



NATIONAL
QUALITY FORUM

Improving Attribution Models

Advisory Panel Orientation & Annotated Outline Review

November 1, 2017

Welcome and Introductions

NQF Project Staff

- Erin O'Rourke, Senior Director
- Ashlie Wilbon, Senior Director
- Jean-Luc Tilly, Senior Project Manager
- Kirsten Reed, Project Manager
- Taroon Amin, Consultant

Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- Project overview
- Role of the advisory panel and NQF staff
- Annotated outline review
- Next steps

Advisory Panel

- Ateev Mehrotra, MD, MPH
- Elizabeth Drye, MD, SM
- Danielle Lloyd, MPH
- Daniel Muldoon, MA
- Jennifer Perloff, PhD
- Brandon Pope, PhD
- Jack Resneck, MD
- Srinivas Sridhara, PhD, MS

Where have we been?

What did we accomplish?

- Identified key challenges in attribution
- Developed a set of guiding principles
- Identified elements of an attribution model
 - *Explored strengths and weaknesses*
- Identified recommendations for developing, selecting, and implementing an attribution model
 - *Attribution Selection Guide*

Key Findings

- Best practices have not yet been determined
 - *Existing models are largely built off of previously used approaches*
 - *Trade-offs in the development of attribution models should be explored and transparent*
- No standard definition for an attribution model
- Lack of standardization across models limits ability to evaluate
- Greater standardization among attribution models is needed to allow:
 - *Comparisons between models*
 - *Best practices to emerge*

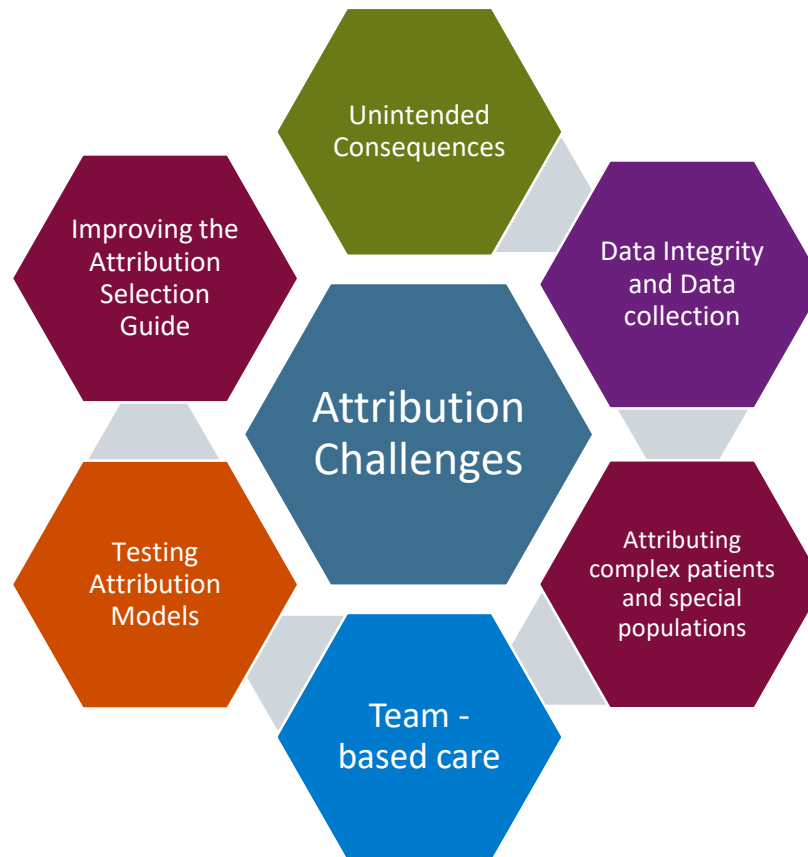
Key Findings (continued)

- Little consistency across models but there is evidence that changing the attribution rules can alter results.
- Lack of transparency on how results are attributed and no way to appeal the results of an attribution model that may wrongly assign responsibility.
- These products allow for greater standardizations, transparency, and stakeholder buy-in:
 - *Allow for evaluation of models in the future*
 - *Lay the groundwork to develop a more robust evidence base*

Where are we going?

