

Baldrige Health Care Glossary HD: Benchmarks

Benchmarks

The term “*benchmarks*” refers to [processes](#) and results that represent best practices and [performance](#) for similar activities, inside or outside an organization’s industry. Organizations engage in [benchmarking](#) to understand the current dimensions of world-class [performance](#) and to achieve discontinuous (nonincremental) or “[breakthrough](#)” [improvement](#).

[Benchmarks](#) are one form of [comparative](#) data. Other [comparative](#) data organizations might use include information obtained from other organizations through sharing or contributing to external reference databases, information obtained from the open literature (e.g., outcomes of research studies and practice guidelines), data gathering and evaluation by independent organizations (e.g., CMS, accrediting organizations, and commercial organizations) regarding industry data (frequently industry averages), data on competitors’ [performance](#), and [comparisons](#) with other organizations providing similar [health care services](#).

Note: [Blue](#) words above are hyperlinks to other Glossary HD term definitions.

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