

Six Aims for Improvement

(Adapted from *Crossing the Quality Chasm*, Executive Summary)

Aims for the 21st-Century Health Care System

The Institute of Medicine's Committee on Quality of Health Care in America has proposed six aims for improvement in today's health care system.

Health care should be:

- *Safe*—avoiding injuries to patients from the care that is meant to help them
- *Effective*—providing services based on scientific knowledge to all who can benefit
- *Patient-centered*—providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values
- *Timely*—reducing waits and sometimes harmful delays
- *Efficient*—avoiding waste, including waste of equipment, supplies, ideas, and energy.
- *Equitable*—providing care that does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and socioeconomic status.

A health care system that achieves major gains in these six dimensions will be better at meeting patient needs. Patients will experience care that is safer, more reliable, more responsive, more integrated, and more available.