Clinical Quality Improvement (PIP-QI) Policy

1. Policy Title

Clinical Quality Improvement (PIP-QI) Policy

2. Purpose

This policy describes [Practice Name]'s commitment to continuous clinical quality improvement (CQI), with a particular focus on the Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement (PIP-QI) incentive. It aligns with criterion CQI1 – Continuous quality improvement activities of the RACGP Standards for general practices (6th edition), which makes CQI a standalone standard.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all clinical and administrative staff involved in collecting, analysing, and acting on practice data to improve care.

4. Definitions

- Clinical quality improvement (CQI): A systematic, data-driven approach to improving healthcare processes and outcomes.
- PIP-QI: An Australian Government incentive providing payments to general practices for participating in continuous quality improvement activities.
- Quality improvement activity: A planned activity that uses data to improve the quality of care and services.
- Clinical indicator: A measurable element of patient care used to assess quality and safety.

5. Principles

- CQI is an ongoing, mandatory practice activity, not an episodic one.
- Improvement work is data-driven and tied to patient outcomes.
- All staff contribute to and learn from CQI activities.
- At least one documented CQI activity is completed every 12 months, including one using coded clinical data (criterion CQI1).

- CQI integrates with clinical risk management and patient feedback.

6. PIP-QI Participation

- Share de-identified practice data with the local Primary Health Network (PHN) as required for PIP-QI.
- Review PIP-QI data and the 10 agreed improvement measures at least quarterly.
- Select and complete at least one CQI activity each year using the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) method or equivalent.
- Document the aim, method, data collected, changes implemented, and outcomes.

7. Priority Improvement Areas

Priority areas align with the PIP-QI measures and the practice's own needs, including:

- Proportion of patients with diabetes with HbA1c recorded in the last 12 months.
- Proportion of patients with a recorded smoking status.
- Proportion of patients with a recorded alcohol consumption status.
- Proportion of patients with a weight/BMI classification recorded.
- Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with MBS 715 health checks completed.
- Proportion of eligible patients with influenza immunisation recorded.
- Up-to-date cervical screening participation among eligible patients.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Practice Manager:

- Coordinates data extraction, PHN submission, and CQI activity documentation.
- Maintains records of CQI activities and outcomes.

Lead GP (CQI sponsor):

- Provides clinical leadership for improvement activities.
- Reviews and signs off CQI outcomes.

Practice nurses:

- Deliver improvement activities on the ground and capture required data.

9. Education and Training

- All staff receive induction in the practice's CQI approach.
- CQI sponsors and data leads receive training in PDSA methodology and data tools.

10. Monitoring, Audit, and Review

- Quarterly review of PIP-QI measures and active CQI activities.
- Annual internal audit of PIP-QI processes and outcomes.
- Annual review of this policy, or sooner if PIP-QI requirements change.

11. Documentation and Record Keeping

The practice maintains:

- Records of all CQI activities (aim, method, data, changes, outcomes).
- Patient feedback and the actions taken in response.
- Clinical incident reports and their resolutions.
- Data extraction reports and PHN submissions.
- Minutes of CQI team meetings.
- Annual CQI audit results and action plans.

12. References

- The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Standards for general practices (6th edition). East Melbourne, Vic: RACGP; published 26 August 2026. Available at: https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-standards/standards-6th-edition
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement (PIP-QI). Available at: https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/practice-incentives-program-pip/pip-quality-improvement-pip-qi
- RACGP. Quality improvement toolkit. Available at: https://www.racgp.org.au

Version Control

Policy title: Clinical Quality Improvement (PIP-QI) Policy

Version: 2.1

Effective date: 27 August 2026

Next review date: 27 August 2027

Policy owner: Lead GP / Practice Manager

Aligned to: RACGP Standards for general practices (6th edition, published August 2026)