



Health Improvement Institute (HII) is a non-profit, tax exempt, 501(c)3, charitable organization dedicated to improving the quality and productivity of America's health care. The Institute is a voluntary organization; directors, officers, and advisory board members are volunteers. The institute receives funding primarily from grants and activity fees. The Institute's primary goal is to inform patients, providers, payers, purchasers, policymakers, and the public about available alternatives to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to make informed health care choices. To achieve this goal, the Institute undertakes a variety of programs and activities. They include the following:

#### **Awards of excellence**

- ***Aesculapius Award*** is given to producers of health-related radio and television PSAs (public service announcements) and publishers of health websites. These awards are intended to promote excellence in health communications.
- ***Award for Excellence in Human Research Protection*** is designed to encourage and to recognize excellence and innovation in human research protection. The founding sponsor of this awards program was the Office for Human Research Protections, US DHHS.

#### **Independent ratings**

Health website ratings project is an extension of the Institute's program to assess and improve the quality of health information on the Internet. This pilot project developed independent ratings of health websites for consumers. The Institute conducted this project, in collaboration with Consumer Reports WebWatch (a program of Consumer Union). The Medical Library Association actively supported the project.

#### **Workshops on important health topics**

- In 1991, the Institute, in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute and Candlelight Childhood Cancer Foundation, held a forum on *Emerging Treatments for Breast Cancer*.
- In 1997, the Institute held a successful 1-day workshop: *Quality of Health Information on the Internet – enabling consumers to tell fact from fraud*.
- In 2007, the Institute held another 1-day workshop: *Quality of health information on the Internet – 10 years on*, to continue and to expand the discussion begun in 1997.
- In 2008, the Institute held a roundtable: *Is U.S. health care at a cross-roads?*
- In 2010, the Institute began the *Project to harmonize health research guidelines*.

#### **Quality improvement**

Health Improvement Institute is committed to assessing and improving the quality of its program, projects, and processes. Primary mechanisms to achieve this goal may include:

- Review of Institute plans by program or project advisory group members
- Use of structured work plans to conduct Institute activities
- Credentialing of judges, raters, and assessors
- Periodic review of Institute processes
- Feedback from participants in Institute programs and projects.

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