

# PREFACE

The US healthcare system is undergoing a transformation. While much has changed since the previous edition of this book, many of the challenges the US healthcare system faces remain the same, including high costs, lack of access to care, inconsistent quality, and disparities in care. In 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) into law—the largest healthcare reform effort since the creation of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965. The ACA seeks to expand coverage, control costs, improve quality, and transform care delivery. While it creates unique opportunities for learning and improvement across the US healthcare system, it also presents many uncertainties and challenges with regard to implementation. Despite these many uncertainties, one thing is assured: Healthcare quality is paramount. Ensuring healthcare that is safe, effective, efficient, equitable, patient centered, and timely is fundamental to all current and future healthcare reform plans, whether big, small, global, national, or regional.

This textbook provides a framework, a context, strategies, and practical tactics to help all stakeholders understand, learn, teach, and lead healthcare improvement. We have assembled an internationally prominent group of contributors to bring to this book the best, most current thinking and practices from each of their disciplines.

The third edition includes new case studies, up-to-date content, new study questions, and three new chapters. Despite these changes, the framework of the book remains the same. Chapters 1 through 4 discuss foundational healthcare quality principles. Chapters 5 through 17 discuss critical quality issues at the organizational and microsystem levels. Chapters 18 through 21 detail the influence of the environment and emerging trends on the organizations, teams, and individuals delivering healthcare services and products.

In Chapter 1, Maulik Joshi and Donald Berwick focus on the patient and articulate key findings from sentinel national reports of healthcare quality published over the past 14 years. In Chapter 2, Leon Wyszewianski discusses the fundamental concepts of quality. In Chapter 3, David Ballard and colleagues discuss medical practice variation and provide an updated case study. In Chapter 4, Kevin Warren describes the latest quality improvement tools and programs.

In Chapter 5, John Byrnes discusses measurement as a building block in quality assessment and improvement. Stephen Schmaltz and colleagues describe statistical tools for quality improvement in Chapter 6, and David Nash and colleagues detail a physician profiling system in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8—a new chapter—Quint Studer describes the importance of culture to providing consistent quality, and in Chapter 9, Susan Edgman-Levitan tackles an often discussed but less understood area of patient satisfaction—experiences and perspectives of care—and includes an update on the latest surveys. In Chapter 10, Michael Pugh aggregates data into management tools known as *scorecards* and *dashboards*. Frances Griffin in Chapter 11 and Edward Walker in Chapter 12 dive deeper into two evolving subjects essential to driving performance improvement—patient safety and a culture of reliability, respectively. In Chapter 13, Ferdinand Velasco describes the many implications of information technology for healthcare quality.

In Chapters 14 through 16, James Reinertsen, A. Al-Assaf, and Scott Ransom and colleagues provide a triad of keys for change in organizations seeking to become high performers by addressing leadership, infrastructure, and strategies for quality improvement. Chapter 17 by Valerie Weber and Jaan Sidorov is a compilation of strategies and tactics for changing staff behavior.

Chapter 18 by Kimberly Acquaviva and Jean Johnson provides examples of many of the recent national quality improvement initiatives and an overview of the quality improvement landscape. In Chapter 19, Diane Storer Brown and Kevin Park summarize the work of the two major accrediting bodies in healthcare—the National Committee for Quality Assurance and The Joint Commission—and cover the latest changes in the accreditation process. Chapter 20 by François de Brantes describes the power of the purchaser to select and pay for quality services and provides updated information on pay for performance. The final chapter, a new chapter by Steffanie Bristol and Maulik Joshi, brings the latest developments in healthcare to the forefront and paves a path to healthcare transformation.

Several of these chapters could stand independently. Each is an important contribution to our understanding of the environment and the patient-centered organizations that deliver healthcare services. The science and knowledge of quality measurement are rapidly expanding and evolving. This book provides a timely analysis of the most current tools and techniques.

Who should read this book? The editors believe all current stakeholders would benefit from the information included in it, but its primary audiences are undergraduate and graduate students in healthcare and business administration, public health, nursing, allied health, and medical programs. As leadership development and continuing education programs proliferate, this text also is a resource for executives and practitioners at the front line.

We hope this book will break down the educational silos that prevent stakeholders from sharing their understanding of patient-centered organizational systems and the environment of healthcare quality.

We are extremely fortunate to have an all-star list of contributors. These authors have incredible experience and expertise in healthcare, from which our readers benefit greatly.

We also want to thank Natalie Erb, who was instrumental to this book's success. Natalie contributed to the textbook in so many ways, including development of all instructor materials, and lent tireless support to the final work.

This textbook and the accompanying instructor manual are designed to facilitate discussion and learning. The instructor manual contains teaching aids for each chapter, including answers to the end-of-chapter study questions, PowerPoint presentations, and a test bank. To access these resources, e-mail [hapbooks@ache.org](mailto:hapbooks@ache.org).

Please contact us at [mjoshi@aha.org](mailto:mjoshi@aha.org). Your feedback, teaching, learning, and leadership are essential to transforming healthcare. Thank you.

Maulik S. Joshi  
Elizabeth R. Ransom  
David B. Nash  
Scott B. Ransom