

Data Trends

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This News Brief alerts you to a newly released report from the Institute of Medicine, "A User's Manual For The IOM's 'Quality Chasm' Report," by Donald M. Berwick.

Fifteen months after releasing its report on patient safety ("To Err Is Human"), the Institute of Medicine released "Crossing the Quality Chasm." Although less sensational than the patient safety report, the Quality Chasm report is more comprehensive and, in the long run, more important. Prefaced with the statement that "Patients' experiences should be the fundamental source of the definition of quality," the report calls for improvements in six dimensions of health care performance: safety, effectiveness, patient-centeredness, timeliness, efficiency, and equity; and it asserts that those improvements cannot be achieved within the constraints of the existing system of care. The report provides a rationale and a framework for the redesign of the U.S. health care system at four levels: 1) patients' experiences; 2) the microsystems (i.e., providers) that actually give care; 3) the organizations that house and support microsystems, and; 4) the level of systems and policy (i.e., laws, rules, payment, accreditation, and professional training that shape organizational action).

Because of its focus on several levels--from clients to systems--this framework is useful when considering system-of-care policies and services research. This report is accessible at:
<http://www.healthaffairs.org/freecontent/v21n3/s11.pdf>

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