

Patient Safety Organization Proposal



TEXAS HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

FACT SHEET

What is a Patient Safety Organization?

Patient Safety Organizations are focused on reducing adverse events, and improving health care quality and safety. PSOs were authorized as part of the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005. The concept is to provide repositories for clinicians and health care organizations to voluntarily report and share data on patient safety events, enabling similar providers to compare data on similar events. This national network of "patient safety databases" uses common reporting formats to ensure consistency, with each PSO's data published annually in AHRQ National Health Quality/Disparities Reports.

How do PSOs expect to improve patient safety?

Until now, patient safety reporting mechanisms have been challenged by an inability to aggregate data on a large scale for improvement analysis and information sharing in a protected environment. In addition, providers often fear malpractice litigation and face inadequate protection by state laws when reporting adverse events. PSOs address these concerns by creating common formats for reporting patient safety events, in a secure and private platform that is protected from legal discovery.

Am I required to participate in a PSO?

No. Participation is voluntary.

How do PSOs benefit my hospital and patients?

- You receive a **comprehensive analysis** of recurring safety issues by experts.
- Your **data is aggregated** with that of many hospitals/systems, giving you a comparative database to ensure more accurate identification of safety improvement opportunities.
- You **gain access to technology and expertise** already available in the marketplace. You don't have to recreate the wheel.
- Your participation **demonstrates the hospital's accountability** for safety improvement to providers, the public and public officials.
- By pooling resources and sharing the costs with other PSO participants, you get a **higher quality product** at significantly less cost than other data-sharing alternatives.

What are the PSO privacy and confidentiality protections?

Any data, reports or analyses that you submit to or receive from a PSO are privileged and confidential by federal law and not subject to discovery in a civil or administrative proceeding and may be disclosed in a criminal proceeding under very limited circumstances. Disclosure of patient safety work product is allowed to carry out patient safety activities of the PSO or providers participating in the PSO. See 42 C.F.R. §§ 3.204, 3.206.

What exactly is THA/DFWHC proposing?

The Texas Hospital Association and Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council are collaborating to create and certify a statewide PSO as a separate, stand-alone entity to begin operations in early 2010. To launch the PSO, a minimum of 40 hospitals must commit to participate as 'charter' hospitals.

What will it cost my hospital to participate?

As a charter member, your hospital's annual costs for the first two years of participation will be fixed at \$15,000, discounted from the participation fees for hospitals which join the PSO after its initial formation.

As a 'charter' member, how does my hospital benefit?

In addition to the discounted annual pricing, hospitals that sign up by Jan. 1, 2010, will participate as **members of the interim board**. The interim board will help select the PSO's executive director, develop the Request for Proposal process for selecting a vendor, and establish bylaws and other operating policies and procedures.

What is the anticipated timeline for launching the THA/DFWHC Patient Safety Organization?

The goal is to secure letters of intent to participate from at least 40 hospitals by October 2009, with operations to launch in first quarter 2010.

Who do I contact?

For more information, please contact Starr West, Texas Hospital Association, 512/465-1042 or swest@tha.org; or Kristin Jenkins, Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council, 972/719-4900 or kjenkins@dfwhc.org.