Networks will provide a system of national, state, and regional professional associations and other supports that align programs and platforms of continuing medical education, maintenance of certification, patient and family engagement and other work with the overarching aims of the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative. These networks will support clinician members and play an active role in the alignment of new and shared learning.

How much funding is available under the Initiative?

CMS anticipates awarding up to \$670 million to support the Practice Transformation Networks and up to \$30 million to fund the Support and Alignment Networks. Additional funds will be used to support Quality Improvement Organizations, as well as support and evaluation of the initiative.

Can an applicant apply to be both a Practice Transformation Network and a Support and Alignment Network?

No.

PRACTICE TRANSFORMATION NETWORKS

How much funding is available for each award under these cooperative agreements?

CMS expects to make awards ranging from approximately \$2 million to \$50 million each to cover a four-year period of performance.

Who is eligible to apply for the cooperative agreements?

To be eligible, an organization must have pre-existing relationships with multiple clinician practices (primary care and/or specialists) that include data sharing capabilities. Examples of the types of organizations expected to apply are as follows, but not limited to:

- Health Systems
- Regional Extension Centers
- Quality Improvement Organizations
- Large Group Practices
- Regional and State-Based Health Collaboratives
- Hospital Systems

Additionally, an organization must be recognized as a single legal entity by the state where it is incorporated, and must have a unique Taxpayer Identification Number designated to receive payment. The organization must have a governing body capable of entering into a cooperative agreement with CMS on behalf of its members.

Can Quality Innovation Network Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIOs) compete to become a Practice Transformation Network?

Yes, a QIN-QIO can compete to become a Practice Transformation Network through its corporate entity just as they have done in the past for other federal funding opportunities. However, because CMS anticipates specific QIN-QIO accountabilities related to practice transformation as part of the 11th Scope of Work, conflict of interest requirements would preclude QIN-QIO from serving in both roles. Accordingly, any QIN-QIO that may become a Practice Transformation Network would need to address conflict of interest requirements which would likely involve releasing (agreeing not to accept) the QIN-QIO 11th Scope work related to the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative. Interested QIN-QIOs should have additional discussion with program representatives regarding further details.

As noted in the funding opportunity announcement, all applicants need to address any potential conflict of interest requirements.

How many cooperative agreement awards will be funded?

The number of cooperative agreements will be based on the number of best qualified applicants.

Are letters of intent required?

No, but letters of intent are highly encouraged.

What is the deadline for letters of intent?

Letters of intent are due to CMS by November 20, 2014. Information on submission is available in the funding opportunity announcement.

What is the performance period for the Practice Transformation Networks?

The anticipated period of performance is May 1, 2015 through April 30, 2019. The four-year period of performance includes one 12-month base period and three option periods of 12 months each. Option period funding will be tied to achieving milestones and targets. CMS is under no obligation to make additional awards under this initiative.

- Year one 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016
- Year two 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017
- Year three 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2017 to April 30, 2018
- Year four 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019

SUPPORT AND ALIGNMENT NETWORKS

How much funding is available for each award under these cooperative agreements?

CMS expects to make awards ranging from approximately \$1 million to \$3 million each to cover a four-year period of performance.

Who is eligible to participate?

Eligible organizations include medical professional associations; specialty societies; and organizations that are involved in generating evidence-based guidelines for clinical practice, promoting measurement through clinical registries and electronic health records, and effectively incorporating safety and patient and family engagement.

Additionally, an organization must be recognized as a single legal entity by the state where it is incorporated, and must have a unique Taxpayer Identification Number designated to receive payment. The organization must have a governing body capable of entering into a cooperative agreement with CMS on behalf of its members.

How many cooperative agreement awards will be funded?

The number of cooperative agreements will be based on the number of best qualified applicants.

Are letters of intent required?

No, but letters of intent are highly encouraged.

What is the deadline for letters of intent?

Letters of intent are due to CMS by November 20, 2014. Information on submission is available in the funding opportunity announcement.

What is the performance period for the Support and Alignment Network?

The anticipated period of performance is May 1, 2015 through April 30, 2019. The period of performance includes one 12-month base period, with three 12-month option periods. Support and Alignment Networks must commit to the aims of the initiative as supported by their own proposed specific targets and milestones. Option period funding will be tied to achieving these milestones and targets. CMS is under no obligation to make additional awards under this initiative.

- Year one 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016
- Year two 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017
- Year three 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2017 to April 30, 2018
- Year four 12-month project and budget period: May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019