



**NATIONAL  
QUALITY FORUM**

Driving measurable health  
improvements together

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# Best Practices for Developing and Testing Risk Adjustment Models

## *Orientation Web Meeting*

December 15, 2020

*This project is funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under contract HHSM-500-2017-00060I –75FCMC20F0001 - Best Practices for Developing and Testing Risk Adjustment Models.*

# Welcome



## Welcome

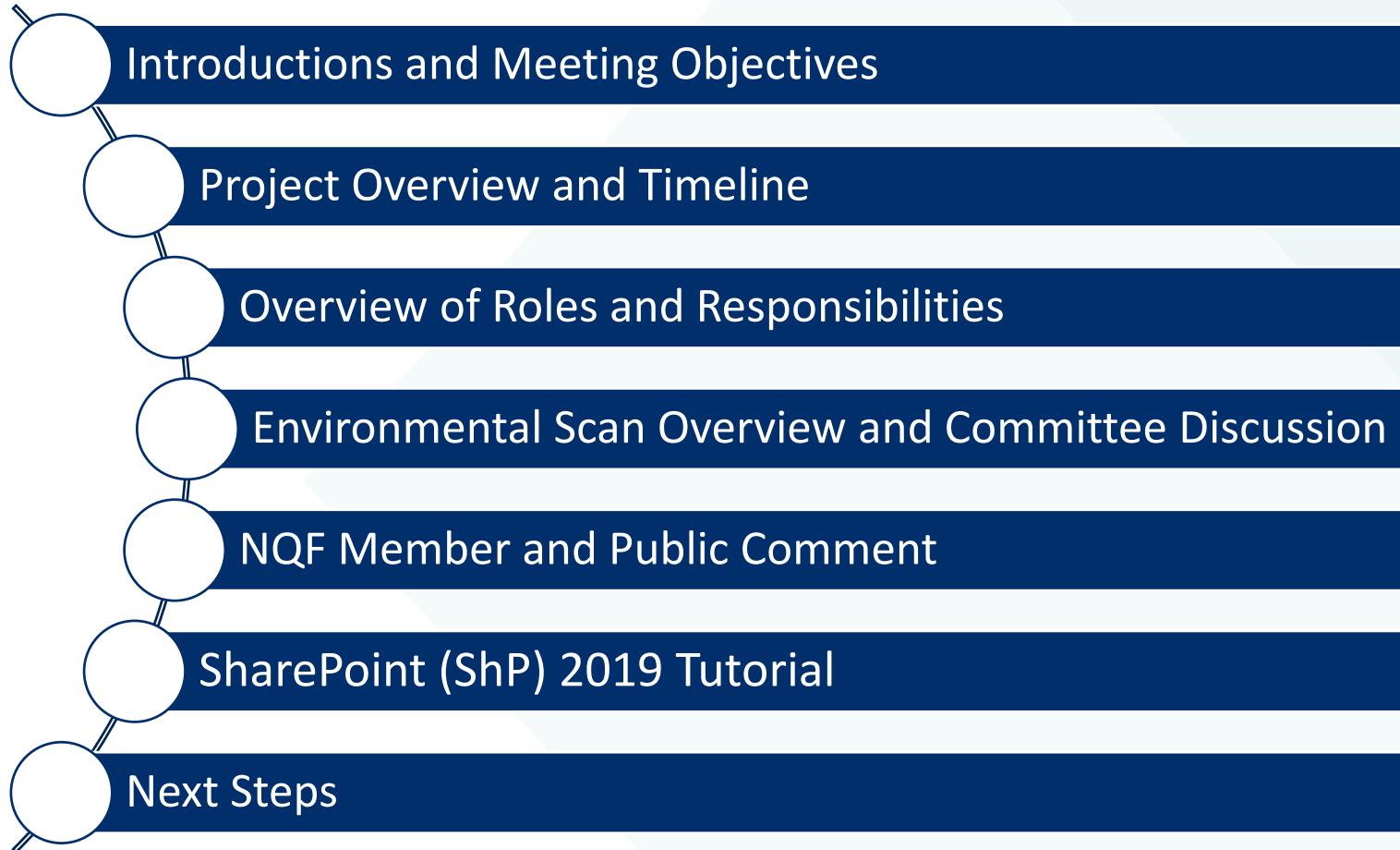
- The RingCentral web platform will allow you to visually follow the presentation.
- Please mute your lines when you are not speaking to minimize background noise.
- You may submit questions to project staff via the RingCentral web platform chat function.

