

NQF's Lean Journey:
CDP Improvement
Update



NATIONAL
QUALITY FORUM

NQF Kaizen

September 2013

- Conducted in collaboration with ONC and CMS
 - Provided LEAN facilitation and support
 - Over 100 participants divided into four multi-stakeholder groups for each focus area
- Expectation that future state work could be completed within 3-6 month timeline

Purpose of the Kaizen Event

- Provide timely, multi-stakeholder input into the measure development lifecycle that will help develop high-quality measures.
- Reduce the waste and delays across the measure development, testing and endorsement to ensure that the measures that matter are available as soon as possible.

Focus Areas for the Kaizen Event

Measure Development I

- Identification of measure concepts, specifications, and pre-testing

Measure Development II

- Measure testing and finalization prior to NQF submission

Measure Endorsement

NQF and CMS Contracting Process

Key Findings

- The ultimate customer of the measure development and endorsement process is the patient with their family or caregivers.
- Driving force in the future state discussions.
- Create a more iterative development and endorsement process that eliminate steps identified with waste or variation.
- Some steps could be moved or added if waste and pain points were eliminated further down the road.

“Aha’s” for Kaizen Participants

- Patients and other stakeholders are not often engaged upfront to determine what to measure;
- Measure developers require approximately 40 hours to complete the NQF measure submission form;
- NQF members require approximately 10 hours to complete nomination materials;
- Limited awareness that NQF has timelines for completion of project work in the CMS contract;
- Projects that focus on sites of care or clinical domains may not fit a more patient centered approach;
- Negative culture and tone of NQF steering committee deliberations for measure developers.

Future State – Measure Development

- Need for early multi-stakeholder input when determining what measure concepts are most valuable for development, particularly from patients.
- Create training program and pool of stakeholders, including patients, providers and purchasers who can serve on measure developer technical expert panels.
- Create national templates for evidence and testing that foster alignment between measure documents for CMS, measure developers, and NQF.
- Levels of endorsement may more appropriately determine measurement development and testing path.
- Potential role for NQF to provide informal technical input to inform the measure testing process.

Future State – Measure Endorsement

- Enhanced meeting management can drive a more collaborative culture between measure developers, NQF, Steering Committees, and other stakeholders.
- Standing Committees that can allow testing of improved measure flow, improved consistency for measure review, and decreased time for committee member nominations by stakeholders.
- Continuous open flow of measure submission would be an important enhancement.
- Assessing stakeholder support for measures through commenting may reduce the reliance on member voting in the endorsement process.

Future State – NQF/CMS Contracting

- CMS and NQF can participate in a more open and collaborative process prior to the beginning of contract development.
- Sharing of CMS contract templates should reduce churning process after task order submission.
- CMS will work to align their measure development contracts with their NQF project contracts.

Post Kaizen Work

- Project teams chartered to complete the ongoing work to implement the future state map.
 - Teams co-led by an NQF staff person and an external stakeholder in the process.
 - Team charters include proposed milestone, pilots and metrics to assess the success of the proposed changes.
- Kaizen evaluation revealed that three-quarters of participants were highly motivated to participate in future activities.
- Some organizations committed to help NQF secure funding for more innovative features of the future state model.

Harmonization Enhancements

Restructuring the harmonization process has led to:

- Better grouping of measures
 - Measures have been shifted to new projects to ensure alignment with the NQS and across NQF (e.g., health and well being)
 - Number of measures under review for a project has been lowered to ensure adequate time to review the measure
- Improved relationship between NQF and measure developers
- Increased collaboration amongst developers to achieve measures that are best in class and have the broadest application

Enhancements for Measure Developers

- The **NQF Developer Guidebook** is a resource for measure developers to help inform them about the NQF measure submission, evaluation and endorsement process:
 - Explains measure submission and evaluation
 - Sets expectations for measure developers and stewards
 - Resource for NQF CDP-related processes and policies for measure developers
- **Measure Developer Workshop** provides an opportunity for NQF to engage the developer community and identify potential collaboration opportunities amongst developers
- **Collaboration with CMS and HSAG** to reduce burden of duplicative forms and to extend measure developer webinars to all developers

Educational and Process Enhancements

- The **Committee Guide to NQF's Measure Endorsement Process** is a resource for steering committee members on the NQF measure endorsement process
- The **NQF Field Guide to NQF Resources** provides access to basic information and NQF resources related to quality measurement.
 - » Quick-reference glossary of measurement terms and phrases
 - » Visual representations of some of NQF processes
 - » User profiles to learn about how our members use NQF resources.
- Enhancements to the **Call for Nominations**
 - Includes greater detail about time requirement in call for nominations
 - New online form—allows applicant to apply to multiple committees simultaneously

Improved Communications

- **NQF Go**, a new communications tool, that provides a quick, high-level overview of new NQF projects.
 - Concisely explain **what** the work is, **why** it's important, and more importantly, **how** NQF members can get involved.
 - Preliminary results suggest that NQF Go is frequently opened
- Projects will implement **distribution lists** to notify members and other interested parties of regular project updates with standardized messages with relevant dates and information.
- **NQF Technical Reports** will be redesigned to include more relevant information on the importance of the measures in a manner that is easier to digest

Improved Internal Process

- Staff has addressed the need for internal standardization with regard to adherence with timelines by developing new **Standard Work**
- Staff is undertaking opportunities to improve **meeting management**
 - NQF has prioritized improved meeting management and culture for NQF Committee meetings:
 - » Defining roles and responsibilities for Steering Committees, Developers, Staff, and Public
 - » Laying clear, consistent ground rules for discussion and participation
 - Prioritized improved training for committee members and developers on the CDP.

More Frequent Opportunities to Submit Measures

- Pilot more frequent opportunities for measure submission
- By moving to submission opportunities every 6 months, measure developers and measure users will not have to wait as much as 3 years for NQF endorsed measures in a given topic area.
- The Standing Committee will also evaluate the entire portfolio of measures over 2-3 years, foster harmonization and alignment, and identify important gaps in the endocrine portfolio.

Standing Committees

- Availability of **Standing Committees** with set meeting times will allow for more frequent opportunities for measure submission:
 - Would increase flexibility to begin reviewing measures soon after measures are submitted for endorsement
 - Allow for increased capacity within the CDP
- In this upcoming contract cycle, we expect to seat 20 committees across 20 topic areas.

Open Commenting

- Allow open commenting on measures at any time
 - NQF will solicit stakeholder and public comment throughout the measure evaluation process
 - Will address concerns that the 30-day public comment period is not sufficient
 - Will ensure that all interested persons have the opportunity to prepare and submit comments
- Currently being piloted in All-Cause Admission/Readmissions CDP Project



NQF and CMS Contracting

- NQF staff has established a cross-departmental proposal review/QA team to collaborate, review proposals, and improve submissions to HHS/CMS during contracting periods
- NQF staff has created a template for reviewing proposals prior to submission to HHS/CMS, to ensure alignment between the content, technical, and business proposals
- CMS is working to revise their internal templates in order to standardize the sharing of information with NQF
- CMS is talking to the Consensus Based Entities group to ensure that they serve in a role to coordinate ideas and projects across HHS, prior to contracting with NQF