

THE NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

NOTICE OF INTENT TO CALL FOR CANDIDATE STANDARDS FOR OUTPATIENT IMAGING EFFICIENCY

NQF is initiating a consensus development project seeking measures focused on the appropriate use of imaging services in the outpatient area. The formal NQF Call for Candidate Standards will be announced on **Tuesday, December 1, 2009**.

NOTICE TO MEASURE STEWARDS

If, after reviewing this Notice of Intent, your organization believes it has one or more measures that address the scope and objectives of this project as described below and would like NQF to evaluate them for possible endorsement, please submit a [notice of intent to submit candidate standards](#) by **Monday, November 16, 2009**. Instructions for submitting this information are given at the end of this document.

BACKGROUND

NQF is initiating a consensus development project seeking outpatient measures focused on the appropriate use of outpatient imaging services, avoidance of redundant and unnecessary exposure to radiation, and reduction of wasteful follow-up procedures. These strategies have the potential to improve both the quality and affordability of health care. Overuse of imaging procedures was identified as a targeted area within the National Priorities Partnership.

To date, NQF has endorsed a limited number of imaging efficiency measures focused on appropriateness of imaging, efficient use and management of imaging diagnostic services, coordination of care and communication among all providers and departments regarding a diagnostic imaging service. This follow-up project seeks to fill measurement gaps that address overuse of high cost, high risk imaging in the outpatient setting.

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

NQF will solicit candidate standards for review, evaluation and potential endorsement as national voluntary consensus standards for imaging efficiency. The goal of these consensus

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standards is to identify specific imaging efficiency measurement domains, which include, but are not limited to:

- Duplication of imaging services;
- Overlap of imaging services;
- Screening;
- Negative studies;
- Non-contrast imaging of the same body part using the same imaging modality followed shortly thereafter but on separate occasions with contrast imaging;
- Imaging of adjacent body parts;
- Coordination of care.

THE NQF PROCESS

The candidate measures will be considered for NQF endorsement as voluntary consensus standards. Agreement around the recommendations will be developed through NQF's formal Consensus Development Process (CDP). This project will involve the active participation of representatives from across the spectrum of healthcare stakeholders and will be guided by a Steering Committee with assistance from technical advisors as needed.

Any organization or individual may submit measures for consideration. To be evaluated, candidate consensus standards must meet the following general criteria:

- Be fully developed for use (e.g., research and testing have been completed);
- Be intended for use in both public reporting and quality improvement;
- Be open source or in the public domain;¹ and
- Have an identified measure steward.²

¹ NQF requires any non-government organization submitting a measure for endorsement to execute a Measure Steward Agreement that addresses intellectual property protection and disclosure of the measure's proprietary components, including but not limited to specifications, risk adjustment methodologies, data collection instrument, data collection or analysis software, and database access. For details, please see our [Policy on Endorsement of Proprietary Measures](#).

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Measure stewards must also have a fully executed Measure Steward Agreement with NQF. Information on submitting measures to NQF can be found on the NQF website.

FUNDING

This project is supported under a contract provided by the Department of Health and Human Services.

MEASURE STEWARDS: NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT CANDIDATE STANDARDS

Measures stewards anticipating submission of candidate measures to NQF for this project should submit a notice of intent. A Microsoft Word document containing a list of measures should be sent to imagingefficiency2@qualityforum.org no later than **November 16, 2009 at 6 p.m. ET**. This list should include:

- Title and description of the measure;
- Organization (indicate whether developer or steward); and
- Contact person (name, e-mail address, and telephone number)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, contact Tina Grannis RN, BSN at (202) 783-1300 or via e-mail at imagingefficiency2@qualityforum.org.

² NQF requires any measure considered for endorsement to have an identified responsible entity and process to maintain and update the measure on a schedule commensurate with clinical innovation, but at least every 3 years. Measure stewards must execute a [Measure Steward Agreement](#) with NQF.

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