

## **Opportunity to Increase Emergency Department Throughput**

The Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems and the Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation are partnering with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's *Aligning Forces for Quality* (AF4Q) initiative on *Increasing Throughput* in the emergency department. All Oregon hospitals are invited to join in this virtual collaborative; **participation is free.**

As you are aware, hospital emergency departments (EDs) provide a critical safety net in every community, yet over the last decade, studies have deemed the country's EDs to be at a breaking point, weighed down by crowding as patient volumes have steadily increased, while capacity has decreased. Too often, patients entering an overcrowded ED face longer wait times for care, often leave the ED without being seen and without obtaining the care they need. Research has also shown that increases in ED crowding are associated with increased waiting times for analgesics and antibiotics, greater mortality and more adverse health care events. Given the high degree of clinical uncertainty with patients presenting in an ED, the disorder of a crowded ED may lead directly to poor quality care. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has proposed the inclusion of ED performance measures in its public reporting program starting in 2014.

Hospitals that participate in the RWJF virtual collaborative will receive 18-months of expert consultation, coaching and tools to help them improve select emergency department performance measures by 15 percent before March 2012.

Performance measures that will be assessed through *Increasing Throughput* are:

1. ED arrival to departure— admitted patients;
2. ED arrival to departure— discharged patients;
3. Admit decision time to ED departure time; and
4. Left without being seen (LWBS).

For additional information, please go to: [www.forces4quality.org/hqn](http://www.forces4quality.org/hqn) or contact Diane Waldo at [diane.waldo@oahhs.org](mailto:diane.waldo@oahhs.org) or (503) 479-6016

This collaborative opportunity is scheduled to begin in October 2010 with applications due August 31, 2010.

Next steps:

- Visit [www.forces4quality.org/hqn](http://www.forces4quality.org/hqn) to learn more about the Hospital Quality Network
- Sign up online for the informational webinar on July 14, noon – 1:30pm
- Enroll online
- Download the Agreement of Participation following enrollment and get it signed by your hospital CEO