

## Meeting Summary

### Implementation Workgroup Web Meeting 4

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The National Quality Forum (NQF) convened a web meeting for the Implementation Workgroup on July 29, 2020.

#### Welcome and Review of Web Meeting Objectives

NQF staff and Workgroup co-chairs welcomed participants to the meeting. NQF staff reviewed the following meeting objectives:

- Update on Implementation Guide
- Public Comment Review
- Resolution on any Final Issues

#### Update on Implementation Guide

NQF staff began with updates on the Implementation Guide. The goal for the guide is to be a user-friendly source for “how to’s” and best practices. The final Guide will use layout and graphics to become more user-friendly. Currently the Guide is in text format for review, edit, and public comment. The resource is focused on the use of core measures in value-based payment programs, primarily by health plans. Although the Guide was focused in its approach, the goal was to include information relevant for all stakeholders.

#### Public Comment Review

NQF staff then transitioned to a review of the public commenting period. The commenting window was open from June 29 to July 17 and the Guide received 23 comments from 6 organizations. One theme among the public comments was concern about strategies that may not align with recommended best practices (use of claims data, quality data codes, methods for dealing with small numbers, etc.). The recommended response by NQF staff was to recognize these best practices, but keep a broad range of strategies in the Guide as a reflection of varying maturity and capabilities around performance measurement. While staff recognize the need to move measurement forward, the intent is to provide practical strategies for plans and providers wherever they may be on their measurement journey. Workgroup members agreed with the suggested approach.

Another theme among the comments was recommendations to make the strategies more prescriptive, including specific suggestions for strategies. NQF staff recommended to leave the strategies and recommendations general to apply to broadest range of stakeholders and situations. One workgroup member noted it may be useful to provide an illustrative example of successful implementation for a measure. NQF staff shared that there are examples of success in the resources section of the guide but would revisit the possibility of adding an additional example within the text.

Another comment theme was concerns that some strategies recommended to deal with small numbers represent a change to measure specifications. NQF staff recommended adding language clarifying that the intent is not to alter specifications, but rather data processing should be examined. A workgroup member recommended staff review the rural health report NQF released last year. The report focused on dealing with small numbers. Other Workgroup members noted the importance of mentioning the science of creating composite measures.

An additional theme among the comments was to combine the technical considerations section with the measure alignment section and rename. NQF recommended keeping these separate due to literature on success factors for value-based payment consistently referencing measure alignment specifically. NQF noted that technical considerations are important, but do not appear to be as strong of a success factor as measure alignment. Workgroup members agreed with this response.

The next public commenting theme was that the Guide does not sufficiently recognize the importance of patient and caregiver engagement. NQF staff stated they would review the report and update to ensure patient and caregiver engagement and perspective is specifically included in all appropriate areas (e.g., consider patient burden with PRO collection). Workgroup members agreed and underscored the importance of this perspective. One workgroup member shared that in their experience, patients are very much in support of the inclusion of patient-reported outcomes. Another workgroup member noted that there will indeed be a burden created when PROs are included, but this burden must be evenly distributed and mitigated as much as possible.

Another theme was a broader recommendation and feedback related to the selection of core measures and the core measure set process. NQF staff recommended raising this with the broader CQMC community.

NQF staff posed the question to the group as to how they should refer to the portion of plan's business that is not fully insured. In the Guide the term Administrative Services Only (ASO) was used. Workgroup members found ASO to be too abstract and recommended plainly stating "not fully insured." NQF staff also asked the workgroup whether the term "measure steward" or "measure developer" would resonate as the source of truth for specifications for measure information, particularly for audiences affiliated with commercial plans. One workgroup member noted that the measure steward could serve as the control mechanism to bring the measure developer into the conversation. Another workgroup member agreed that the measure steward is closest to the source of truth.

NQF staff also asked the workgroup for some examples to include in the Key Takeaways portion of the Measure Alignment section. One workgroup member shared an example from California which was a multi-payer, multi-provider collaborative effort focused on the advanced illness population. Co-collaborating with California Healthcare Foundation and the state, the initiative was around better implementation practices for the state palliative care benefit and supporting regional commercial payers in developing standardized contracts and measure specifications in value-based payment for the palliative care benefit, thus creating standardization for a mean. Additionally, a workgroup member in Minnesota shared that Minnesota Community Measurement was founded on the basis that all health plans in the state came together to establish one true source of information for quality measures. Additionally, along with CQMC work, CMS is undergoing an alignment initiative across their programs to internally create a more parsimonious set of measures.

## Resolution of Any Final Issues

NQF staff opened up conversation to the workgroup regarding any feedback or considerations that the group has not covered. The workgroup did not have anything to add.

## Next Steps

NQF staff closed by noting that they will incorporate feedback and public comments into the Guide. Once the content is finalized, NQF will work with their internal graphic design team to update the layout and the Guide will be finalized and posted by August 14. NQF staff thanked the workgroup for their time and commitment, as this was the last meeting of the group.