NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

Moderator: Angela Franklin
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10:00 am CT

Operator: Welcome everyone. Today's conference is about to begin. Please note all lines will be open so we do ask that you please use your mute button when not speaking to help cut down on background noise.

Also if you need to step away from the line for any reason, please do not place the phone on hold as doing so will feed music into the entire conference.

At this time, I would like to turn the call over to Ms. Angela Franklin. Please go ahead, ma'am.

Angela Franklin: Hello, everyone. This is Angela Franklin, Senior Director of Performance Measures here at NQF. And you are joining the Measure Developer Webinar that is focused on Behavioral Health, the project that has opened November 14 and is in phase 1 at this time.

I'd also like to introduce you to other staffers on this project, Sarah Fanta, our Project Manager, and Evan Williamson, our Project Analyst. And I will turn it over to Sarah. Go ahead, Sarah.

Sarah Fanta: Okay. Hi everyone. This is Sarah Fanta. So I just want to briefly go over the agenda for today's call. We're going to be giving you a brief overview of the Behavioral Health Project with a particular focus on phase 1.

We're also going to be going over how to submit a measure on the NQF Web site, briefly explain the NQF evaluation criteria for what your measures will be evaluated against. And also leave some time open for questions and answers which we'll pause momentarily throughout the presentation to allow for some questions.

This is a very high-level kind of logistical Webinar, just to go over the NQF process. The Webinar was basically developed from the feedback that we've received from many of you regarding, you know, how to submit a measure, how to go through the NQF process, how to access the submission forms.

So if there is interest out there we would to host an additional Webinar to take a deeper dive regarding specific measure specifications such as viability and validity of measures and a deeper dive looking at the measure evaluation criteria.

We're also willing to work with measure developers one-on-one. Our project team's available via email or by phone to work with you through this process.

So just a quick project overview, this is two-phase project. Phase 1 started in November and we're hoping to end in October of next year. We'll be looking at new and composite measures across all care delivery settings, especially primary and specialty care.

Phase 2 of the project is slated to begin next September and it will be looking at measures that were identified in as gaps in phase 1 and we'll also be looking at roughly 29 NQF-endorsed measures that are up for maintenance.

So the project scope, NQF is seeking measures in the following areas, screening, assessment and follow-up, risk, appraisal and assessment, documentation and follow-up, prevention, care

integration, use in adults with substance abuse disorders. That- our scope has also been expanded to include alcohol and tobacco measures as well as use in adults with serious emotional disturbances and effective care measures.

This next slide just shows the timeline for phase 1. Our Call for Nominations just closed on December 13, and we received a great deal of nominations across a wide variety of stakeholder groups. And so we've begun the internal vetting process to see who will be seated on that committee and that proposed slate will go up for a two-week commenting period on January 10.

As most of you are aware, the Call for Measures is open now and will close on February 14. But if you are interested in submitting your measures any time before February 14, particularly in that January timeframe, NQF staff will have more time to review the measures and be able to offer suggestions throughout the way. So basically the sooner that you can get them in the better, but the deadline is February 14.

That Steering Committee will be meeting April 17 and 18 in Washington, D.C. to go over the measures. The report will be available for review and comment in June through July - early July. The Steering Committee will respond to those comments in late July and there will be a pre-voting Webinar August 13. And NQF member vote will be open in August.

Finishing up with CSAC review in September and then NQF's Board endorsements next October.

Are there any questions right now on Behavioral Health Project in general, the timeline, the scope? The lines are open so just feel free to ask a question if anyone out there has any at this point.

Ann Watt: This is Ann at The Joint Commission. I - everything is very clear so far. I'm just wondering if you are going to be posting these slides.

Sarah Fanta: Yes. All of these slides will be available on the NQF Web site on the Behavioral Health

Project page. And we'll be sure to email them out to you all as well, everyone who is included on

the measure developer list, yes.

Ann Watt: Thanks.

Sarah Fanta: Okay. Any other questions at this time? Okay.

So the focus of today's discussion, as I mentioned earlier, is to basically walk you through this

NQF submission process for new measures, explain the measure maintenance and competing

measures process and answer any questions any of you may have regarding the process or how

to submit a measure.

And at this point, I'm going to be turning it over to Evan to explain how to submit new measures to

NQF.

Evan Williamson: Hi, everybody. This is Evan. So we're going to go through the process of creating an

account and submitting a measure on the NQF Web site.

I'm doing this through PowerPoint. I didn't want to pull up the Internet portion of this. But if you

have any questions or specific questions about it that I don't have in these slides, please feel free

to contact me at any time and I can walk you through it.

So the first process is to log in. NQF log-in is always required. And then a form is required for

each individual measure, so each separate measure needs a separate form.

