

What Do We Mean by Conceptual Analysis?

- Does prior research indicate a relationship between SDS and the outcome?
- Is there a logical relationship or theory about the relationship between SDS and the outcome?
- Is there a significant passage of time between the healthcare unit intervention and measured outcome during which other factors may have an effect?
- Do patient actions or decisions influence the outcome or process and are the decisions affected by SDS (e.g., ability to purchase medications)?
- Does the patient community have an influence (e.g., distance to pharmacies, groceries, healthcare services)?

Measure Developer Considerations for Conceptual Analysis

- What non-clinical SDS-related variables/factors have a possible conceptual relationship to resource utilization and cost?
 - What evidence is there of the conceptual relationship?
 - Which variables does the developer have access to in order to further analyze the risk model?
- Do you believe the results of your conceptual analysis warrants additional empirical analysis?
- Are there differences in the relationship to SDS to payment by condition (pneumonia vs. HF vs. AMI)?
- How will you approach the empirical analysis of these variables in the risk model?

Variables Under Consideration

- Educational attainment or income (from census data using patient zip code)
- Medicaid status (proxy for low income and insurance coverage)
- Black or white race

Discussion of Conceptual Analyses

Committee discussion questions:

- Has the developer adequately demonstrated that there is (or is not) a conceptual relationship between the risk factors and the payment/resource utilization/cost for each measure or condition (e.g., pneumonia, AMI, HF)? (i.e., Does the Committee believe there is a conceptual relationship?)
- How well do these variables proxy for the intended SDS factors and align with the conceptual model?

Discussion of Conceptual Analyses

Committee discussion questions:

- If there is a conceptual relationship, are the data available, feasible and accessible (for this population) in order for these factors to be used in empirical testing of risk-adjustment?
- Based on the conceptual analysis provided by the developers, does the Committee believe that further empirical analysis is warranted?
 - If so, which factors does the Committee recommend the developers pursue in the empirical analysis?

Preparing for Empirical Analysis Review

- Empirical Analysis Review (October 27 webinar)
 - Review and discuss the empirical analysis of the risk adjustment approach in context of the validity criterion;
 - Review and discuss the developer's decision to include or not include SDS adjustment in the measure based on the empirical analysis provided; and
 - Make an endorsement recommendation:
 - Recommend [continued] endorsement of the measure
 - Recommend to de-endorse the measure

NQF Guidance for Submission of Empirical Analyses

- Analyses and interpretation resulting in decision to include or not include SDS factors in section.
- Compare performance scores and risk model performance with and without SDS factors in the risk adjustment model (including method and results).
- An interpretation of their results in terms of the differences in performance scores for the same entities.
- If the developer has decided to SDS adjust they will need to submit, updated reliability and validity testing and specifications for a stratified version of the measure using these factors.

Preparing for Empirical Analysis Review

Committee Discussion:

- If the developer has a plan for the empirical analysis for the Committee to consider, what recommendations or input does the Committee have on the proposed approach?
- If a plan has not been submitted, what considerations or recommendations would the Committee like to provide to the developers as they develop their approach?



Public and Member Comment