If you are experiencing technical issues, please contact the NQF project team at [RAGuidance@qualityforum.org](mailto:RAGuidance@qualityforum.org)

# Welcoming Remarks



## Agenda



# Introductions and Meeting Objectives

## Project Team

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### NQF Staff

**Sai Ma**, PhD, MPA, Managing Director  
Senior Technical Expert, Quality Measurement

**Matthew Pickering**, PharmD, Senior Director

**Taroon Amin**, PhD, MPH, Consultant

**Katie Berryman**, MPAP, PMD, Project Manager

**Janaki Panchal**, MSPH, Manager

**Hannah Ingber**, MPH, Senior Analyst

**Juanita Rogers**, MS, CHES, Analyst



## CMS Staff

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### CMS

**Sophia Chan**, PhD, MPH, IDIQ COR, TO COR, CCSQ, CMS

**Maria Durham**, MS, MBA, Director, Division of Program and Measurement Support (DPMS), CCSQ, CMS

**Helen Dollar-Maples**, RN, MSN, Deputy Director, DPMS

**Patrick Wynne**, Senior Analyst, IDIQ COR, CCSQ, CMS

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## Technical Expert Panel (TEP) Members

Co-Chairs	Philip Alberti, PhD	
	Karen Joynt Maddox, MD, MPH	
Arlene Ash, PhD	John Martin, PhD, MPH	
Patrick Campbell, PhD, PharmD, RPH	Shalini Prakash, MS	
Elizabeth Drye, MD, SM	Sandra Richardson, MS	
Marc Elliott, PhD, MA	David Shahian, MD	
Rachel Harrington, PhD	Cristie Upshaw Travis, MSHHA	
Bellinda King-Kallimanis, PhD, MSc	Janice Tufte	
Vincent Liu, MD, MS	Katherine Vickery, MD, MSc.	
Danielle Lloyd, MPH		

## Federal Liaisons

Federal Liaison	Affiliation
Andy Frankos-Rey, MA	CMCS/CMS
Craig Caplin, PhD	HRSA
David Nyweide, PhD	CMMI/CMS
Jesse Roach, MD	CCSQ/CMS
Joel Andress, PhD	CCSQ/CMS
Lok Wong Samson, PhD	ASPE
Maushami (Mia) DeSoto, PhD	AHRQ
Rachael Zuckerman, PhD	ASPE
Sarah Gaillot, PhD	CM/CMS
Shafa Al-Showk, PhD	CM/CMS



## Meeting Objectives

- Introduce technical expert panel (TEP) members and discuss roles, responsibilities, and ground rules
- Review and discuss the background, scope, and objectives of the project
- Obtain TEP-input on the approach to the Environmental Scan approach, including summary table examples

# Project Overview and Timeline

## The National Quality Forum: A Unique Role

- Established in 1999, NQF is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization.
- NQF is serving as the consensus-based entity (CBE). NQF brings together public and private sector stakeholders to reach consensus on healthcare performance measurement. The goal is to make healthcare in the U.S. better, safer, and more affordable.
- **Mission:** To lead national collaboration to improve health and healthcare quality through measurement

## NQF Activities in Multiple Measurement Areas

### ■ Performance Measure Endorsement

- ▣ 600+ NQF-endorsed measures across multiple clinical areas
- ▣ 15 empaneled standing expert committees