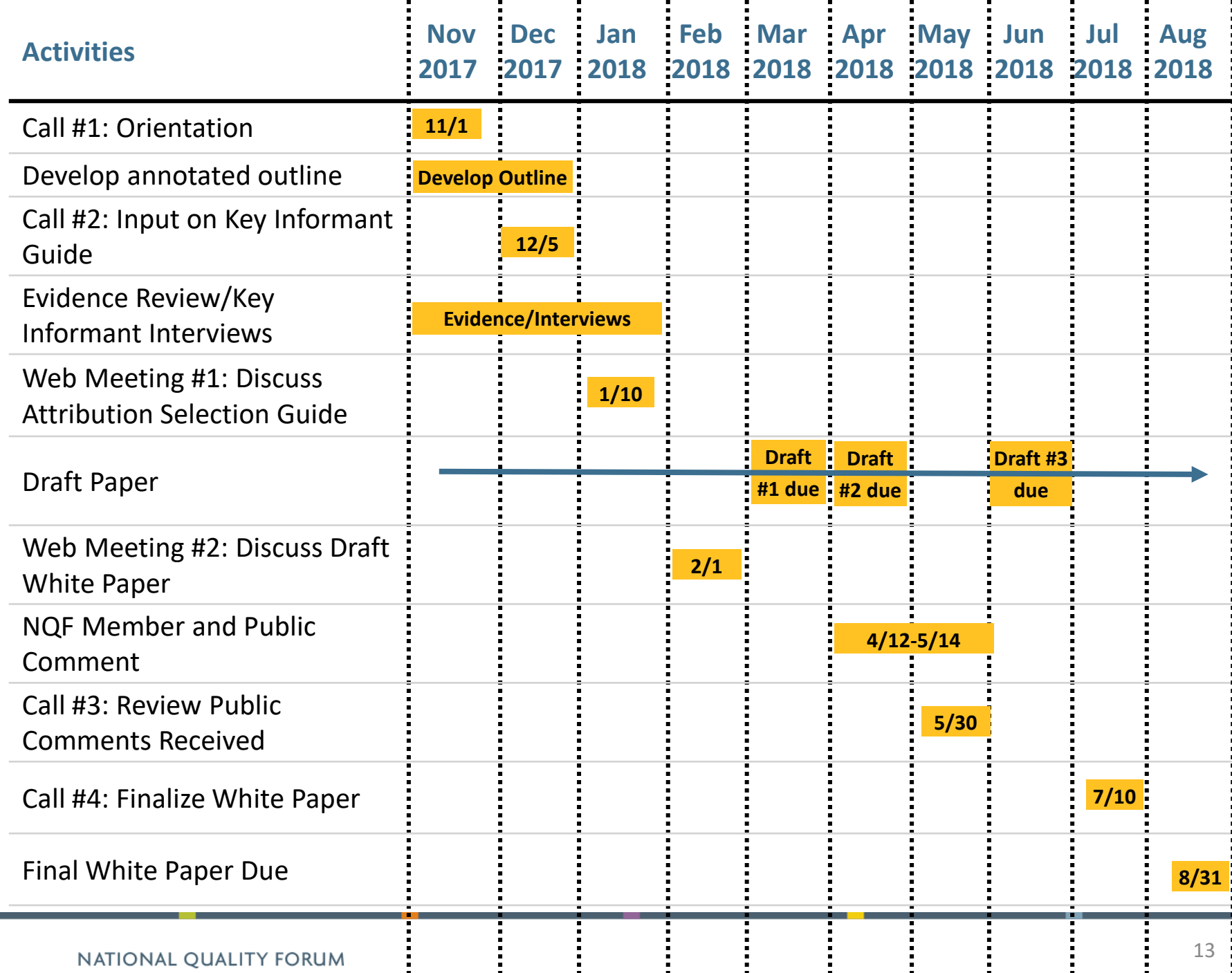
Project Purpose and Objectives

- Develop a white paper to provide continued guidance to the field on approaches to attribution



To accomplish these goals, NQF will:

1. Convene a multistakeholder advisory panel to guide and provide input on the direction of the white paper
2. Hold two webinars and four conference calls with the panel
3. Conduct a review of the relevant evidence related to attribution
4. Perform key informant interviews
5. Develop a white paper that summarizes the evidence review, interviews, and recommendations
6. Develop a blueprint for further development of the Attribution Selection Guide
7. Examine NQF processes for opportunities to address attribution in measure evaluation and selection



Roles of the Advisory Panel and NQF Staff

NQF Staff will...

Draft the Annotated Outline

Complete research (key informant interviews, literature review, qualitative data collection)

Draft White Paper

Write Final White Paper with Future Recommendations

Public and Member Comment

Panel Input

Annotated Outline & Discussion Questions Review

Discussion Questions

1. Are there additional questions that are critical and should be explored within this project?
2. Are you aware of any new and/or relevant literature that can support this project?
3. Do you have any ideas/input on potential individuals or organizations that could be interviewed as key informants?
4. What are your early thoughts on how we might promote the use of, refine, and improve dissemination of the attribution selection guide?)

Section 1: Introduction

- Why this work is important
- The role of attribution in measurement, selection, and pay-for-performance programs
- The importance of attribution for resource use, outcomes, composite measures, and population health management.

Panel Discussion

- Distinguishing between measure-level and program-level attribution and the interaction between them as foundation for exploring these attribution challenges we will address.

