

**CALL FOR MEASURES AND MEASURE CONCEPTS:
Palliative and End-of-Life Care 2015-2016**

NQF is seeking new measures and concepts on various aspects of palliative and end-of-life care, including, but not limited to, measures that assess physical, emotional, social, psychological, and spiritual aspects of care, access to and timeliness of care, patient and family experience with care, patient and family engagement, care planning, avoidance of unnecessary hospital or ED emergency department admissions, appropriateness of care, cost of care, and caregiver support.

NQF is particularly interested in:

- measures of assessment and management of physical, psychological, and emotional symptoms (e.g., pain, dyspnea, weight loss, weakness, nausea, serious bowel problems, delirium and depression)
- measures of patient- and family-centered palliative and hospice care, including education, support, individualized goal-setting, compliance with patient and family care preferences, and other measures of engagement and experience
- access to affordable palliative and hospice services
- measures of spiritual and social well-being
- composite performance measures
- measures applicable to more than one setting
- measures that capture broad populations, including children and adolescents where applicable
- measures that are harmonized with similar measures
- measures that are sensitive to vulnerable populations, including racial/ethnic minorities; and Medicaid populations

This project launched **Thursday, October 15, 2015**. The final submission deadline is **Monday, February 29, 2016**.

BACKGROUND

The project seeks measures addressing various aspects of palliative and end of life care, including, but not limited to, measures that assess physical, emotional, social, psychological, and spiritual aspects of care, access to and timeliness of care, patient and family experience with care, patient and family engagement, care planning, avoidance of unnecessary hospital or emergency department admissions, appropriateness of care, cost of care, and caregiver support. The Standing Committee also will re-evaluate fifteen (15) previously-endorsed

palliative and end-of-life care measures that are due for maintenance against the most recent [NQF measure evaluation criteria](#), per the new [Maintenance of NQF Endorsement policy](#).

For this project, NQF will convene a new multi-stakeholder Standing Committee composed of twenty to twenty-five (20-25) individuals to evaluate measures and make recommendations for endorsement. Members of this Standing Committee will possess knowledge, experience, and/or proficiency in healthcare performance measurement and/or relevant expertise associated with palliative and end-of-life care across various care settings.

MEASURE CONCEPTS

In addition to soliciting fully-developed measures for consensus-based endorsement review, NQF is also soliciting measure concepts through NQF's Measure Inventory Pipeline. This pipeline will serve as an important source of information for HHS and other stakeholders on new measure development in the broader healthcare community. It will also enable NQF to track current and planned measure development to ensure early collaboration among developers to drive harmonization and alignment of measures.

In an effort to capture comprehensive information on measures in development, NQF seeks input on several variables including:

- measure description
- numerator statement
- denominator statement (target population)
- planned use
- stage of development
- other relevant information

Please note that the information entered through NQF's Measure Inventory Pipeline will not be evaluated by the Standing Committee against the NQF Criteria. Submitted information will be catalogued by NQF and used to help inform the Standing Committee's measure gaps discussion. NQF will also share the information with HHS to inform CMS' Measure Inventory Pipeline, which is a reference for several stakeholders.

MEASURE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To submit a measure, please complete the following:

- [Measure Submission Form](#) Clicking on this link will redirect you to the webpage for this project, from which you can access the online measure submission form.



- [Measure Steward Agreement](#) Please note that no materials will be accepted without submission of a fully executed *Measure Steward Agreement Form*. All materials not meeting this requirement will be returned to the sender.

PROCESS PARTICIPATION

Measure developers are strongly encouraged to attend (either in person or via web/conference call) the following scheduled meeting dates to represent their measure(s) and respond to questions from the Committee and members of the public.

