

# Federal Interagency Workgroup on Improving Diagnostic Safety and Quality in Health Care

**Workgroup Goal:** Established by [Senate Report 115-150](#). The Senate Committee on Appropriations requested “AHRQ to convene a cross agency working group that will propose a strategy to enhance scientific research to improve diagnosis in healthcare, as outlined in the 2015 NASEM report.” (NASEM stands for “National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.”)

**Workgroup Summary:** The latest workgroup meeting occurred virtually on March 17, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and was attended by representatives from the following agencies:

<b>AHRQ</b>	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
<b>CDC</b>	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<b>DoD</b>	Department of Defense
<b>HRSA</b>	Health Resources and Services Administration
<b>FDA</b>	Food and Drug Administration
<b>NIH/NLM</b>	National Institutes of Health/National Library of Medicine
<b>NIH/NIBIB</b>	National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering
<b>NIH/NCATS</b>	National Institutes of Health/National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences
<b>NIH/CC</b>	National Institutes of Health/Clinical Center
<b>NIH/NCI</b>	National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute
<b>ONC</b>	Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
<b>VA</b>	Department of Veterans Affairs

The aims of the meeting were to: (1) hear from Society for Diagnosis in Medicine (SIDM) representatives on current work and future plans; (2) reflect on current diagnostic safety and quality activities; and (3) provide agency updates.

A select sample of updates appears below.

Agency	Update
<b>AHRQ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Posted <a href="#">Special Emphasis Notice</a>: Health Services Research Priorities for Improving Diagnostic Safety and Quality.</li> <li>Made continued progress on the development of a patient and family engagement resource and a TeamSTEPPS module to improve diagnosis.</li> </ul>



Agency	Update
<b>CDC/ Healthcare Quality Promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posted <a href="#">Diagnostic Stewardship meeting summary blog</a>.</li> <li>• Updated <a href="#">Core Elements of Hospital Antibiotic Stewardship Programs</a>.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Selective Reporting of Antimicrobial Susceptibility Test Results</a> tool is available to help increase the understanding of why antibiotic-resistant test results may not be readily available in the electronic health record (EHR).</li> <li>• Additional <a href="#">implementation tools</a> are available, along with a tool to assist with urine culture stewardship.</li> </ul>
<b>ONC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <a href="#">ONC Cures Act Final Rule</a> was passed March 9, 2020. The rule will help improve diagnostic accuracy and diagnostic processes through better and more complete information sharing among providers and patients. To that end, patients will be able to access information from their EHR using an app of their choice.</li> <li>• The recently released <a href="#">Strategy on Reducing Burden Relating to the Use of Health IT and EHRs</a> represents a collaborative effort between ONC and the Centers for Medicare &amp; Medicaid Services (CMS). The report highlights the need for policies that will reduce cognitive overload for clinicians, which can degrade the diagnostic process.</li> </ul>
<b>NIH/NIBIB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Interagency Modeling and Analysis Group (led by NIBIB) hosted a workshop, “Integrating Machine Learning With Multiscale Modeling for Biomedical, Biological, and Behavioral Systems” (2019 ML-MSM). Final paper from the workshop is at <a href="https://www.nature.com/articles/s41746-019-0193-y">https://www.nature.com/articles/s41746-019-0193-y</a>.</li> <li>• One of the key themes was how to use <a href="#">modeling to address human safety concerns</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>VA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <a href="#">new project</a> aims to develop cancer diagnosis measures in both VA and non-VA settings</li> <li>• The Joint Commission issued a Quick Safety Issue, <a href="#">Advancing safety with closed-loop communication of test results</a>, highlighting VA, AHRQ, and ONC work.</li> <li>• VA representatives co-led working groups, “Patient Safety Research and Innovation” and “Global Patient Safety Challenges” at the <a href="#">2020 World Health Organization meeting</a> in Geneva, Switzerland.</li> <li>• VA participation in Patient Safety Measures of Hospital Harm Technical Expert Panel (TEP). <a href="#">The project</a> aims to develop measures of hospital harm for use in CMS quality and payment programs, with a measure on diagnostic error.</li> <li>• A forthcoming journal supplement will cover <a href="#">Embedded Research</a>. A recent article discusses the <a href="#">relevance of embedded research for improving diagnosis</a>.</li> </ul>

The group continued to reflect on current diagnostic safety and quality activities and discussed opportunities to work synergistically across agencies. Key reflections centered on cognitive burden for clinicians, health information technology, and teamwork among clinicians. Specifically, it was suggested that more multidisciplinary research is needed on clinical cognition and how teams interact with health information technology in the context of the diagnostic process.

Next Steps: The next IAWG meeting is currently scheduled for July 23, 2020.