Section 2: Contextual Factors and Terms of Attribution

- What is the current landscape of attribution — has anything changed since our prior work?
- Key definitions
- Summary of NQF's prior work on attribution

Section 3: Focus and Goals

- Guidance for designing an attribution model
 - *Unintended consequences of attribution models*
 - *Challenges that data integrity and data collection methods pose to developing attribution models*
 - *Attributing care in team-based care delivery models*
 - *Challenges in attributing complex patients and those in special populations and settings*
- Current approaches and best practices for testing attribution models
- Evaluation of attribution models as part of the endorsement and selection processes
- Improving the Attribution Selection Guide, its dissemination, and its use

Panel Discussion

- Are there any other remaining challenges or issues from the first project or your experience that should be explored during this effort?
- Potential key informants in the field to further inform our analysis of these issues.
- Suggestions for relevant literature to review.

Section 4: Methods

- Systematic evidence review
- Qualitative interviews
 - *Surveys*
 - *Key informant interviews*
 - *Input from other NQF panels and committees*

Section 5: Discussion

- Review of attribution methodologies
- Exploring the challenges to attribution
 - *Current approaches for attribution model testing within models and programs*
 - *Team approaches to attribution, including nonclinicians*
 - *Incorporation of adjudication and feedback processes*
 - *Data Issues*
 - *Attributing complex patients and special populations and settings*
 - *Unintended consequences*
 - *Attribution model selection guide*

Current approaches for attribution model testing within models and programs

- How are the elements of the attribution model selection guide incorporated in the testing of attribution models?
- How does the accountability mechanism of the attribution model affect the testing plan for the attribution model?
- As the attribution models evolve over time, what should the expectation for testing be?
- How can the attribution model analytically demonstrate that a provider can reasonably influence the outcomes that they are being held responsible for? (i.e., face validity?)
- What types of sensitivity analyses can be conducted to compare alternative attribution models?

Team Approaches to Attribution

- Under what conditions should programs incorporate nonclinicians in attribution models?
- How can attribution models support the move toward team-based care/accountability while balancing accountable units who may perceive a lack of control about which patients are attributed to them and their ability to influence those patients' outcomes?
- How can attribution models attribute multiple units in ways that are proportional to their involvement?
 - *Should programs focus on a defined set of “proximal outcomes” that are specific to each type of accountable unit but contribute to the achievement of a larger aspirational goal?*

Incorporation of adjudication and feedback processes

- How can incorporation of an adjudication and feedback process support transparency of an attribution model?
- What are the elements that should seek feedback from the accountable units? The elements of an attribution model that could benefit from feedback from the accountable unit?
- How could the process balance concerns about patient-centeredness with concerns about fairness to providers?
- How could the process be fair to all providers and not favor those with resources to appeal?

Data Issues

- How do different data types (e.g., administrative claims) influence the design of an attribution model?
- What is the role of patient and clinician attestation?

Attribution Challenges in Special Settings/Complex Patients

- What are the special patient populations that should be explored? Pediatrics, oncology, and behavioral health?
- What are the special settings that require nuanced consideration when developing an attribution model?

Unintended consequences of attribution models on specific subpopulations and clinically complex patients

- What are the unintended consequences that might emerge with the use of various attribution models?
- How does the accountability mechanism influence the need to explore unintended consequences?
- What is the role of risk adjustment?
- What is the role of exclusion criteria?

Section 6: Recommendations to Advance the Science of Attribution

- Best practices for testing attribution models
- Approaches to attribution in team-based care delivery models
- Improving data to improve attribution models
- Evaluation of attribution models as part of measure endorsement and selection
- Recommendations for improving the attribution model selection guide, its dissemination, and its use

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Next call is December 5, 12:00-2:00 pm ET
 - *Review the key informant interview guide*
 - *Further explore key attribution challenges to be addressed through key informant interviews*

Key Meeting Dates

Event	Date/Time
Conference Call: Orientation & Review of Annotated Outline	November 1, 2017, 12:00pm – 2:00pm ET
Conference Call: Review Key Informant Guide	December 5, 2017, 12:00pm – 2:00pm ET
Webinar: Review Attribution Model Selection Guide & NQF Processes	January 10, 2018, 12:00pm – 2:00pm ET
Webinar: Review Draft White Paper	February 7, 2018, 12:00pm – 2:00pm ET
Conference Call: Review Public Comments Received	May 30, 2018, 12:00pm – 2:00pm ET
Conference Call: Finalize White Paper	July 10, 2018, 12:00pm – 2:00pm

NQF SharePoint Site

- Primary method of document sharing and collaboration for NQF staff and the Panel
- SharePoint Categories
 - *Document (e.g., reference materials)*
 - *Calendar and meeting materials*
 - *Panel roster*
 - *Staff contacts*

<http://share.qualityforum.org/Projects/Attribution/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Project Contact Information

- Email: attribution@qualityforum.org
- NQF Phone: 202-783-1300
- Project page:
[http://www.qualityforum.org/Improving Attribution Models.aspx](http://www.qualityforum.org/Improving_Attribution_Models.aspx)
- SharePoint page:
<http://share.qualityforum.org/Projects/Attribution/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Project Staff Contact Information

- Erin O'Rourke: eorourke@qualityforum.org
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- Kirsten Reed: kreed@qualityforum.org

Questions?

NQF Member and Public Comment

Thank you.