



Ensuring the Quality of Long-term Support Services

The quality of support services is fundamental because it influences the health outcomes, autonomy, and living conditions of people in a status of dependency.

Governments can contribute to promoting the quality of services and play a crucial role as regulator in three fundamental aspects:

1. the effectiveness of care and safety for the patient
2. the way of focusing on the patient
3. and the coordination of and integration with social and health services ([OECD and European Commission 2013](#))

There are several instruments to ensure quality, and most countries rarely use only one, as can be seen in the following table.

The most used are records and licenses for service providers, as well as minimum standards for physical infrastructure and care processes ([Mor, Leone y Maresso 2014](#)).

In general, three types of strategies are used to promote quality. Some countries, such as Germany, Austria, Japan, and Switzerland, choose to promote quality based on the professionalization of the people who provide care. A second strategy is to use inspections to constantly review compliance with established standards.

Finally, there is the monitoring of suppliers, which emphasizes the incentives generated by users' access to data and results that may influence the choice of service providers.

There are several instruments to ensure quality, and most countries rarely use only one, as can be seen in the following table.

Regulatory Measures Implemented by Different Countries

Regulatory Actions/ Predominant Regulatory Approach	Professionalization				Inspection				Data and Public Reports				Under development	
	Germany	Austria	Japan	Switzerland	Australia	England	Netherlands	Spain	Canada	Finland	New Zealand	United States	Korea	China
1 Registration and licenses														
2 Standards for physical infrastructure														
3 Standards for professional education and training														
4 Associations of long-term support services														
5 Minimum standards for care processes														
6 Outcome measures of the dependent person														
7 Routine inspections														
8 Random inspections/without notice														
9 Data and inspections based on experiences														
10 Monetary penalties for non-compliance														
11 Sanctions and alarm systems														
12 Legal appeals process														
13 Compilation of complaints and monitoring systems														
14 Processes to address complaints by phone or Internet														
15 Public reports														
16 Data to promote consumer choice														
17 Quality based on payment for results														

Note: The shaded cells indicate that this regulatory action is used. However, this does not reflect the importance or effectiveness of this action.

Source: [Mor, Leone y Maresso](#) (2014, Table 16.3).

Learning material prepared by **Nadin Medellín**.



Copyright © 2019 Inter-American Development Bank. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons IGO 3.0 Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives (CC-IGO BY-NC-ND 3.0 IGO) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/igo/legalcode>) and may be reproduced with attribution to the IDB and for any non-commercial purpose. No derivative work is allowed.

Any dispute related to the use of the works of the IDB that cannot be settled amicably shall be submitted to arbitration pursuant to the UNCITRAL rules. The use of the IDB's name for any purpose other than for attribution, and the use of IDB's logo shall be subject to a separate written license agreement between the IDB and the user and is not authorized as part of this CC-IGO license.

Note that link provided above includes additional terms and conditions of the license.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Inter-American Development Bank, its Board of Directors, or the countries they represent.