NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

CONFERENCE CALL FOR THE COMMON FORMATS EXPERT PANEL

March 12, 2010

Panel Members: David Classen, MD, MS (co-chair); Henry Johnson Jr., MD, MPH (co-chair); John Clarke, MD; Matthew Grissinger, RPh, MS; Mark Keroack, MD, MPH; Helen Lau, RN, MHROD, BSN; Arthur Levin, MPH; Lori Paine, RN, MS; Shannon Phillips, MD, MPH; Nancy Ridley, MS; Heather Sherman, PhD

NQF Staff: Peter Angood, MD; Melinda Murphy, RN, MS; Lindsey Tighe, MS

Others Present: Peter Goldschmidt, MD, DrPH, DMS; Amy Helwig, MD, MS; John Moquin, CPHIMS(AHRQ); Emily Littman, New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Drs. Classen and Johnson welcomed the Common Formats Expert Panel and thanked them for their continued participation. Dr. Johnson reviewed the agenda items with the panel then introduced Dr. Helwig and asked her to provide a status report on Common Formats Version 1.1.

AHRQ VERSION 1.1 STATUS REPORT

Dr. Helwig informed the Panel that Common Formats Version 1.1 paper forms will be released during the last week of March and will incorporate recommendations of the Expert Panel, including those made at the February meeting. This includes adding a new health information technology (HIT) element to the Summary of Initial Report (SIR). The technical specifications for Common Formats will also be released in March.

The technical specifications comprise a series of documents including rules and guidance that will standardize the patient safety event information that is collected. The documents provide rules for data collection and guidance on how and when to create the data elements, values, conditions, and "go to" logic for data elements. They also include the Clinical Document Architecture (CDA) that will be the standard submission file format. The technical specifications include the following documents:

- Implementation Guide with information about how organizations are to submit information to the Patient Safety Organizations;
- Common Formats Flow Charts Diagrams used to gather relevant information based on the type of incident being reported; because questions are based on answers to previous questions, it is clear when response are not consistent with the incident being reported;
- Validation Rules and Errors Document: Excel sheet that will specify combinations of data elements that do not make sense in terms of specific event types; specifies error messages;
- Data Dictionary: Defines all data elements, giving technical and coded names, metadata and guidance for when and how to use data elements; and
- Local Specification: Provides guidance on how to implement Common Formats at the local level.

Information about the release of the Common Formats and accompanying documentation will be provided to the Patient Safety Organizations (PSOs) and will be announced publicly through the Federal Register and through notification through an AHRQ listserv of individuals who have asked to be updated on the evolution of the Common Formats. Also, to assist software developers in understanding the technical specifications, there will be an AHRQ sponsored software developers meeting on May 5 from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the same location as the second annual PSO meeting. The PSO meeting is open to the public and will be held on May 6 and 7.

In response to a question from a Panel member, Dr. Helwig stated that the various Common Formats documents are searchable. She also advised the Panel that the technical specifications will probably be revised at the same time as the Common Formats specifications, which will likely be in 2011. The technical specifications will need to be incorporated into electronic reporting formats by software developers and used by providers and (PSOs) for a period of months before meaningful data can be collected on their utility. The timing of these events likely will not allow for revisions to the technical specifications during 2010. Provision will be made for correcting critical flaws as they arise.

Again in response to a question from a Panel member, Dr. Helwig informed the group that the rollout of a version of Common Formats for skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) will likely be ready for public comment at the end of 2010, though an exact date has not yet been established. AHRQ is working with the federal working group to develop these forms as they did with the hospital forms. She advised that the incident types and content will be consistent with the Common Formats for hospitals though they have dropped the forms for blood, perinatal, surgery, and anesthesia. Event descriptions and forms for elopement and accidents common to SNFs will probably be added.

FOLLOW UP ON OPEN ITEMS

The Panel members discussed the following open items:

- exclusion of amniotic fluid embolism on the perinatal form, and
- inclusion of HIT as a factor contributing to patient safety events.

Exclusion of Amniotic Fluid Embolism on the Perinatal Form

Dr. Helwig informed the Panel that, per member discussions during the February conference call, amniotic fluid embolism will not be on the Perinatal form for Version 1.1. The consultation with Dr. Gluck has been deferred until after Version 1.1 is posted.

Inclusion of HIT as a Factor Contributing to Patient Safety Events

The Panel discussed the implications of including a question on the SIR regarding the contribution of HIT to the occurrence of patient safety events. The Panel members felt it very important that the language used in the question on the SIR be neutral so as not to suggest negative connotations with regard to the use of HIT. Dr. Helwig informed the Panel that to address their concerns, this question has been added as a freestanding question on the SIR and is not part of the listing of response options regarding contributing factors to patient safety events.

Though the Panel agreed upon the importance of beginning to collect information about the use of HIT and the unintended consequences of that use, members stated concerns that the data collected from this question would be too broad to be meaningful. As the reports could contain data regarding issues of HIT design, use, or performance of the system, the data collected through this question on the SIR would not provide the specificity for meaningful interpretation. Dr. Helwig advised the Panel that the information will be used as a starting point for learning more about the use of HIT in healthcare facilities; however, the most meaningful information for providers will come from analyzing the reports and narratives at the local level when issues arise. There was concern expressed that interpretation of the data collected from this question (displayed as a percentage of patient safety event reports involving HIT) could be misused to discredit HIT. As such, Panel members felt it would be important to include a cautionary note explaining that the data received from this question cannot be immediately interpreted as the significance and implications of the data are not yet understood. The Panel was clear in its opinion that a form specific to HIT should be developed.

In response to a Panel member's question, Dr. Helwig advised the Panel that PSOs can use the data collected through Common Formats to create their own reports. This will be another avenue for gathering additional information and thus increasing the utility of the data collected.

ACTING ON COMMENTS RECEIVED ON VERSION 1.1

Ms. Murphy explained to the Panel that NQF will receive all documentation for Version 1.1 from AHRQ at one time, after all the forms and event descriptions have been finalized. Once this documentation has been received, NQF staff will update the current commenting tool and open it on the website approximately one week later.

With regards to comments on the technical specifications, the Panel was advised that, at present, review and recommendations for improvement of the technical specifications would be done by technical experts responsible for maintaining the specifications. Recommendations that inform what should be included or modified in the specifications will continue to come from the Panel.

NEXT STEPS

The Common Formats Expert Panel will next meet by conference call on **Monday, April 12 from 4:00-5:30 p.m. ET.**

On May 5th, 2010, AHRQ will host a Software Developer's Meeting in Baltimore, MD. Panel members have been invited to attend. During this meeting AHRQ will take questions on the technical specifications of Common Formats and getting feedback from attendees.

On May 6 and 7, 2010, AHRQ will host its annual PSO meeting, which Panel members also have been invited to attend.