### ■ Measure Applications Partnership (MAP)

- ▣ Advises HHS on selecting measures for 20+ federal programs

### ■ National Quality Partners

- ▣ Convenes stakeholders around critical health and healthcare topics

### ■ Measurement Science

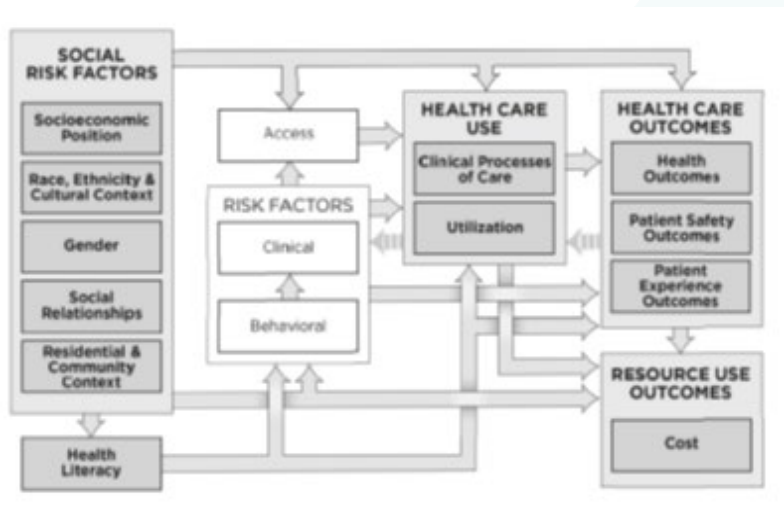
- ▣ Convenes private and public sector leaders to reach consensus on complex issues in healthcare performance measurement

### ■ Measure Incubator

- ▣ Facilitates efficient measure development and testing through collaboration and partnership

# The importance and challenges of adjusting for social and functional risk factors

**Figure 1.** Health Care Access Conceptual Model



National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine 2016 report

- Fair and meaningful quality and resource measures are foundation for value-based care
- Social and functional risk factors can directly affect outcomes and/or indirectly do so through behavioral or clinical factors
- However, when and how to adjust for social and functional factors remains inconsistent with limited consensus



## Project Objectives (*Base Year*)

- Conduct an environmental scan of data sources used for risk adjustment, functional or social risk factors available for testing, and approaches to conceptual and statistical methods for risk adjustment.
- Develop Technical Guidance for measure developers that includes emerging best practices on when and how to adjust for functional and social risk factor in measure development.
- Convene a multistakeholder TEP over the next 24-months to provide expertise and guidance towards major project components.



## Environmental Scan: Three-pronged Approach (Base Year)



Literature review



Consensus  
Development Process  
(CDP) submission scan



Programs review

### Focuses of the scan:

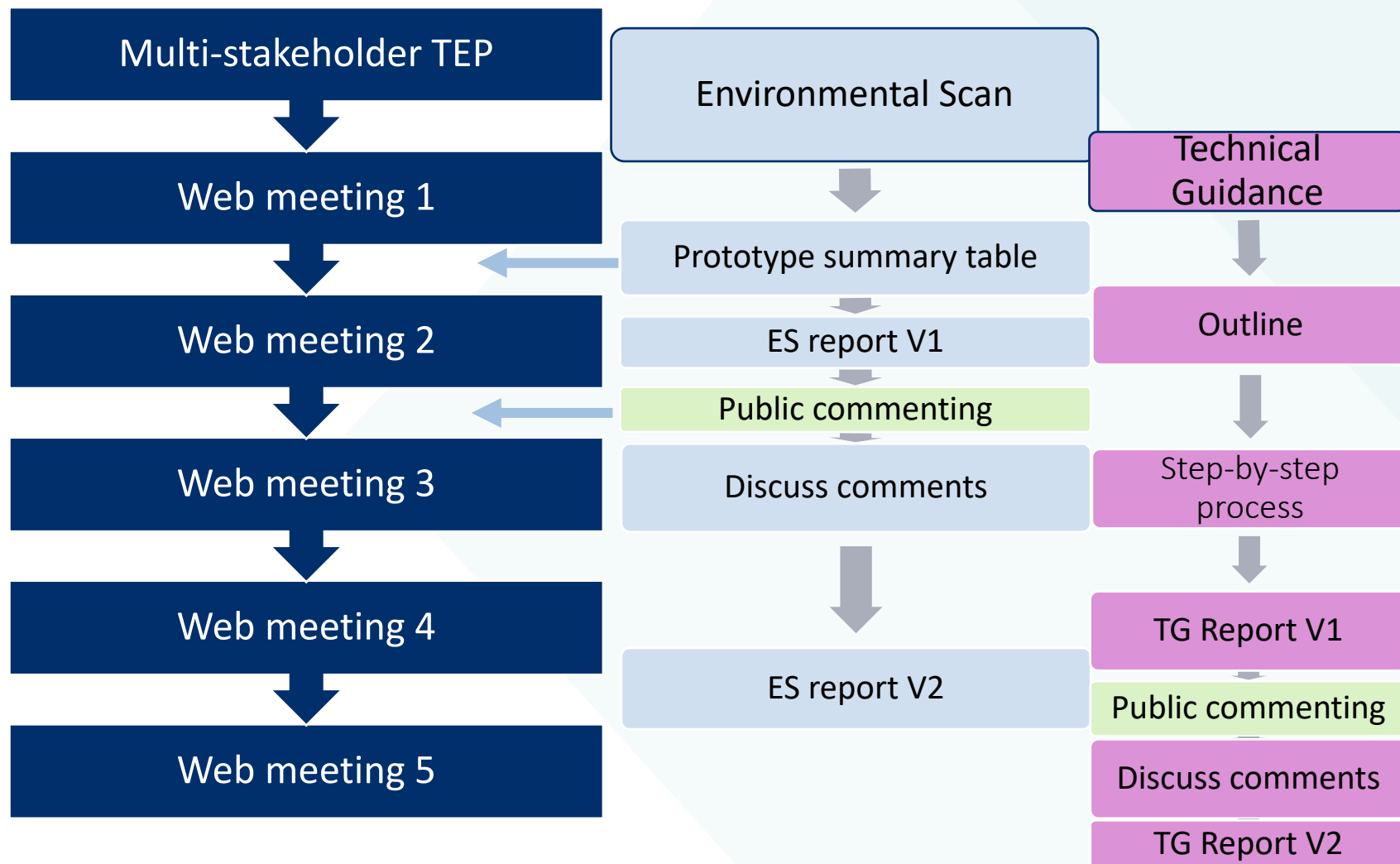
- Conceptual model
- Datasets used
- Social risk and functional risk factors available for testing
- Statistical methods
- Existing guidance
- How federal and non-federal programs currently adjust for social and functional risk factors: measure vs. payment or program level