And once you've started a process you can save it as an in-progress submission and you can access that through My Dashboard which is on the right side of the Web site and I'll show you where that it.

And, again, if it's - the measure is not in the public domain, a Measure Steward Agreement must be completed and submitted.

All right, so we'll walk through the process of creating an NQF account. So again, if your organization is a member of NQF, this new account will replace the member ID and password the organization has used in the past. And this will allow you to access the members only content on the NQF site.

So on the NQF home page, which is qualityforum.org, at the top you'll see this bar here and it says Log-In right there. So you click on that and it will bring you to this page where it says please login to access this resource.

If you already have a log-in, great, you can just type it in the username and password and sign in. But if you don't, you click on enroll now and that will bring you to the process to create an account.

So first thing we'll do is we'll check to see if you already have an account. So you enter contact information, email, name, zip code. And then if you don't have - if we check and you don't have an account it will bring you to this page to complete your account information.

So you'll fill out just all the information. There's more down at the bottom. And then you'll just press submit.

After that you'll receive an email to activate your account. It's pretty straightforward. And it will you bring you back to the NQF log-in page where now you'll type in to log-in to access this resource.

Once you're logged in, on the right side of the page this box will appear and this is kind of your user account settings. And you'll click on the Dashboard and that's where it will track any submissions in process or measures submission.

All right, so now we'll go to actually the submission form. So we're going to go to Consensus Development Projects. You can see right at the top there is Behavioral Health phase 1 and 2 under the Current Consensus Development Projects tab.

And then so you click on Behavioral Health phase 1 and 2 and then that brings up our project page. And this just gives you an overview of our project, the opportunity and just some background information on the Behavioral Health Project.

Then you'll click on the Details tab. It will take you to kind of more specifics about the project and where we have the timeline we went over earlier in an interactive form here.

And you'll click on the Call for Candidate Standards and there listed is the Call for Measures. There's a PDF there, the Measure Steward Agreement we mentioned earlier and also the Table of Endorsed Measures that we've identified that will be up for maintenance during phase 2.

So when you see at the bottom, there is a link that says Submit Measure. So we'll click on the Submit Measure link there and that will take you to the next page. And here we have the NQF Measure Submission form - we're into Version 5.0. This might be a little different than something you've used in the past.

But you want to read over just the information there. It says the criteria used to evaluate measures. There's a lot of useful information, links you can click on.

So up in the right-hand corner you'll see Begin Submission, right there. All right, so we'll first - before we move on we'll just go over some of the details on this with the Save Draft portion.

So you want to make sure that the pop-up appears after you've clicked on Save Draft during your measure submission process. And you want to make sure you save your work during this. And that's where you can exit later from the Dashboard.

And so let's go through - there's a log-out period as well. So if you leave it unattended it will time out. So that make sure that you're always saving your work with - you don't want to lose any of the work you've already done.

So we'll open up Begin Submission and that takes you to the submission - the actual submission form here where there are check boxes, there's free text, there's other sections and just a few details here. Attachments that can't be larger than five megabytes and we accept Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint and PDF documents.

So it's all pretty straightforward. Again, you'll just walk through, we ask the questions there, you know, that's basically public domain, measure steward, all those things will be asked and you just go through the check boxes and free text.

All right, so, again, so we've - we went to the save process. So once you've logged in you can click on Dashboard and it will have your submissions in progress. You'll have your test - you know, areas with test projects but it will have whatever you save it as and you can go back into it.

So make sure - you can work with more than one Measure of Submission form at a time so we allow you to save multiple submissions if you're working on them before the submission deadline.

So once you've completed the online submission form, you click the Submit button which is located in the upper right-hand corner and lower hand corner of the submission form. You'll click the validation button and certify that you've completed the submission form and entered all the required information.

Do we have any questions on the submission form? All right, I'll turn it back over to Sarah now, and she'll go over the NQF evaluation criteria.

Sarah Fanta: Thank you for that great overview, Evan. Okay, so at this point I'm going to briefly run over the NQF evaluation criteria. And these are the four major criteria that the Steering Committees are going to be measuring your measures against.

So the first is the importance to measure and report which incorporates the level of evidence, the opportunity for improvement and the relationship to high-priority or high-impact areas of care.

The second is scientific acceptability which will focus mainly on the reliability and validity testing results of each measure.

The third is the usability portion. And that will focus on whether or not the measure results are meaningful and understandable to the intended audience, and useful for both public reporting and informing quality improvement.

The fourth major criteria is feasibility. And this criteria is looking at whether or not the measure can be implemented without undue burden on those who are entering the information into the measure.

And the Steering Committee will also be responsible for assessing related and competing measures which Angela will go over in a few minutes.

