

Six Aims for Improvement

In a report from the Institute of Medicine, *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*, policy makers, health care leaders, clinicians, regulators, purchasers, and others are urged to adopt a shared vision for health care that focuses on closing the quality gap between what we know to be good health care and the health care that people actually receive. The report recommends a redesign of the American health care system by providing six "Aims for Improvement":

- **Safe:** avoiding injuries to patients from the care that is intended to help them.
- **Effective:** providing services based on scientific knowledge to all who could benefit and refraining from providing services to those not likely to benefit.
- **Patient-centered:** providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values and ensuring that patient values guide all clinical decisions.
- **Timely:** reducing waits and sometimes harmful delays for those who receive and those who give care.
- **Efficient:** avoiding waste, including waste of equipment, supplies, ideas, and energy.
- **Equitable:** providing care that does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and socioeconomic status.

A health care system that achieves major gains in these 6 areas would be far better at meeting patient needs.

Reference

Committee on Quality of Health Care in America, Institute of Medicine. *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press; 2001