

# USING INDICATORS TO INCENTIVISE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

*Martin Marshall*

## **Objective:**

In a keynote presentation prior to this workshop, Professor Marshall will have outlined the concepts and principles underlying the use of financial incentives to improve the quality of patient care. He will have described one of the most ambitious practical initiatives in this field, the new General Practice contract in the UK and examined some of the potential advantages and risks of this scheme. In this workshop, participants will have the opportunity to explore the issues in more detail and in particular will be able to examine the applicability of such an initiative in their own countries. Participants will be encouraged to critique the approach being adopted in the UK and explore ways of improving the scheme. This workshop is therefore designed for those delegates who want to develop the ideas in the keynote presentation in greater detail.

## **Learning methods:**

The emphasis will strongly be on active participation using small and large discussion groups. As and when requested by the participants, more detail will be provided about the new UK contract than could be presented in the key note presentation, and written copies of the 136 quality indicators will be provided for all delegates to enable them to critique the indicators in detail.

The key issues for discussion will be brainstormed at the start of the workshop and the participants will prioritise these and address them in small groups. Periodically, the small groups will come together to share comments and ideas with the larger group. Professor Marshall will facilitate the discussion and the expertise and experience of all the group members will be drawn upon.

Examples of issues which might arise include:

- How important are financial incentives in comparison with other quality improvement initiatives?
- How are incentives expected to work? What role do professional values and personal motivation play alongside self-interest?
- How would the UK proposals for 'rewarding results' go down in your country?
- What do you see as the weaknesses of the UK scheme? How would you address these weaknesses, in order to improve the acceptability and effectiveness of financial incentives in your country?
- What role do patients play in an incentive scheme aimed at changing the behaviour of health care professionals?
- What about the less-measurable, or softer, side of clinical practice – issues such as communication, continuity, coordination, advocacy and empathy? Do you think they might be damaged by focusing on biomedical diseases? If so, how would you address this problem?