

## Put yourself in these shoes.



Imagine that you just woke up from open heart surgery. You hear the beep of a monitor. You see a scary scar on your chest. You feel relieved to be alive—and incredibly fragile. And now you hear your doctor say that she’s prescribing cardiac rehabilitation (CR). “Exercise?” you think. “Now? Really?!”

In that moment, when a heart patient understandably balks at a CR prescription, a CR team can make all the difference. This team stands ready to help people understand and manage their heart conditions—like angina and heart failure—and recover from heart or valve surgery or artery stenting. During regular sessions, a CR team can offer people practical tips and techniques to develop new

lifestyle, physical activity, and nutrition habits that can protect and preserve cardiovascular health for years to come. Participants feel better, live longer, and reduce their likelihood of another hospital admission! Despite these proven benefits, referral, enrollment, and participation rates remain far too low.

That’s why Million Hearts® has set a national goal of 70% participation in CR among those who are eligible by 2022. To help achieve this goal, Million Hearts® created the CR Change Package and CR Communications Toolkit (see the “Tools” and “Do This!” sections). These tools can help you champion CR in your practice, health system, and community. Also, consider being part of the Million Hearts® Cardiac Rehabilitation Collaborative. Email [MillionHeartsCRC@cdc.gov](mailto:MillionHeartsCRC@cdc.gov) to join others who are taking action on this goal.

—Janet Wright, MD, FACC  
Executive Director, Million Hearts®

[Learn How to Champion CR](#)

## Tools You Can Use

### Ramp up CR participation with this change package. [PDF - 902 KB]

The Million Hearts® Cardiac Rehabilitation Change Package combines actionable strategies, testable ideas, case studies, and other resources that you can learn from and implement to improve CR participation rates.

### Are e-cigarettes helpful or harmful? Understand the evidence. [PDF - 873 KB]

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Office on Smoking and Health outlines e-cigarette myths and facts in this colorful, easy-to-understand infographic. Share with your colleagues and networks.

### Experience interactive lessons, master classes, and more at the 2019 CMS Quality Conference.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ (CMS) annual conference will take place January 29–31, 2019, in Baltimore, Maryland. Thousands of health care professionals and thought leaders will explore solutions to some of the industry’s most challenging problems.

## Quick Fact

When it comes to CR participation rates, location matters. A **2017 CDC study** found that use of CR varied widely among heart attack survivors, from 20.7% of eligible patients in Hawaii receiving CR to 58.6% of eligible patients in Minnesota.

## Million Hearts® in the Community

### Blood pressure Champions tackle medication adherence by focusing on patient barriers. [PDF - 309 KB]

When they formed chronic care teams and focused on addressing specific patient barriers, Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champions in Florida and California achieved remarkable success in helping people manage their high blood pressure.

### Clinical teams in Pennsylvania and Michigan share their CR strategies. You can too.

On Huddle for Care, Penn State Health St. Joseph and Michigan Medicine detail their CR programs, including challenges they have faced and their strategies for increasing referrals, participation, and completion. You too can share your real-world CR success stories on Huddle for Care!

### ASTHO proposes solutions to worrisome trends exposed in CDC’s latest Vital Signs report.

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) shares ways for health professionals to support people at risk of cardiovascular events and prevent the rising heart disease burden, such as with tobacco cessation programs.

### CMS welcomes public comments on coverage for ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM).

CMS is now accepting public comments, clinical studies, and other scientific information related to coverage for ABPM in diagnosis of Medicare patients with suspected hypertension. The public comment period ends November 8.

## The Science of Million Hearts®

### Multiple factors contribute to high rates of hypertension in black adults, including diet and education level. (JAMA)

### Sales of a USB flash drive-shaped e-cigarette grew more than sevenfold from 2016 to 2017. (JAMA)

### Be There San Diego collaborative reduced heart attacks and increased health care savings. (Health Aff)

### Linking environmental and health strategies can improve both air quality and cardiovascular outcomes. (N C Med J)

### Nondaily cigarette smoking rising among people with mental health and substance use problems. (J Clin Psychiatry)

## Do This!

### Spread the Word About CR.

CR can save lives, but not enough eligible people participate. Help change that by spreading the word about the value of CR with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Communications Toolkit! Help us reach at least 5 million people with information about the value of CR by the end of the year. Share social media messages and infographics and embed information about CR on your website, then tell us how many people you reached by emailing [millionheartsCRC@cdc.gov](mailto:millionheartsCRC@cdc.gov).