



Cancer Standing Committee – Spring 2020 Measure Evaluation Post-Comment Web Meeting

The National Quality Forum (NQF) convened the Cancer Standing Committee for a web meeting on October 5, 2020 to review and discuss public comments received for one measure.

Welcome, Review of Web Meeting Objectives, and Attendance

Matthew Pickering, PharmD, NQF senior director, opened the call by welcoming participants to the web meeting. The Committee co-chairs, Karen Fields, MD, and Shelley Fuld Nasso, MPP, also provided welcoming remarks. Dr. Pickering reviewed the meeting objectives, and Oroma Igwe, MPH, NQF manager, conducted the Committee roll call. Eleven Committee members were present for the call. Representatives from the measure developer team, American College of Radiology (ACR), were also present during the meeting.

Measure not recommended for endorsement

0508 Diagnostic Imaging Inappropriate Use of “Probably Benign” Assessment Category in Screening Mammograms (ACR)

NQF 0508 is a process measure that captures the percentage of final reports for screening mammograms that are classified as “probably benign.”

Review and Discussion of Public Comments

Dr. Pickering introduced NQF 0508 *Diagnostic Imaging: Inappropriate Use of “Probably Benign” Assessment Category in Screening Mammograms* and reminded the Committee that this measure did not pass the validity criterion during the July 10, 2020 measure evaluation meeting. Dr. Pickering summarized that the Committee raised concerns with the sole use of face validity for its maintenance endorsement review, as NQF prefers empiric validity testing. Face validity is acceptable provided that there is a Committee-approved rationale for the absence of empiric validity testing. The Committee did not pass the measure on validity, a “must-pass” criterion.

Dr. Pickering reported that NQF received two comments for NQF 0508, including one comment from the measure developer, during the 30-day commenting period. The comments outlined the following:

- The American Geriatrics Society (AGS) expressed concern that the phrasing of the measure is confusing, particularly the use of “probably benign” as an assessment category.
- AGS also raised concerns regarding when the measure should be used and how the measure considers mammogram screening intervals.
- ACR respectfully disagreed with the Standing Committee’s recommendation that the measure should be re-specified for “follow-up” mammograms only.
- ACR plans to determine the necessary data elements to identify disparities and reassess the methodology appropriate for establishing validity.

During the Committee discussion of the comments, ACR addressed the confusion around the use of the term “probably benign”, emphasizing that the “probably benign” assessment category, or Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS) 3, is reserved for findings with a high probability (≥98 percent) of being benign and should not be used as a category for indeterminate findings. Inappropriate designation of findings as “probably benign” can result in the unnecessary follow-up assessment of lesions that could have otherwise been quickly classified and assessed alternatively, or it can delay diagnosis and treatment of cancerous lesions. The Committee did not have any dissenting views, nor did it share any additional comments related to the developer’s response.

The Committee asked for ACR to provide more detail regarding their plan to reassess the validity of the measure. ACR responded that they plan to identify disparities that demonstrate a larger performance gap and examine the performance variance among larger and smaller practices. Notably, ACR also acknowledged that NQF 0508 did not pass on the validity criterion. ACR plans to reassess the appropriate methodology for establishing validity and reanalyze the data collected for NQF 0508, following potential revisions associated with the previously mentioned Standing Committee feedback.

NQF Member and Public Comment

No public or NQF member comments were provided during the post-comment web meeting.

Next Steps

Teja Vemuganti, MPH, NQF analyst, reviewed next steps. Mrs. Vemuganti informed the Committee that the Consensus Standards Approval Committee (CSAC) will consider the Committee’s recommendation during its November 17-18, 2020 meeting and that no further action would be required of the Committee for the spring 2020 measure evaluation process. At the CSAC meeting, the CSAC will review the Committee’s recommendation on NQF 0508. Additionally, it will review the Spring 2020 draft report comments and the related adjudication that occurred during the Spring 2020 post-comment web meeting. The developer (ACR) will have the opportunity to weigh in on the CSAC’s discussion of NQF 0508 if they desire or if requested by the CSAC. In preparation for the fall 2020 measure evaluation cycle, the Committee will meet again in January 2021 for the fall 2020 Orientation web meeting. Following the CSAC meeting, the 30-day appeals period will be held from November 23-December 22, 2020. Should there be any appeals submitted, NQF staff will compile them for review by the Appeals Board to determine whether the concern raised is relevant and warrants consideration for overturning the endorsement decision. In the absence of appeals submissions, NQF 0508 will proceed to its final endorsement status for the Spring 2020 review period.