Scheduled meeting dates

Meeting	Date/Time
Standing Committee Orientation Webinar (2 hours)	April 5, 2016 3:00-5:00pm EST
Measure Evaluation Q&A	April 13, 2016 12:00-2:00pm EST
Workgroup Webinars (2 hours)	April 20, 2016 3:00-5:00pm EST April 27, 2016 12:00-2:00pm EST April 28, 2016 3:00-5:00PM EST April 29, 2016 3:00-5:00pm EST
In-person meeting (2 days in Washington, DC)	May 10-11, 2016
Post-Meeting Webinar (2 hours)	May 20, 2016 3:00-5:00pm EST
Post Draft Report Comment Webinar (2 hours)	August 3, 2016 3:00-5:00pm EST

Materials must be submitted using the online submission form by 6:00 pm, ET, February 29, 2016. If you have any questions, please contact Senior Project Manager Rachel Roiland, at (202) 559-9513 or via e-mail at palliative@qualityforum.org.

Conditions for Consideration:

- The measure owner/steward verifies there is an identified responsible entity and process to maintain and update the measure on a schedule that is commensurate with the rate of clinical innovation, but at least every three years.¹
- The intended use of the measure includes both public accountability and quality improvement.
- The measure is fully specified and [tested for reliability and validity](#). Measures that are not tested will not be accepted in this project.
- The measure developer/steward attests that [harmonization](#) with related measures and

¹ Measure stewards must execute a Measure Steward Agreement with NQF.



issues with competing measures have been considered and addressed, as appropriate.

- The requested measure submission information is complete and responsive to the questions so that all the information needed to evaluate all [criteria](#) is provided.

Submission Guidance:

- [Developer Guidebook](#):
 - A Developer Guidebook as has been created to assist developers in the measure submission and evaluation process. The Guidebook contains all the information developers need to know when submitting a measure to NQF.
- ICD-10-CM/PCS:
 - Beginning April 1, 2013 measures specified with administrative claims data must submit a set of ICD-9-CM and ICD-10-CM/PCS codes. Click [here](#) for further information on this requirement.
- eMeasures:
 - All eMeasures must be specified in the Heath Quality Measures Format (HQMF) and use the Quality Data Model (QDM) and value sets vetted through the National Library of Medicine's Value Set Authority Center (VSAC).
 - Please review the [current measure evaluation criteria and guidance for additional information on submitting eMeasures](#).
- Composite measures:
 - Please notify project staff if you plan to submit a composite measure.

Technical Assistance

NQF project staff will provide technical assistance to measure developers at any time during the measure submission process up to the submission deadline. Contact the project team with any questions about the criteria, how to answer the questions in the form, any technical issues with the online submission process... or anything else!

MEASURE SUBMISSION COMPLETENESS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Measure steward agreement or concept agreement is completed and signed
- ☐ All conditions for submission are met.
- ☐ There are responses in all fields on measure submission form (MSF) unless a particular item is not applicable as indicated in the item instructions.
- ☐ Attachments include: eMeasure specifications (S.2a) if applicable; data dictionary/code list (S.2b); Evidence and Measure Testing attachments.
- ☐ All URLs are active and accurate.
- ☐ Harmonization/competing measures: Did you present a plan for harmonization of the related/competing measures identified by staff during early identification/triage or justify submitting competing or non-harmonized measures? (see Harmonization



process in the [Developer Guidebook](#)).

- ☐ Paired measures should be submitted on separate forms.
- ☐ An eMeasure must be specified in HQMF format, using QDM and value sets vetted through the VSAC.
- ☐ Composite performance measures: responses to the composite measure items are included.
- ☐ Both ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes are included.

RESOURCES FOR MEASURE DEVELOPERS AND STEWARDS

For more details on measure submission and evaluation, please see:

- [Submitting Standards Web Page](#)
- [Measure Evaluation Criteria and Guidance PDF](#)
- [Guidance on Quality Performance Measure Construction](#)
- [Endorsement Maintenance Policy](#)
- [What Good Looks Like - Measure Submission Examples](#)
- [Composite Measure Evaluation Guidance Report](#)
- [Patient Reported Outcomes Report](#)
- [eMeasure Feasibility Report](#)
- [Reserve Status Policy](#)