



**Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)  
Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC)  
Office of Quality Improvement (OQI)**

**Health Center Quality Improvement Awards**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**1. What are the Health Center Quality Improvement Awards?**

To further its commitment to improve the overall quality, efficiency, and value of health care services for the millions of patients served at health centers, HRSA has established an annual recognition and quality improvement fund. These awards recognize the highest performing health centers nationwide, as well as those health centers that have made significant quality improvement gains from the preceding year. HRSA's fiscal year (FY) 2017 Health Center Quality Improvement Awards (QIAs) are one-time grant supplements to recognize health center achievements in expanding access to care, improving care quality and outcomes, increasing comprehensive care delivery in a cost effective way and addressing health disparities. Further, these awards support health centers in delivering patient-centered care as evidenced by Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) recognition. Health centers will use these funds to expand current quality improvement systems and infrastructure and to improve primary care service delivery in the communities they serve.

**2. How much funding will HRSA award under this funding opportunity?**

For FY 2017, HRSA awarded nearly \$105 million in one-time, supplemental QIAs to 1,333 health centers<sup>1</sup> in five primary categories:

- 1) **Improving Quality of Care: \$46.1 million (1,153 health centers recognized)**
- 2) **Enhancing Access to Care: \$6.4 million (526 health centers recognized)**
- 3) **Delivering High Value Care: \$582,000 (21 health centers recognized)**
- 4) **Addressing Health Disparities: \$9.6 million (318 health centers recognized)**
- 5) **Achieving PCMH Recognition: \$42.1 million (930 health centers recognized)**

**\* Note: Some health centers were recognized in more than one category.**

**3. What types of organizations were eligible for Health Center QIAs?**

Organizations eligible for the QIAs were existing Health Center Program grantees that reported clinical and financial information to the Uniform Data System (UDS) for calendar year 2016 UDS data. The UDS is a core set of data used by HRSA to ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, improve health center performance and operations, demonstrate overall program accomplishments and identify trends over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Three health centers did not submit a 2016 UDS Report but received a PCMH Recognition Award

**4. Are the Health Center QIAs awarded annually?**

HRSA established the QIAs to recognize the highest performing health centers nationwide as well as those health centers that have made significant quality improvement gains in the past year. Since 2014, QIAs have been awarded based on a center's performance. If the budget allows, QIAs may continue annually.

**5. How will health centers use these funds?**

Health centers that received QIAs will use these funds to expand current quality improvement systems and infrastructure and to improve primary care service delivery in the communities they serve.

Health centers must use these funds for quality improvement activities, which include but are not limited to:

- Developing and improving health center quality improvement systems and infrastructure, including training staff; developing policies and procedures; enhancing health information technology, certified electronic health records, and data systems; data analysis; and/or implementing targeted quality improvement activities.
- Developing and improving care delivery systems, including purchasing supplies to support care coordination, case management, and medication management; developing and implementing contracts and formal agreements with other providers; laboratory reporting and tracking; training and workflow redesign to support team-based care; clinical integration of behavioral health, oral health, HIV care, and other services; and/or patient engagement activities.

**6. Can the QIA funds be used to purchase equipment, if so what is the reporting requirement?**

QIA funds can be used to purchase equipment. The grantee must submit an itemized list, including purchase price, of all equipment items purchased with grant funds. The grantee is required to report acquired equipment (including information technology systems) with an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more for which HRSA has reserved the right to transfer title. This list must be uploaded into the EHB. If no equipment purchases were made using funding provided through this award, submit a letter of verification from your organization's financial officer.

**7. Can you provide details on how these awards were determined?**

The QIAs are based on annual Health Center Program UDS and PCMH recognition data. The UDS is a standardized reported data set that provides a core set of information on the nation's health centers, including patient demographics, services provided, clinical processes and outcomes, patient's use of services, costs, and revenues appropriate for documenting the operation and performance of health centers. Health centers were eligible for QIAs in the following five categories:

- I. **Improving Quality of Care Awards** were provided to health centers that used clinical quality measures (CQMs) to improve patient services and outcomes in four categories:
  - **Electronic Health Record (EHR) Reporters** employed EHRs to report on all CQM data in the UDS for all of the health center's patients.
  - **Clinical Quality Improvers** made at least a 10% improvement in one or more CQMs between 2015 and 2016.
  - **Health Center Quality Leaders** achieved the best overall clinical performance among all health centers and placed in the top 30 percent of the adjusted quartile rankings for CQMs.
  - **National Quality Leaders** exceeded national clinical quality benchmarks, including Healthy People 2020 goals, for chronic disease management, preventive care, and perinatal/prenatal care.
- II. **Enhancing Access to Care Awards** were provided to health centers that increased the total number of patients served and the number of patients receiving comprehensive services between

2015 and 2016.

- III. **Delivering High Value Care Awards** were provided to health centers that improved the delivery of cost efficient care delivery compared to the national average while also increasing quality of care and improving access to comprehensive services.
- IV. **Addressing Health Disparities Awards** were provided to health centers that met or exceeded Healthy People 2020 goals across different racial/ethnic groups, or made at least a 10% improvement towards the Healthy People 2020 goals.
- V. **Achieving PCMH Recognition Awards** were provided to health centers that achieved PCMH recognition for one or more of their service delivery sites.

**8. How are these awards different than the Health Center QIAs made in August 2016?**

The FY 2017 Health Center QIAs used data submitted by grantees in the 2015 and 2016 UDS data. FY 2016 QIAs used 2014 and 2015 UDS data.

**9. Where can I find the list of organizations that received Health Center Quality Improvement Awards?**

For a list of FY 2017 QIAs, please go to the BPHC webpage:

<https://bphc.hrsa.gov/programopportunities/fundingopportunities/qualityimprovement/index.html>

**10. How many Health Center QIAs were made for fiscal year 2017? How many of the awards were to rural/urban health centers?**

HRSA awarded QIAs to 1,333 health centers, including 746 urban and 587 rural.

**11. How do I find out how to qualify for a Health Center QIA?**

Health Center Program grantees can find more information on the QIAs at

<https://bphc.hrsa.gov/programopportunities/fundingopportunities/quality/index.html> and send inquiries to the BPHC Quality Improvement mailbox ([BPHCQI@HRSA.gov](mailto:BPHCQI@HRSA.gov)).

**12. Where can I find more information on the clinical performance of health centers?**

Health center level profiles are available at <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/uds/datacenter.aspx?q=d>. Profiles include data on patient demographics, services provided, clinical indicators, utilization rates, costs, revenues, and a health center's adjusted quartile ranking on CQMs compared to health centers nationally.