## Technical Guidance (*Base Year*)

1. Datasets used for risk adjustment and measure specifications
2. Functional or social risk factors available for testing and measure development
3. Approaches to conceptual and statistical methods
4. Approaches for inclusion of functional and social risk factors
5. Fit for purpose in a measurement system

## Key Milestones (*Base Year*)



## Committee Web Meeting Timeline (Base Year)

Meeting (2 hours each)	Date/Time
<b>Web Meeting 1:</b> Orientation	December 15, 2020 ( <b>TODAY!</b> )
<b>Web Meeting 2:</b> Environmental Scan Feedback	February 2, 2021; 1-3pm ET
<b>Web Meeting 3:</b> Technical Guidance and Public Comment Feedback	March 30, 2021; 1-3pm ET
<b>Web Meeting 4:</b> Technical Guidance Feedback	May 11, 2021; 1-3pm ET
<b>Web Meeting 5:</b> Public Comment Feedback	July 12, 2021; 1-3pm ET



## Option Year

- Re-convene TEP web meetings
- Update the Environmental Scan Report from the Base Year
- Conduct Key Informant Interviews to prepare a Developer Feedback Report
- Update the Technical Guidance based on the findings of the Developer Feedback Report and the updated Environmental Scan Report

# Overview of Roles and Responsibilities

## Roles and Responsibilities of the TEP

- Serve as experts working with NQF staff to achieve the goals of the project
- Review meeting materials in advance and engage in meeting discussions
- Provide timely and relevant feedback on project deliverables
- Respond to public comments submitted during the review period
- Steer the development of major project components by providing input and guidance on:
  - ▣ the current state of risk adjustment for social and functional status in measurement, including emerging best practices;
  - ▣ the appropriateness of a standard risk adjustment framework;
  - ▣ the environmental scan; and
  - ▣ the development of technical guidance



## Providing Input

- **How to provide input during the web meetings?**
  - ▣ Provide timely input on major deliverables during facilitated discussion sections of the TEP meetings, either verbally or by messaging the project team (via chat box)
- **How to provide input outside of the meetings?**
  - ▣ Submit requested input via offline survey questions
  - ▣ Submit additional input on major deliverables through the project inbox ([RAguidance@qualityforum.org](mailto:RAguidance@qualityforum.org))



## Roles of the Co-chairs

- Group leaders and facilitators of the TEP
- Assist in facilitating TEP meetings by driving the TEP to consensus on technical guidance and outlining potential path forward for areas where consensus cannot be reached
- Keep the TEP focused and on track to meet project goals without hindering critical discussion/input
- Assist NQF staff in identifying key issues for TEP discussion

