You can't improve what you don't measure. That's why performance measurement is an important building block to improve health care quality.

Public reporting of performance measurement data is growing. More than 200 websites provide information about local health care providers.

Every state except for Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, and the District of Columbia has at least one public report on the quality or cost of care provided by hospitals or physicians.

Performance measurement and public reporting data helped motivate providers to improve their care and led employers to change their purchasing habits.

A study of 567 health care practices in Wisconsin showed that participation in public reporting led to improved performance.

Reports on health care quality and cost help patients make better choices about their care and better partner with their doctors.

Sharing public reports about quality and cost helps health care professionals see where they can improve their care.

Issuing public reports about quality and cost allows payers and consumers to see the value they are getting for their money.

Most consumers don't understand that quality varies. Reports on the care physicians and hospitals provide can help demonstrate differences.

Consumers are most likely to use public reports when they move to a new town, need a new doctor, or are diagnosed with a disease.