Overview

Improving Performance in Practice (IPIP) is a national program with sites in seven states. IPIP brings in trained quality experts to serve as coaches for health care practices to help improve efficiency. In most states, coaches come from within the health care practices and receive training to apply leading industry techniques. Michigan’s program uses auto industry coaches who already have significant training in reducing costs through improving quality. Coaches receive further training in the Patient-Centered Medical Home concept from industry representatives. In 2010, Michigan’s IPIP focused primarily on diabetes, with some work in asthma and future plans to include high blood pressure.

To participate, practices must have an electronic health record system and a patient registry. After a physician submits an application, the IPIP program director interviews the practice leader and, with the coach, conducts a site visit. The visit includes an exercise to develop a plan for a hypothetical problem that engages staff at all levels.

Each IPIP practice forms a Practice Improvement Team, including physicians, medical assistants, and administrative staff. This team works with the coach to identify and address challenges using quality improvement principles. Practices also participate in a learning collaborative with three events each year. These 2-day sessions bring together coaches and Practice Improvement Teams from across the state to share best practices and lessons learned.

Goals and Expected Outcomes

Goals associated with Michigan’s IPIP include disease-specific outcomes set at the national level as well as quality improvement goals for Michigan’s primary care practices. One goal of IPIP is to help small practices stay competitive with larger practices and specialties.
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Because the coaches volunteer, their participation will remain feasible as long as the burden does not become too great.

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