## Roles of the Federal Liaisons

- Attend and listen to TEP meetings
- Serve as a resource to supplement TEP discussions, providing input on important topics such as practical consideration of data needs, ongoing challenges that federal programs face, etc.
- Provide factual reviews and evaluations of project deliverables (i.e., accuracy of technical descriptions of how quality measures are used in particular programs)



## Roles of the NQF Staff

- Work with the TEP to achieve project goals
- Serve as a neutral convener of multistakeholder representatives
- Work with the TEP to facilitate consensus development and to achieve project goals
- Organize meetings and conference calls
- Ensure communication among all project participants
- Facilitate necessary communication and collaboration between different NQF projects and external stakeholders
- Respond to NQF member and public queries about the project
- Maintain documentation of project activities
- Draft and edit reports and project materials for public commenting
- Publish final project reports



## Role of CMS

- Funder of this project under the Task Order 75FCMC20F0001 – Best Practices for Developing and Testing Risk Adjustment Models. The funding source is Social Security Act Section 1890(b)(7)(C)-(D).
- Provide input and feedback on project deliverables for completeness and accuracy
- Coordinate federal agencies' engagement
- Work with the NQF staff to forecast potential risks and create risk mitigation strategies
- However, CMS respects the independence of the NQF consensus development process and the TEP

# Environmental Scan Overview and Committee Discussion



## Environmental Scan: Literature Review

- A literature from the last six years was conducted to identify studies reporting risk adjustment model development that consider social risk and/or functional status-related risk factors within quality performance measurement.
- A reference review was also conducted of NQF's 2014 report on Risk Adjustment for Socioeconomic Status or Other Sociodemographic Factors and the 2016 and 2020 Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) reports.
- A forward search of these reports was performed using Google Scholar to identify additional relevant articles. Lastly, NQF consulted experts in the field, including the Technical Expert Panel, to identify additional literature for inclusion



## Committee Discussion

- Is there any feedback on the approach for literature search (i.e., appropriateness of inclusion/exclusion criteria, appropriateness of data elements for abstraction)?
- In your review of the summary table, are there any additional data elements in the results table that should be collected?
- Are there any other reports or studies that should be considered?



## Environmental Scan: CDP Submission Scan

- Measures from the NQF-endorsed measure portfolio and candidate measures submitted for NQF endorsement were reviewed
- Prioritized illustrative measures with novel or robust approaches to measure testing
- A cross section of measure focus areas, measure type level of analysis, intended use





## Committee Discussion

- Is there any feedback on the approach for inclusion of illustrative measures?
- Review of the summary table, are there any additional data elements in the results table that should be collected for the illustrative measures?
- Is there any other illustrative measure that should be considered?

## Environmental Scan: Programs

- Definition: "Program" is used in a broad way to refer to any payment or public reporting program, system or model that contains quality measures, such as ACO, Star Ratings, Hospital Compare, etc.
- Purpose: To identify examples that illustrate different approaches in which social and functional risk factors are accounted for at the program level, in addition to or instead of individual measure-level risk adjustment
- Inclusion criteria:
  - ▣ The program is used for value-based payment and/or public reporting
  - ▣ The program includes quality measures
  - ▣ The program adjusts or stratifies for social and/or functional risk factors at the program level, in addition to or instead of adjustment at the individual measure level



