Spring 2019 Social Risk Trial Update

CSAC Informational Update

April 23-24, 2019
Background and Context

- In 2014, NQF convened an Expert Panel to review the NQF policy prohibiting the inclusion of social risk factors.
- The Panel recommended allowing the inclusion of social risk factors when there was a conceptual and empirical basis for doing so.
- NQF Board approved a two-year trial period when social risk factors could be included.
- The first trial demonstrated that adjusting measures for social risk factors is feasible but challenging:
  - Challenging to access data
  - Differing approaches to conceptual rationales and empirical analyses
- NQF has recently launched a new three-year initiative to continue examining the impact of social risk factors.
Overview of Spring 2019 Cycle Submissions

Measures Reviewed
- 72 measures submitted
- 27 assessed outcomes (including PRO-PM)

Risk-Adjusted Measures
- All 27 utilized some form of risk adjustment
- 21 provided a conceptual rationale for potential impact of social risk factors. 17 used literature to support, 9 used data (not mutually exclusive)

Measures with Conceptual Relationship
- 12 of 21 limited/no impact on model performance; social risk factors not included
- 1 of 21 submitted with adjustment for social risk factors
Summary of Submissions for Fall 2017 - Spring 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Measures Submitted</th>
<th>223</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures Using Risk Adjustment</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures with a Conceptual Model Outlining Impact of Social Risk*</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Used published literature to develop rationale</em></td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Used “Expert Group Consensus” to develop rationale</em></td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Used “Internal Data Analysis” to develop rationale</em></td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures with a Social Risk Factor included in Model</td>
<td>18</td>
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*methods were not mutually exclusive
Common Social Risk Factors Considered
Fall 2017 - Spring 2019

- Race/Ethnicity
- Payer
- AHRQ SES Index
- Education
- Employment Status
- Zip Code
- Rural Location
Standing Committee Discussions

- Continued use of race as a potential variable
  - Questions about influence of genetics (e.g., varying rate of medication uptake) vs social factors
  - Committees indicated a preference for stratification
- Concerns that social risk factors may be held to a different standard for inclusion
  - Social risk factor may be statistically significant but does not improve model performance (e.g., C statistic is not improved)
  - Concerns that social risk factors are being tested for impact after clinical factors
- Growing evidence in the literature about the impact on access to care if measures are not adjusted
- Access to data on social risk continues to be a challenge for developers
Disparities Standing Committee May 2019 Meeting Agenda

Trial period update

- Review risk-adjusted measures submitted since fall 2018

Review risk models in use

- Discuss pros and cons of different models
CSAC Discussion

- Does the CSAC have any guidance for the standing committees as they evaluate measures for appropriate adjustment for social risk?
- Does the CSAC have any guidance on how the standing committees should consider concerns about masking disparities?
- Does the CSAC have any guidance on the emerging concerns about the lack of adjustment for social risk potentially causing access challenges?