



Ambulatory Care Patient Safety

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Background

- Ambulatory care settings have high patient volume and potential for harm
- Measurement of patient safety in ambulatory care settings is critical to promoting better care and experiences for patients and families
- Current landscape of performance measures that can assess patient safety in ambulatory care is poorly understood

Background

- With funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), NQF engaged an advisory group of experts to explore the complex intersection of issues related to measurement of patient safety in ambulatory care
- Advisory group helped guide the environmental scan of measures to identify and inform the development of priority measures
- Aimed to create a representative sample of measures and measure concepts that apply to care provided by clinicians, health plans, and health systems and others engaged in ambulatory care

Methodology

Three step approach to environmental scan:

1. Literature Review

- *Search strategy with inclusion and exclusion criteria along with search terms*

2. Measure Scan

- *Identified measures from different repositories and inventories (e.g., NQF's Quality Positioning System, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Measures (CMS) Inventory, etc.)*

3. Key Informant Interviews

- *Semi-structured format*

Measures and Concepts

- Initial environmental scan identified 146 measures and 417 concepts
- Final set of 55 measures and 297 concepts and grouped into the following themes:
 - *Medication management and safety*
 - *Care transitions and handoffs*
 - *Diagnostic safety*
 - *Prevention of adverse events and complications*
 - *Safety Culture*
- Gaps in measures included antibiotic overuse and opioid prescription patterns, specifically structure and outcome measures
- Barriers to measuring patient safety in ambulatory care settings included lack of standardized methods for data collection; lack of interoperability between medical record systems; and lack of funding for clinical informatics

Key Informant Interviews

- Conducted semi-structured interview with questions focused on:
 - *measures and measure concepts*
 - *gaps in measurement*
 - *priority measures*
 - *barriers to measurement*
- Key informants expressed the importance of measures for:
 - *antibiotic overuse*
 - *hand hygiene*
 - *opioid prescription patterns*
 - *safety culture*

Comments and Disposition

Eight comments submitted on the draft report from three organizations, two of which are member organizations

- Theme 1: Measurement of hypoglycemic events
 - *Commenter noted there is a lack of patient-reported hypoglycemic events even though hypoglycemia was identified as a priority of the National Action Plan for Adverse Drug Event Prevention.*
- Theme 2: Safety of ambulatory care for pediatric patients
 - *Commenter noted that ensuring safe care for all infants, children, and adolescents should be a critical component to improve safety in ambulatory care settings.*
- Theme 3: Caution in the development and implementation of measures in the ambulatory care setting
 - *Commenters noted the importance of developing and implementing measures for which there is clear evidence of linkages between processes or structures and relevant outcomes, and measures that are feasible to collect and report.*

Next Steps

- June 1, 2018: Final report was submitted to HHS
- Report available on NQF's website:
http://www.qualityforum.org/Ambulatory_Care_Patient_Safety_2017-2018.aspx

Questions?

- Project webpage:
[https://www.qualityforum.org/Ambulatory Care Patient Safety 2017-2018.aspx](https://www.qualityforum.org/Ambulatory_Care_Patient_Safety_2017-2018.aspx)
- Project email address:
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