NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

Scientific Methods Panel Monthly Call Meeting

NQF Methods Panel Team

January 10, 2019

Welcome and Roll Call

Scientific Methods Panel (SMP) Members

- David Cella, PhD, (Co-Chair)
- David Nerenz, PhD (Co-Chair)
- J. Matt Austin, PhD
- Bijan Borah, MSc, PhD
- John Bott, MBA, MSSW
- Lacy Fabian, PhD
- Marybeth Farquhar, PhD, MSN, RN
- Jeffrey Geppert, EdM, JD
- Paul Gerrard, BS, MD
- Laurent Glance, MD
- Sherrie Kaplan, PhD, MPH

Scientific Methods Panel Members (continued)

- Joseph Kunisch, PhD, RN-BC, CPHQ
- Paul Kurlansky, MD
- Zhenqiu Lin, PhD
- Karen Joynt Maddox, MD, MPH
- Jack Needleman, PhD
- Eugene Nuccio, PhD
- Jennifer Perloff, PhD
- Sam Simon, PhD
- Michael Stoto, PhD
- Christie Teigland, PhD
- Ronald Walters, MD, MBA, MHA, MS
- Susan White, PhD, RHIA, CHDA

Methodologic Issues: Input on Potential Changes to Evaluation Criteria

Current Testing Requirements

- For structure, process, and outcome measures:
  - ***Reliability*** *can be demonstrated at the data element OR score levels*
    - » Eligible for HIGH rating if score-level testing is provided (even if data element testing is not provided)
    - » Eligible for MODERATE rating if only data element testing provided
      - *These scoring rules reflect a 2013 change. Previously, both levels of testing were required to be eligible for a HIGH rating.*
      - *The rationale for the change was to reflect the differences in testing levels in the ratings, given that the computed performance scores are used to make conclusions about the quality of care provided.*

Current Testing Requirements

- For structure, process, and outcome measures:
  - ***Validity*** *can be demonstrated at the data element OR score levels*
    - » Eligible for HIGH rating if score-level testing is provided (even if data element testing is not provided)
    - » Eligible for MODERATE rating if only data element testing provided
  - *For new measures, we allow face validity only*
    - *Highest eligible rating is MODERATE*
  - *For maintenance measures, we expect empirical testing, but may accept face validity if justification is deemed adequate.*

Current Testing Requirements

- For instrument-based measures, both levels of testing are required for both reliability and validity
  - » Highest eligible rating is HIGH (for both reliability and validity)
- For composite measures, score-level reliability testing is required, but score-level validity testing isn't required until maintenance.
  - » Highest eligible rating is HIGH for reliability
  - » For new measures, the highest eligible rating is MODERATE if only data element testing provided

Timeframe for Potential Changes to Testing Requirements

- Jan-Feb 2019: Obtain consensus recommendations from SMP during monthly calls
  - *May cancel March call due to measure evaluation work*
- April 2019: Present SMP recommendations to CSAC
  - *CSAC may accept/reject/modify the recommendations*
  - *CSAC may suggest an implementation timeframe*
- Late spring/early summer: Begin to publicize changes to criteria
- NOTE that NQF often allows up to a 1-year gap between changing criteria and implementing the changes
  - *Likely, any SMP-recommended changes would not be required of developers until August 2020 (although it might be as early as January 2020)*

Options for Changes to Testing Requirements for Structure, Process, and Outcome Measures

	Current requirements*	Option #1	Option #2	Option #3
Reliability	Data element OR score-level	Keep as is	Require score-level testing; data element testing optional	Require BOTH score-level and data element testing
Validity	Data element OR score-level	Keep as is	Require data element testing; score-level testing optional	Require BOTH score-level and data element testing

* Eligible for a HIGH rating if score-level testing is provided (even if data element testing is not provided)

Potential Changes to Testing Requirements

- Begin requiring score-level reliability testing for all measures
  - *Rationale: Use of NQF-endorsed measures in accountability programs → we should have some information about risk of misclassification*
  - *Cautions: Robust testing datasets needed; new testing would be required for many previously-endorsed measures (potentially, a resource issue for developers)*
    - » Some types of measures/developers disproportionately affected

Potential Changes to Testing Requirements

- Begin requiring for all measures data element validity testing
  - *Rationale: Desire to know that data used in measures accurately reflect the gold standard*
  - *Cautions: New testing would be required for many previously endorsed measures*
    - » Likely would require medical record review (which is resource-intensive)
    - » Some types of measures/developers disproportionately affected

Potential Changes to Testing Requirements: Ideas for a "Middle Ground"

- Making expanded testing a requirement for maintenance measures only
- Allowing an "exception" to the expanded testing requirements if justification is adequate
- Both of the above
- Allowing some sort of "grandfather" clause (e.g., only newly submitted measures held to the new requirements; already-endorsed measures wouldn't have to comply)
- Alter rating guidance to reflect adherence to testing requirements

Questions to Consider for Reliability

	Current requirements	Option #1	Option #2	Option #3
Reliability	Data element or score-level	Keep as is	Require score-level testing; data element testing optional	Require BOTH score-level and data element testing

- Is score-level testing important enough to offset concerns?
- Is data element testing important enough to offset concerns?
- Is one level more important than the other? If yes, which?
- Would you be willing to wait until maintenance for expanded testing?
- Would you be willing to grant an exception to the expanded requirements?
- Would you be willing to "grandfather" in previously endorsed measures?
- Do you have recommendations regarding rating guidance?

Questions to Consider for Validity

	Current requirements	Option #1	Option #2	Option #3
Validity	Data element OR score-level	Keep as is	Require data element testing; score-level testing optional	Require BOTH score-level and data element testing

- Is score-level testing important enough to offset concerns?
- Is data-element testing important enough to offset concerns?
- Is one level more important than the other? If yes, which?
- Where/how would face validity come in?
- Would you be willing to wait until maintenance for expanded testing?
- Would you be willing to grant an exception to the expanded requirements?
- Would you be willing to "grandfather" in previously-endorsed measures?
- Do you have recommendations regarding rating guidance?

Potential Changes to Testing Requirements

- Eliminate reliability testing "short-cut"
  - *Currently, if data element validity is demonstrated, additional reliability testing is not required*
    - » NOTE: Somewhat (but not completely) moot if score-level reliability testing is required
- Any reason to require data element reliability testing?
- Any reason to require score-level validity testing?

**Recall that current ratings reflect, to some extent, the levels of testing (only eligible for high rating if score-level testing is conducted)*

Member and Public Comment

Next Steps

- Monthly 1-hour calls
  - *Every 2nd Thursday of the month*
  - *Next call: February 14, 3 pm ET*
- Contact information: methodspanel@qualityforum.org

Adjourn