

OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY AND PATIENT SAFETY

Kaiser Permanente Northwest is a health care organization that provides and coordinates patient care. It includes Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest, Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, and Northwest Permanente, P.C. Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest contracts with physicians from the medical group Northwest Permanente, P.C., to provide care to our members. Northwest Permanente physicians provide the vast majority of primary care and specialty care to our members.

Our vision is to provide safe, high-quality care and to continue to improve the quality of care and services we provide to our members.

Quality program

We measure the quality of care and services we provide our members so that we can continuously improve it. To do this, we use a range of methodologies that measure:

- How effective treatment is for each member.
- How satisfied members are with our services.
- How efficiently we function at all levels.
- How appropriately we use our resources to improve the health of our members.

Our electronic medical records provide a wealth of information on the health status of our members. This information helps us check how well we care for members with certain chronic medical conditions.

We review how many members get recommended preventive care. We then set goals for improved results. We develop programs to achieve those goals. We regularly compare our performance with our goals. We make changes when they are needed.

We regularly ask members how they feel about the quality of care they receive. Their answers help us know when and how to improve the way we provide care. We make improvements in many areas, from the way we answer the telephone to how doctors explain medical information.

NCQA accreditation

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) is an independent, nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. Its mission is to improve the quality of health care.

NCQA accreditation is a voluntary review. It evaluates how we make sure our members receive high-quality care. NCQA's team of trained health care experts, including physicians, conduct thorough document and on-site surveys. The team looks at many areas, including:

- How we review the professional qualifications and member-opinion surveys of our health care providers.
- How we help members stay healthy and get preventive care.
- How we make care and services accessible to members.
- How we care for members when they become sick.
- How we care for members with chronic conditions.

NCQA has accredited our Northwest Region's commercial HMO health plan since 1995. In 2013, we received "Excellent" accreditation, NCQA's highest accreditation level, for our commercial HMO and Medicare HMO product lines. Accreditation is subject to renewal every three years. *NCQA accreditation report can be viewed at kp.org/quality.*

Quality measurement

We have many programs in place designed to promote high-quality care and service. Objective and measurable indicators are used to monitor important aspects of care and services that our members receive. HEDIS® (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set),* the nation's leading tool, is used for measuring the quality of clinical care. Each year, we use CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) survey to evaluate the quality of our services. HEDIS and CAHPS reports make it easier for people to evaluate and compare health plans.

CAHPS is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

HEDIS and CAHPS provide a look at these characteristics of a health plan:

- Quality of care.
- Member access and satisfaction.
- Members' use of services.
- Health plan stability.

NCQA accreditation, HEDIS, and CAHPS reports are available at kp.org/quality. Click on "independent reports."

Professional credentialing

We have high standards for our health care providers. Because there are many applicants for most positions, we can be selective. All applicants must meet rigorous credentialing standards. We learn about their education, training, residencies, board certification, and quality of care by searching state and federal databases.

Once hired, our health care providers undergo periodic review by peers and hospital boards. This review makes sure that credentials are up-to-date and in order. Our group medical practice makes it easier for our health care providers to collaborate. They



* HEDIS® is a registered trademark of NCQA.

work with each other on decisions about patient care and review each other's performance. Input from our patients is also an important part of performance review and credentialing.

Patient safety

Patient safety is one of our top priorities. It is a critical component of all our quality-improvement programs. We have many systems in place to help reduce the possibility of errors. Here are some examples:

- **Medication safety.**
- **Ongoing staff education and training.**
- **An infrastructure that promotes responsible reporting of patient safety concerns.**
- **Staff alert systems.** Foreexample, our medication reporting system lets us know about potentially harmful drug interactions so that we can prevent them.
- **Best practices.** Our health care providers learn the best patient safety practices from the experiences of their Kaiser Permanente colleagues nationwide.

Our patient safety philosophy

At Kaiser Permanente, we care about your health and safety. You are the most important part of your health care team.

We believe that:

- Patient safety comes first.
- Patient safety is every patient's right.
- Patient safety is every employee's responsibility.

We are committed to being your partner to provide safe care. As you prepare for your appointments, write down any questions you may have for your doctor.

Here are some general questions to get you started:

- What is my main problem?
- What do I need to do about it?
- Why is it important for me to do this?*

Our patient safety program

We are dedicated to providing care that is reliable, effective, consistent, and safe. Our patient safety program focuses on six areas: safe culture, safe care, safe staff, safe support systems, safe place, and safe patients.

Recently, national patient safety leaders described our patient safety program as one of the pockets of success in the United States.

Additional patient safety information including reporting, can be found at kp.org/quality. Click on the patient safety link.

Reporting patient safety or quality of care concerns

We encourage members to report any health care safety or quality concerns they may have to hospital management. If the hospital cannot resolve concerns, we refer members to the Joint Commission Hospital Quality Check.

The Joint Commission Complaint Hotline is 1-800-994-6610. The Joint Commission Complaint email address is complaint@jointcommission.org. The Joint Commission website is jointcommission.org.

Additional performance data

More Kaiser Permanente quality performance data is available at the following websites:

FOR ADDITIONAL HEALTH PLAN DATA:

NCQA's Health Plan Report Card

National Committee for Quality Assurance
1100 13th Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005
202-955-3500
<http://reportcard.ncqa.org/plan/external/plansearch.aspx>

FOR HOSPITAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING PATIENT SAFETY:

The Joint Commission Hospital Quality Check

One Renaissance Blvd.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
630-792-5000
qualitycheck.org

Hospital Compare

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201
202-619-0257
1-877-696-6775 (toll free)
hospitalcompare.hhs.gov

The Leapfrog Group's Hospital Quality and Safety Survey Results

The Leapfrog Group
1660 L Street NW, Suite 308
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-292-6713
leapfroggroup.org

Oregon Hospital Quality Indicators

Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems
4000 Kruse Way Place, Building 2, Suite 100
Lake Oswego, Oregon 97035
503-636-2204
<http://www.oahhs.org/oregon-hospitals/hospital-data>

Questions?

If you have questions or need help, call Member Services. We're available by telephone 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Members may also sign on to kp.org and send us an email.

All areas..... 1-800-813-2000

TTY

All areas..... 711

Language interpretation services

All areas..... 1-800-324-8010



*Adapted with permission from Ask Me 3 by the Partnership for Clear Health Communication.