## Committee Discussion

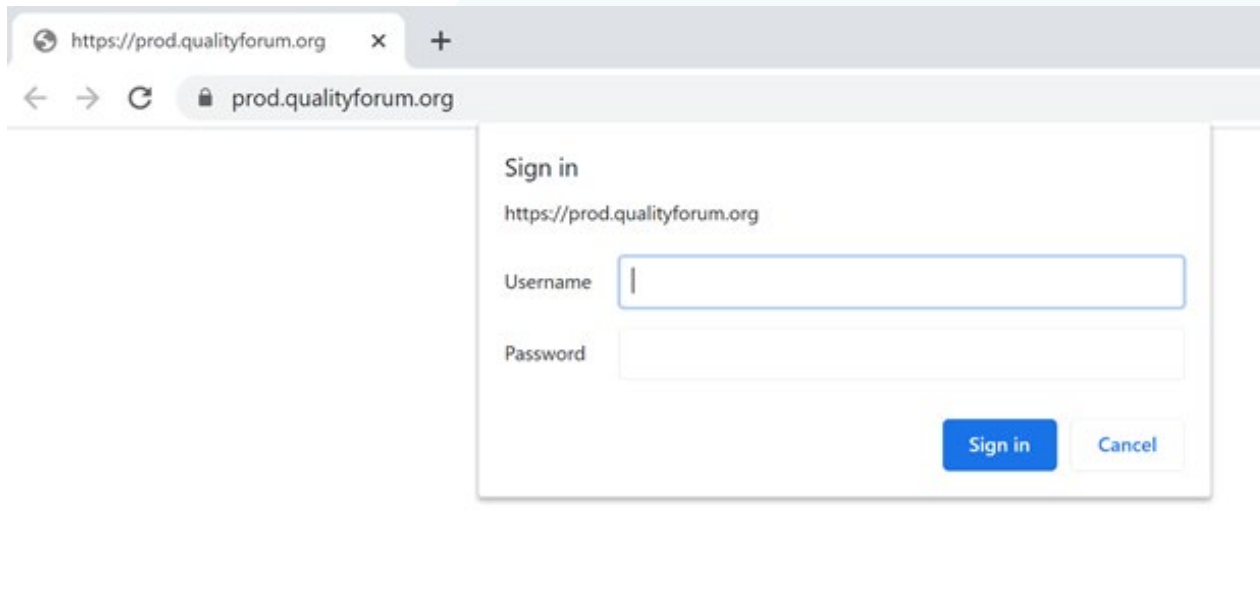
- What is your feedback on the flowchart's logic (*on pg. 9 of the discussion guide*)?
- Are we capturing the right information in the summary table?
- Are there other non-CMS (both federal and nonfederal) programs that fit into this flowchart?

# NQF Member and Public Comment

# SharePoint (ShP) 2019 Tutorial

## Logging on to SharePoint

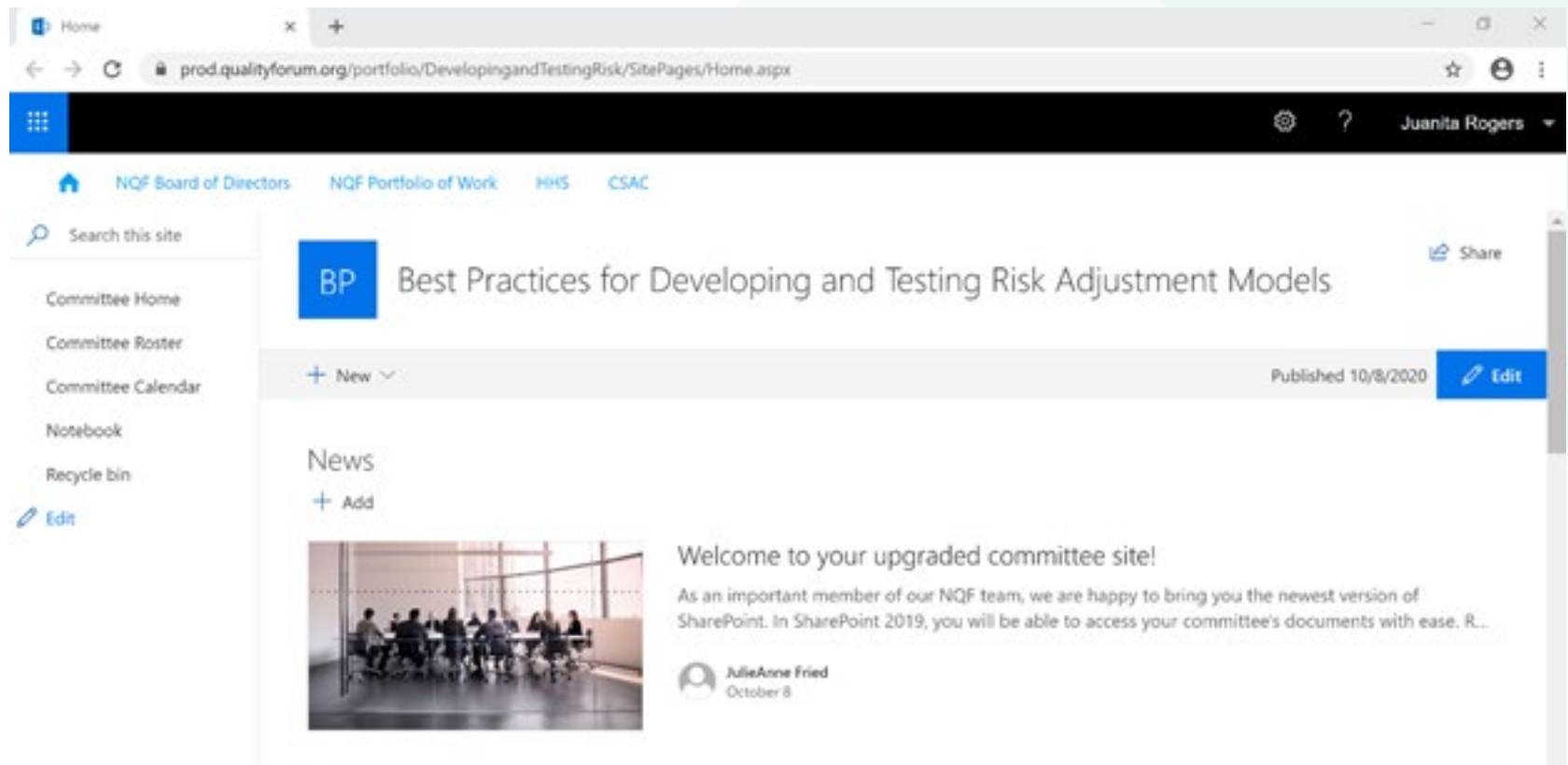
- Link: <https://share.qualityforum.org/portfolio/DevelopingandTestingRisk/SitePages/Home.aspx>



