

# Collaborative for Healthcare Quality: Wisconsin health care community urges patients to connect with physicians

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MADISON (April 29, 2020) — Wisconsin has some of the highest quality health care in the country; however, with routine care significantly disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, providers are increasingly concerned that patients are falling behind in important preventive health and chronic disease care.

The Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality (WCHQ) collects data on clinical performance across more than 40 quality measures for nearly every health system and medical clinic in the state.

With COVID-19 shutting down all but emergency care, WCHQ is expecting to see dips in clinical performance on some key preventive metrics that their members have performed very well on in the past.

“Infants and younger patients may have fallen behind on immunizations and well-child visits,” according to WCHQ President/CEO Chris Queram. “Other patients may need to catch up on routine blood tests and check-ups that are essential to monitoring chronic conditions and to complete routine prevention tests, such as cancer screenings, that cannot be done virtually.”

Statewide, in-person clinic visits have been halted and patients have been extremely understanding during this time. WCHQ members are actively reaching out to care for patients via telehealth.

However, not all care can be delivered virtually, and providers are actively developing plans to safely and quickly resume necessary care. Patients are urged to contact their primary care providers to develop a plan for needed care and schedule either virtual or in-person visits. The concern about patients entering the clinic environment is understandable. That is why clinicians are carefully planning how clinics will be reopened.

“We know that clinics across Wisconsin will take every precaution to ensure the safety of their patients and care teams as they begin to see people in the clinics,” Queram said. “The safety of patients, clinicians and our communities is everyone’s top priority.”