So the evaluation hierarchy, importance to measure and report, which I mentioned, measures those aspects of the measure that have the greatest potential for driving improvements though if it's not important, the other criteria are less meaningful. So in order to move on to the rest of the - through the evaluation process, a measure must be deemed important by the Steering Committee to measure and report.

The second criteria, as I mentioned, which is scientific acceptability, the goal of this criteria is to make valid conclusions about the quality of the measure. So if the results have not proven to be reliable and valid it runs the risk of improper interpretation so that is also a must pass criteria.

So the measure must be important and scientifically acceptable in order to be even considered to be useful and feasible.

For usability, the goal is to use -be able to use the measure for a decision-related - decisions related to selection and improvement. So if the measure is not useful it probably also would not be feasible.

For the feasibility portion, ideally, as I mentioned before, it would cause as little burden as possible to those collecting the measure. So if it's not feasible, you know, we need to consider alternative approaches.

And also if related or competing measures - that will also be taken into account after the measure has met all four of the prior criteria. And, at which case, we'll also see if it can be harmonized to other measures or if its competing measure -whatever is the best in class.

Okay and at this point, I'm going to hand it over to Angela to discuss the related and competing measures issue.

Angela Franklin: Thanks, Sarah. So as Sarah covered earlier, there's the four criteria above but there's also the consideration of comparison to related or competing measures.

And NQF asks that measure developers be aware of measures that are currently endorsed in the same focus area or the same topic or focus population that are also in the system or under consideration in this Behavioral Health Project.

So looking at if a measure meets the four criteria above, as Sarah discussed above, you want to make sure that the measure specs that you are submitting are harmonized with any related measures or the differences in the specs are explained.

You also want to make sure to make a case for how the measure might be superior to competing measures. For example, as we said, it's a more valid or efficient way to measure or make a case for whether there's more than one measure needed in the area.

And so I'll go to the next slide. So here we've just put together a framework for you to do this evaluation - the same concepts, focus, target, process, condition, event, outcome and the same target population, as you can see.

And different concepts for measure focus, target, process, condition, outcome, event and related measures, in which case we would need to harmonize on the target population or you'd need to justify the differences between the two.

Of course you have in your last box there's a different target patient population compared with the different concepts to measure focus, target, process, condition, event, outcome, in which case the measure falls into the neither needing harmonization and it's not a competing measure (topic).

Are there any questions about this because we know this is a topic of considerable question for many? Anything out there? Okay.

All right, then I'll turn it back over to Sarah. And please keep in mind, we will also be open for questions offline. You can email any of us if you have a question about this particular issue.

Sarah Fanta: Okay. And as we mentioned before, we have a pretty wide variety of resources that are available for measure developers on our NQF Web site, however we've put together on this page hyperlinks to all of those that we thought you all would fine useful.

Including the User's Guide, how to submit the Measure Submission Form online in case you need a refresher, a more detailed look at our measure evaluation criteria, the Measure Steward Agreement as Evan mentioned which is necessary for any entity that is not in the public domain.

The Evidence Task Force report which will be important when completing your important section of the measure submission form, the Measure Task Force report which will be important when looking at the scientific acceptability portion of the measure, the Usability Task Force report, guidance on harmonization, we have some guidance available on the NQF Web site.

And also if you're having any technical troubles at any time with the Web site, you're unable to save a draft, anything at all that has to with the Web site, we have our Web help email address listed. So at any time you can email them. You can also email us and we'll just probably be forwarding your request to those folks too. They're good at all of those things.

Okay, so next steps. On the Call for Nominations, as I mentioned, closed on December 13 so, as I mentioned we're beginning that internal vetting process. The Call for Measures closes on February 14, but as I mentioned before if you're able to submit prior to January 14, we'll have more time and opportunity to review and provide a greater level of feedback to you.

Also there's an optional Webinar on March 7 for the Steering Committee which will take a deeper dive looking at specific measure evaluation criteria which would be useful for many of you do dial into just so you can see how your measures will actually be evaluated by the committee.

And as I mentioned before, the Steering Committee meeting is slated for April 17 and 18 in Washington, D.C. Are there any questions at this point? And, as I mentioned, if there's anything that we have not covered in this Webinar, we are more than happy to have another one to take a deeper dive looking at the NQF process and all the steps of our consensus development process as well.

So please email anyone on the project team and I have listed here all of our email addresses. So feel free to contact with anything at all. We would love to hear from you.

We're really looking forward to this project and we're really happy for those of you who are able to dial in to learn a little bit more about NQF. So before signing off, I just want to make sure no one has any questions whatsoever that we can cover at this time.

Okay, so that will conclude the Webinar for today. Like I said, we're here for any questions one-on-one. I'm sorry, was there a question? Okay, it doesn't appear - okay. All right, well thank you, everyone. We're looking forward to being in this exciting process.

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