



INTRODUCTION

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High blood pressure (hypertension) is one of the most important risk factors for heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and diabetes complications. Nearly one of three American adults has high blood pressure, and the costs, including healthcare services, medications and missed days of work are estimated at a staggering \$156 billion.

We've known about the risks of poorly controlled high blood pressure for over a century and effective treatments have been available for over 50 years. Yet according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, less than half of the 67 million American adults with high blood pressure have their condition under control. Why has blood pressure control been so challenging, and what can we do to fix it now?

Blood pressure control has been challenging mainly because it is a silent condition. For this reason, patients may not adhere to recommended medication or lifestyle regimens, physicians may not treat hypertension as an urgent issue, and high blood pressure may not get the public recognition and "call to action" that other diseases receive. In addition, our current health system was designed to address acute medical problems, and chronic conditions require team-based, longitudinal care with advanced information technology and patient-centered care at its core.

To help you address many of the common challenges associated with effectively treating and managing high blood pressure, the American Medical Group Foundation (AMGF) and American Medical Group Association (AMGA) has produced this provider toolkit as part of our Measure Up/Pressure Down three-year national campaign. The goal of Measure Up/Pressure Down is to mobilize doctors, nurses and the entire healthcare team to work together to achieve 80% of their patient population with high blood pressure in control by 2016.

In this toolkit, you'll find useful tools, tips, and resources to help you jump-start your hypertension quality improvement initiative and get you on the road to achieving better control rates. The toolkit is organized around each of the eight campaign planks (care processes).

For each plank you will find:

- Concise one-pagers with guidance including actionable steps and suggested resources for implementing the plank
- Best practices tools used by some of the nation's leading healthcare organizations
- A recommended case study from AMGA's *Best Practices in Managing Hypertension Compendium* for details on how the plank was implemented by medical groups that achieved significant improvements in their control rates

This toolkit is a living document and will be updated throughout the campaign. A downloadable version as well as new content added to the toolkit can be accessed on the campaign website at www.MeasureUpPressureDown.com. We hope that you find the toolkit useful and consider sharing it with your colleagues.





ABOUT AMGA AND AMGF

The American Medical Group Association represents some of the nation's largest, most prestigious medical practices, independent practice associations, accountable care organizations, and integrated healthcare delivery systems. AMGA's mission is to support its members in enhancing population health and care for patients through integrated systems of care. More than 125,000 physicians practice in AMGA member organizations, providing healthcare services for 130 million patients (nearly one in three Americans). Headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, AMGA is the strategic partner for these organizations, providing a comprehensive package of benefits, including political advocacy, educational and networking programs, publications, benchmarking data services, and financial and operations assistance. www.amga.org

The American Medical Group Foundation is the philanthropic arm of AMGA. As a nonprofit 501(C)(3) organization, its mission is to foster quality improvement in group practice through education and research programs in clinical quality, patient safety, service, operational efficiency, and innovation. In addition to research and demonstration projects, the Foundation helps support learning collaboratives and presents educational grants and awards to medical groups that demonstrate improvements in practice, quality, and patient care. www.amga.org/foundation



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We would like to thank the Measure Up/Pressure Down Provider Toolkit Review Committee for contributing their time and expertise in reviewing and recommending tools for inclusion.

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DISCLAIMER

This toolkit is intended for healthcare professionals to consider in managing the care of patients with hypertension. While the toolkit describes recommended courses of intervention, it is not intended as a substitute for the advice of a physician or other knowledgeable healthcare professional. Several of the tools presented in this toolkit were previously published in AMGA's *Best Practices in Managing Hypertension Compendium* and may have been updated or no longer in use by the medical groups since the initial publication of the compendium.

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