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <https://prod.qualityforum.org>. A sign-in modal is overlaid on the page. The modal has a title "Sign in" and a URL "https://prod.qualityforum.org". It contains two input fields: "Username" and "Password". Below the input fields are two buttons: "Sign in" (blue) and "Cancel" (white with a blue border).

- If you experience issues when logging in, please contact: [info@qualityforum.org](mailto:info@qualityforum.org)

## Committee SharePoint Page



The screenshot shows a SharePoint web browser interface. The address bar displays the URL: `prod.qualityforum.org/portfolio/DevelopingandTestingRisk/SitePages/Home.aspx`. The top navigation bar includes a home icon, "NQF Board of Directors", "NQF Portfolio of Work", "HHS", and "CSAC". A search bar on the left is labeled "Search this site". Below it, a list of site links includes "Committee Home", "Committee Roster", "Committee Calendar", "Notebook", and "Recycle bin". The main content area features a blue header with "BP" and the title "Best Practices for Developing and Testing Risk Adjustment Models". To the right of the title is a "Share" button. Below the title is a "+ New" button and a "Published 10/8/2020" date, with an "Edit" button to the right. A "News" section with a "+ Add" button is visible. The first news item includes a photo of a meeting and the text: "Welcome to your upgraded committee site! As an important member of our NQF team, we are happy to bring you the newest version of SharePoint. In SharePoint 2019, you will be able to access your committee's documents with ease. R...". The news item is attributed to "JulieAnne Fried" on "October 8".



## Tips to remember when accessing SharePoint

- SharePoint will work best with the latest version of most modern browsers:
  - ▣ Microsoft Edge
  - ▣ Google Chrome
  - ▣ Firefox
  - ▣ Safari



# Next Steps

## Next Steps

### Meeting dates

Meeting (2 hours each)	Date/Time
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<b>Web Meeting 5:</b> Public Comment Feedback	July 12, 2021; 1-3pm ET

### Upcoming Tasks

Task	Due Date
TEP Responses to Discussion Questions	December 18, 2020



## Project Contact Info

- Email: [RAGuidance@qualityforum.org](mailto:RAGuidance@qualityforum.org)
- NQF phone: 202-783-1300
- Project page:
  - [http://www.qualityforum.org/Risk\\_Adjustment\\_Guidance.aspx](http://www.qualityforum.org/Risk_Adjustment_Guidance.aspx)
- SharePoint site:
  - <https://share.qualityforum.org/portfolio/DevelopingandTestingRisk/SitePages/Home.aspx>

**THANK YOU.**

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