

## **THE OECD HEALTH CARE QUALITY INDICATORS PROJECT**

*Hurst J.*

There is increasing interest among health care researchers and policymakers in measuring and comparing quality of care both on the provider and the systems level. A crucial prerequisite for such analyses is the availability of comparable clinical quality measures, nationally for provider comparisons and internationally for system comparisons.

Although *OECD Health Data* covers many fields relevant to health system performance, such as expenditure and utilization, indicators for the technical quality of medical care represent an important gap.

To remedy this gap, OECD has now set up the Health Care Quality Indicator Project, in which 17 countries collaborate on the development of internationally comparable quality indicators. The ultimate aim is to release those data on a regular basis as part of *OECD Health Data*. Potentially, those data could be used to explore the determinants of variations in quality across countries, such as health expenditure and the characteristics of health systems.

The project builds on a number of national indicator development projects and two international exercises. The Commonwealth Fund of New York is about to publish about 20 clinical quality measures for 5 English speaking countries. Independently, a Nordic Group on quality indicators has begun to identify a list of indicators.