

## Quest Lab Stewardship Advisory Services

Providing expertise and lab utilization insights to help improve patient care and deliver better outcomes



As a community-based, Federally Qualified Health Center, Signature Health provides primary medical care, mental health, and substance abuse services throughout Northeast Ohio.

With an organically grown collection of patient services, Signature Health was looking for ways to gain new insights about, and ultimately, optimize their laboratory operations. The Quest Lab Stewardship Advisory Services team worked with Dr Sarah Hoehnen, one of Signature Health's Medical Directors, to develop a lab stewardship program.

### After an initial review, multiple opportunities for improvement were identified:

- Better visibility, utilization, and standardization around lab testing
- Identification of duplicate orders
- Integration of lab data within their existing EMR system

### Working together, Quest and Signature Health developed a program with the following benefits:

- A better understanding of their patient population
- Insights and data that helped Signature Health meet their clinical objectives and key performance indicator targets
- A normalized test menu to ensure standardized care and more effective reporting of outcomes
- Delivery of evidence-based feedback to physicians to help modify behavior and reduce clinical variations in care
- Better access to performance data to more easily understand the lab's activities and operational effectiveness
- Optimized lab testing, leading to the right test for the right patient at the right time

## The opportunity

### Identify and understand current test trends to help improve patient care

As an initial focus for their lab stewardship initiative, Signature Health wanted to understand current lab testing trends for their patients, particularly around STI, HIV, hepatitis C, and thyroid testing, and how Quest could assist them to:

- Eliminate duplicate testing orders
- Standardize test orders
- Normalize test codes
- Empower proactive change in ordering patterns

## The approach

### Data-driven analysis of test ordering process

Quest worked with Dr Hoehnen and her team to:

- Analyze current data to see the latest trends
- Identify how many different ordering options exist
- Normalize test codes
- Set up a feedback loop to help modify ordering behavior and reduce variations in clinical care

## The results

### Ensuring the right test for the right patient at the right time

The data analysis revealed a significant opportunity to normalize testing across the organization, which resulted in a better standard of care.

The Quest Lab Stewardship Advisory Services team:

- **Monitored**—we provided a dashboard with insight into the utilization trends and whether the initiatives and education interventions are working
- **Benchmarked and compared**—the dashboards developed instantly showed order volumes by location and physician, allowing insight into patterns out of the norm

In addition to the immediate opportunity, Signature Health's lab stewardship program provided important insights that are driving the basis of their priority goals, including:

- A reduction in clinical care variation
- Standardized lab ordering practices across the 6 locations by moving to one EMR and utilizing their test favorites within the test menu
- Increased patient screening rates by:
  - Reforming their intake process
  - Developing a real-time customized dashboard to track screening rates
  - Improving physician work flow with a standardized menu of tests



Using Quest Lab Stewardship Advisory Services and the Quest data analytics platform, Signature Health identified locations with the potential for testing optimization and specific physicians to empower proactive change in ordering behavior and more efficient test utilization.

### 1. Standardize the approach to lab testing

Using a team of dedicated experts, including clinicians, data scientists, and statisticians, Quest Lab Stewardship Advisory Services can help organizations like Signature Health:

- Access critical data
- Observe new trends
- Investigate the details
- Act on and monitor the progress of interventions

### 2. Establish consistent ordering practices

- Determine what the standard testing practice should be by the patient population they serve: behavioral health, primary care, and infectious disease
- **Insight**—the data showed inconsistent ordering patterns by disease state
- **Change**—provide a test menu of “favorites” within the EMR across all ordering locations
- **Communicate**—share the favorites test menu with all physicians and support staff, and provide educational materials to reinforce preferred ordering behavior

### 3. Reinforce desired behavior

- Easily observe and monitor the impact of interventions
- Identify best practices and create interventions to educate and change ordering behavior throughout the enterprise
- Utilize data to monitor, measure, and improve performance for better cost and quality care initiatives

“It’s when you are able to share data insights that you get people’s attention. Understanding the larger scale impact of day-to-day clinical work can empower clinicians to make necessary changes.”



**Dr Sarah Hoehnen**  
*Medical Director of  
 Infectious Disease,  
 Signature Health*

Quest Lab Stewardship offers opportunities to uncover new insights into testing trends, providing organizations the opportunity to improve patient care and control costs through better test utilization.

Learn more at [QuestForHealthSystems.com/LabStewardship](https://QuestForHealthSystems.com/LabStewardship) or talk to your local Quest Diagnostics representative

