Doctors want to ensure their patients receive the best possible treatment. With this in mind, their daily work is committed to quality assurance by means of case discussions, further training, reviewing standards of treatment etc. This commitment to quality is still insufficiently perceived by the general public and politicians, particularly in the ambulatory sector. This is where the "Q-Monitoring of ambulatory care in Switzerland" project ("Q-Monitoring") plays an important part: using statistics, it aims to illustrate the spectrum of quality activities already being performed by doctors specializing in ambulatory treatment.

The Board of the Swiss Respiratory Society (SRS) is convinced that the Q-Monitoring project also adds value for pulmonologists administering ambulatory treatment and collaborates with nine other specialist societies in this project.

Q-Monitoring is neither a new quality tool nor a means of modelling the quality of treatment. The sole aim is to record current quality activities – in other words, to evaluate the current status. Data is collected based on a voluntary and strictly confidential self-declaration.

Werner Karrer, MD, President of the Swiss Respiratory Society
Jürg Häggi, MD, Head of Quality for the Swiss Respiratory Society
Daniel Herren, MD, Member of the Central Board of the FMH, Head of the DDQ Department
**Tailored Feedback**

The pilot phase has shown that an analysis of participants’ data provides a useful feedback for the individuals involved: it illustrates the areas in which they already do a great deal to ensure quality assurance and those in which there is still room for improvement. Furthermore, respondents were able to compare the anonymous answers of all their professional colleagues and use them as a valuable compass amidst the jungle of possible quality activities.

The specialist societies involved also benefited from taking part in the project: they obtained a clear picture of where the strengths and weaknesses of quality assurance lie in their particular discipline, which in turn provides a practical basis for decisions on targeted post-graduate training courses. Last but not least, the project enables participating specialist societies and the FMH to formulate well-founded arguments on which to base their professional policy activities.

For more information on Q-Monitoring for ambulatory medicine in Switzerland, visit www.fmh.ch → Qualität / Qualité → Q-Monitoring/Monitorage. If you have questions about the project, the FMH’s Data, Demography and Quality (DDQ) Department (E-Mail ddq@fmh.ch) will be happy to help.

**Strong Data**

In 2011, in conjunction with the Data, Demography and Quality (DDQ) Department of the FMH, the SRS drew up the questionnaire for pulmonologists. This collaboration is essential, since only specialists are familiar with the quality activities performed within their discipline. As of March 7, 2012, data will be collected by pulmonologists for the purposes of monitoring the quality of ambulatory medicine in Switzerland.

To ensure the success of the Q-Monitoring project, the SRS Board depends on a good response from colleagues providing ambulatory treatment: the sounder the data, the weightier the arguments of the medical community in the discussion on quality.

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