Quality at Kaiser Permanente in Northern California

Keeping you healthy is at the heart of everything we do. At Kaiser Permanente, you can count on the support of a team of health care professionals, all working together to give you care that meets your needs. You also have a wide range of technology and online resources to help you manage your health care and stay your healthiest.

A recognized leader

Here’s just some of the recognition we’ve received from independent organizations about the high quality of our care:

• Kaiser Permanente Northern California Medicare and Commercial health plans were rated 5 out of 5, according to the National Committee for Quality Assurance Medicare and Private Health Insurance Plan Ratings for 2017–18, which rate health plans for consumer experience, prevention, and treatment.*

• For a record-setting ninth year in a row, we’re the only health plan to get perfect scores for quality care in the California Office of the Patient Advocate’s Health Care Quality Report Card.† No other plan in the state has ranked as high.

• We received 5 out of 5 stars in Covered California’s 2017 Health Insurance Company Quality Rating System. These ratings affirm Kaiser Permanente’s deep commitment to being a leader in providing an exceptional level of service to the members, patients, and communities we serve.‡

To learn more about our commitment to quality, please visit kp.org/quality.

Keeping quality as our goal

To make sure we continue improving our care, we’ve created groups to develop, manage, and evaluate our efforts. These groups include:

• The boards of directors of our health plan and hospitals
  These groups, which govern our quality improvement process, make policies to guide the organization, set and monitor goals and performance, and choose leaders.

• Our Northern California Quality Oversight Committee (QOC)
  Physicians and nonphysicians serve on this committee, which is sponsored by the associate executive director for quality of The Permanente Medical Group, Inc., and by the health plan and hospitals’ vice president for quality. The QOC sets priorities, evaluates and monitors quality-improvement programs, makes policy recommendations, and creates programs to deal with quality-of-care issues. The QOC reports regularly to the boards of directors. At least once a year, the committee reviews and adopts our quality-program description, program evaluation, and work plan.

How we monitor our progress

We participate in several independent reports on quality of care. These reports can give you a way to compare our performance to that of other health plans. For example, we report complete, audited information on the effectiveness of our care, including asthma- and diabetes-management measures, to NCQA’s Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®).** We also participate in the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) program,†† which NCQA uses to measure member satisfaction.

Additional information about measuring quality of care and service can be found at kp.org/measuringquality.

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Improving quality and service
Each year we develop clinical and service goals to help us improve your health care. Our clinical goals include improving our members’ health in these key areas:
• asthma treatment
• cancer screening and prevention for breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colon cancer
• cardiovascular health, including blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol management, and smoking cessation
• depression treatment
• osteoporosis management
The service you get from us is an important part of your experience. Our goals in that area include:
• making sure you find the right personal physician
• giving you personalized care and service
• making sure it’s easy to get the care you need

Progress in meeting annual goals
Across California, Kaiser Permanente does better at performing most preventive screenings than any other health plan. According to 2017 HEDIS® scores, we had the highest rates of prevention and screening measures – including cancer screenings and weight, nutrition, and exercise management.

According to 2017 HEDIS® scores, we had the highest rates for comprehensive diabetes care measures – blood sugar testing (HbA1c), blood pressure control, and eye exams.

Patient safety
We care about your health and safety. We have many systems in place to help reduce the chance of errors. These include:
• medication-safety programs
• team training
• effective communication techniques
• reporting programs to help us identify areas where errors can occur

We’ve also found ways to identify which patient-safety practices are working best, then promote them throughout Kaiser Permanente.

We believe empowering members improves their safety and medical experience. Here are some of the ways you can be an active partner in your care:
• If you have any questions or concerns about your safety or care, speak with someone on your care team.
• If you don’t understand the responses to your questions, ask again until you do.
• Make sure you know all the medications you’re taking and why you’re taking them.
• Educate yourself about your diagnosis and any medical tests you’re taking.
• When you have an outpatient procedure or are hospitalized, ask a family member or friend to stay with you and be your support person.

Your physicians and other care team members
Our medical professionals are dedicated to providing compassionate, personalized care. They’re selected through a rigorous hiring process: In California, we hire only 1 in 10 doctors who apply. This helps ensure you’ll be cared for by skilled medical staff with whom you’ll want to build long-term relationships.
Once our practitioners join Kaiser Permanente, they get ongoing training in their specialties and in general patient care, such as:

- cultural-sensitivity training
- new-technology education
- thorough reviews of the procedures we’ve found to be most effective in promoting quality care

Learn about your personal practitioner online

You can learn more about your health care practitioner, including education and board certification information, by visiting kp.org/doctorsandlocations. If you haven’t already selected a personal practitioner or would like to change your practitioner, you can do so there. Make sure to register first at kp.org/register to use our secure online features.

Advancing research and technology

Our efforts to enhance your care don’t happen only at our medical offices and medical centers. Many improvements come directly from what we do in our research laboratories.

Our physicians and researchers have developed innovative programs and technologies that are used every day in hospitals and clinics across the country. Our research in important areas like colon cancer, osteoporosis, heart disease, and immunizations has led to new methods of screening and treating millions of people.

We’re also a leader in health information technology. From our robust electronic health record system to our mobile app, you and your care team have powerful tools to stay connected to your health.

Need additional information?

For more information about our quality program, or if you have questions about your care or the care of a loved one, please contact the Member Services department at your local Kaiser Permanente facility.

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3 Health Insurance Company Quality Rating System, Covered California, October 2017. These scores are based on California data collected by the nationally recognized Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS).

“HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

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

‡‡ Kaiser Permanente 2017 HEDIS® scores. Benchmarks provided by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Quality Compass® and represent all lines of business. Kaiser Permanente combined region scores were provided by the Kaiser Permanente Department of Care and Service Quality. The source for data contained in this publication is Quality Compass 2017 and is used with the permission of NCQA. Quality Compass 2017 includes certain CAHPS® data. Any data display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion based on these data is solely that of the authors, and NCQA specifically disclaims responsibility for any such display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion. Quality Compass® and HEDIS® are registered trademarks of NCQA. CAHPS® is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.