



NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

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improvements together

Memo

October 19, 2021

To: Primary Care and Chronic Illness Standing Committee

From: NQF staff

Re: Post-comment web meeting to discuss public comments received and NQF member expression of support has been canceled

Introduction

NQF closed the public commenting period on the measure submitted for endorsement consideration to the Primary Care and Chronic Illness (PCCI) Standing Committee. NQF received one post-evaluation comment from the American Board of Family Medicine, the measure developer for NQF #3617 *Measuring the Value-Functions of Primary Care: Provider Level Continuity of Care Measure*. Since no comments were received that were authored by stakeholders external to the developer or that require discussion or adjudication from the Standing Committee, NQF along with the Standing Committee co-chairs have decided to cancel the post-comment web meeting scheduled for October 19, 2021.

The Standing Committee's recommendation will be reviewed by the Consensus Standards Approval Committee (CSAC) on November 30, 2021. The CSAC will determine whether or not to uphold the Standing Committee's recommendation for the measure submitted for endorsement consideration. All Standing Committee members are encouraged to attend the CSAC meeting to listen to the discussion.

Standing Committee Actions

1. No actions beyond reviewing this briefing memo and draft report.

Background

Primary care providers serve as the most common contact point for many people within the U.S. healthcare system. As such, primary care has a central role in improving the health of people and populations. Continuity of care is an essential element of primary care; it involves collaborative care management, including the patient and their care team, with the goal of achieving high quality medical care over time.

Over the last 15 years, NQF has endorsed dozens of measures addressing improvements in primary care and chronic illnesses. These measures are used in many national- and state-level public reporting and accountability programs, as well as for quality improvement. With the formation of the PCCI Standing Committee in 2017, NQF was able to consolidate and streamline the measure maintenance and endorsement process for a broad set of measures related to primary care and chronic illness. High quality performance measurement that captures the complexity of primary care and chronic illnesses is essential to improve diagnosis, treatment, and management of conditions. Chronic illnesses are long lasting or persistent health conditions or diseases that patients and providers must manage on an ongoing basis. For the spring 2021 cycle, the Standing Committee reviewed one measure related to continuity of care.

This Primary Care and Chronic Illness (PCCI) Standing Committee is convened with the recognition that the most common contact point for many people within the United States healthcare system is their primary care provider. This Standing Committee oversees the measurement portfolio used to advance accountability and quality in the delivery of primary care services. The background and description of NQF's most recent PCCI Standing Committee meeting as well as previous meetings are available on NQF's project [webpage](#). On June 23, 2021, the PCCI Standing Committee evaluated one newly submitted measures against NQF's standard evaluation criteria.

For this cycle, the Standing Committee recommended the following measure:

- **NQF #3617** Measuring the Value-Functions of Primary Care: Provider Level Continuity of Care Measure (American Board of Family Medicine [ABFM])

Comments Received

NQF solicits comments on measures undergoing review in various ways and at various times throughout the evaluation process. First, NQF accepts comments on endorsed measures on an ongoing basis through the Quality Positioning System (QPS). Second, NQF solicits member and public comments during a 16-week comment period via an online tool on the project webpage.

Pre-evaluation Comments

NQF solicits comments prior to the evaluation of the measures via an online tool on the project webpage. For this evaluation cycle, the pre-evaluation comment period was open from April 29 to June 10, 2021, for the measure under review. No pre-evaluation comments were received.

Post-evaluation Comments

The draft report was posted on the project webpage for public and NQF member comment on August 16, 2021, for 30 calendar days. During the commenting period, NQF received one comment from the measure developer. The developer provided additional evidence in support of the correlative importance of continuity of care and decreased emergency department (ED) utilization and the continued need for the promotion of primary care continuity. Since the measure was recommended by the Standing Committee and the comments do not require deliberation by the Standing Committee, the Spring 2021 post comment meeting will not be convened.

NQF staff have included all post-evaluation comment that were received in the comment narrative (Word document) posted to the Standing Committee SharePoint site. This comment narrative contains the commenter's name, comment, associated measure, topic, and—for the post-evaluation comment—an NQF response (including measure steward/developer responses) was provided in response to the developer's comment.

Comment(s) and Their Disposition

Measure-Specific Comment(s)

3617: Measuring the Value-Functions of Primary Care: Provider Level Continuity of Care Measure (ABFM)

The American Board of Family Medicine Federation of American Hospitals (FAH) provided additional and substantial data supporting the assertion that continuity of care decreases ED utilization and increases desirable utilization.

Measure Steward/Developer Response:

No response required

NQF Staff Response:

Thank you for your comment. Since the measure was recommended by the Standing Committee and the comments do not require deliberation by the Standing Committee, the Spring 2021 post comment meeting will not be convened. Please reach out with any questions.

Action Item:

No action required.

NQF Member Expression of Support

Throughout the 16-week continuous public commenting period, NQF members have the opportunity to express their support ('Support' or 'Do Not Support') for each measure to inform the Standing Committee's recommendations during the commenting period. This expression of support (or not) during the commenting period replaces the member voting opportunity that was previously held subsequent to Standing Committee deliberations.

During the 16-week public commenting period, NQF did not receive any expressions of support for the measure under endorsement consideration for the current cycle.

Appendix A: NQF Member Expression of Support Results

During the 16-week public commenting period, NQF did not receive any expressions of support for the measures under endorsement consideration for the current cycle.