

## **National Quality Forum**

**Moderator: Measure Developer Maintenance**  
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**OPERATOR:** This is Conference # 46933725.

**Operator:** Welcome, everyone. The webcast is about to begin. Please note today's call is being recorded. Please standby.

**Wunmi Isijola:** Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for dialing in to this month's Measure Developer Webinar. My name is Wunmi Isijola. I'm a managing director here at NQF.

The purpose of today's call is really to go over our recommendation for the Kaizen Consensus Development Process and a lot of the work that has happened during that event.

So before we get started, I just wanted to give an overview of what is Kaizen. Kaizen essentially means change. It's a process improvement mechanism by which we look at kind of our process, kind of see where we can identify and eliminate waste and how we kind of effectively and efficiently change our processes.

So NQF embarked on a process or Kaizen event on May 18th and 19th in collaboration with CMS; and really the intent was to thoroughly examine the Consensus Development Process, taking a look at the way we do our work, some of the changes that we would potentially like to see. And we had inputs from over 40 different stakeholders, many including private and public sectors stakeholders, some CMS and some of our federal agencies, standing

committee members, organizations that develop measures, and anyone particularly interested in that work.

One thing to note, we did have a lot of developers like yourself engaged in that work. But we did put into place efforts to make sure that we gathered other stakeholder input by sending out follow-up survey. So we did -- we were able to capture some input from other stakeholders as well.

So really the objectives -- and you see five main objectives here. We really wanted to -- the ability to have a continuously CDP cycle for all measure types and topic areas, really improving the management of our pipeline, so knowing what sort of measures are underway so that we can adequately prepare for that in certain topic areas.

The utilization of standing committee expertise, you know, for committee members to focus in on the areas of a measure that they are privy to and understand, but also leveraging what we do best, our measure evaluation criteria and what that looks like; as well as kind of the bigger objective was to really significantly reduce that CDP process to about six and a half months.

So the approach and what we did was we actually broke the work into two -- three areas of focus and really within those areas of focus, you see the approaches here on your screen. We wanted to improve the coordination of CMS developers and NQF, as I mentioned, to really facilitate timely evaluation of measures, so knowing what's coming down the people, knowing exactly the opportunities by which developers can submit their measures, so coordinating that process with our CMS colleagues; increasing those opportunities for submission and you'll see some of those recommendations as we go through this process.

And, again, reducing the cycle time, I know we were kind of at that nine months window, but really bring that down to allow for more frequent submission. And then ultimately improving the flow of information between our two main processes, so that's our, again, CDP process and our Measure Application Partnership processes.

So high level, you'll see on your screen many of the recommendations that came out of that event. Again, increasing the opportunities for submission, we'll talk about the intent to submit; creating a technical review or methods panel; the way the structure of our current measure evaluate technical report looks like.

The public commenting period, really able to expand that period of timing and the use of member expression of support; enhancing and strengthening the stakeholder education and training, and opportunities and resources there. The way we look at endorsement decision and ratification of measures as well as the adjudication of appeals and those that come in. And, again, improving the way we exchange information and access between our queue and NQF in that processes.

So we'll be going through each one as we go through this presentation. So on your screen, you'll see kind of a graph that really outlines what we were anticipating this to look like. So based from the feedback that we received, it is being proposed that every standing committee is offered an opportunity to review measures twice per year, so as you see there are two cycles, and that will allow primarily reducing committee downtime, but also the frequent opportunities for measures to be reviewed and considered for endorsement.

So what we're proposing is the first cycle would be 12 measures. We would base it on a set schedule. Eight months maintenance measures will be parsed out for that particular schedule, and then we would include four new measures in every topic area.

And as of right now, we're thinking that we would have 22 to be reduced to 16 topic areas. That's still in the works, but we'll let you guys know what that would look like. So the first cycle again will be those 12 measures and then we would have another opportunity for again a set number of eight maintenance measures to be reviewed that were already schedule. You'll that ahead of time. And then we would allow another four new measures to be reviewed in that process.

And it would go through that same CDP process of submitting the measure and being reviewed by the committee, a public commenting period. It'd go through the CSAC and so forth and so on, into kind of the approval of that measure for endorsement.

So one of the things also that came out of that was the intent to submit, and what that really allows is an opportunity for, you know, developers and stewards to let us know what your plans are to submit measures. So if there is something in your pipeline and you guys are working on that, we would like to know that ahead of time and that will allow us to really plan accordingly to be able to foresee what that capacity would look like.

What we're asking -- or what it would look like rather is an intent to submit form which would give us very high level information. As you see, the submission type -- if it's a maintenance measure, are you anticipating on submitting that measure?

The type of measure it is, the process or outcome, obviously the titles of high level specifications of the measure and your planned submission date, so letting us know that, "Hey, is it -- would it be ready for the next cycle, or do you foresee there will be delays?" This will help us again to really make sure we're able to look at the measures based on the scheduled timeframe.

Another recommendation that came out was a need to establish a technical advisory panel which would assist NQF in reviewing kind of the methodological review of submitted measures. So what they would do is similar to any process.

As you know right now, NQF creates the preliminary analysis for each measure. But what we were finding is many committee members aren't privies per se in this scientific review of a measure so we would essentially take that piece out of their hands, and that would allow the committee to focus on areas of their expertise with the evidence and the usability of the measure and implementation.

Staff would preliminary or our methods panel will do that scientific acceptability review in the preliminary analysis. And as you see on the screen, any measure that has a low or sufficient would not be forwarded to the committee for further evaluation.

And what I want to say is, again, in the intent to submit, it's also an opportunity for you to ask for technical assistance. So by the time of preliminary analysis is conducted on your measure, you would have gotten all of the necessary technical assistance required to make sure that your measure is scientifically sound.

But, again, I want to emphasis although we do the preliminary analysis for that particular area, that is still up to the committee to make a recommendation. They can essentially disagree with that or they can agree with that. But what we want to do is take that out of their hands and put the information in front of them that is more applicable to their review.

And a large part of this is also ensuring that we can get more consumers and patients involved in the process as we're hearing a lot of consumers and patients are intimidated by the scientific review of the measure. So this will allow them to really engage in the areas which they are a little more privy to and have a little more expertise in it.

Next slide, so another recommendation that we heard was about the measure evaluation technical report. So as you know, after each committee evaluation meeting, we do create a report that summarizes all of the deliberations of the committee. What we're hearing that is extremely dense and extremely lengthy.

There were varied key elements in the report that most people or most of our audiences really focus in on, so we wanted to make sure that we focus in on those aspects in this newly revised report. And that would be high level executive summary which will give you a quick snapshot of the endorsement decision, a brief summary of the actual measure and what it focuses on, and

then kind of that detailed description of what the measure evaluation was, so the committee's deliberation on each criteria.

Currently, we have that as Appendix A in most of our reports, so we'll continue to do that. All of the other remaining information would be housed on our website and that would really be spent around the topical areas.

Another recommendation was to really strip out a lot of the prioritized gaps in that measurement area or any cross-cutting issues that may have been identified within each topical area and that would be written in an annual report. So that would happen at the end of the year and consolidated with all of the different topic areas in one comprehensive report.

Another recommendation that we had was the public commenting period with NQF expression of support. So right now we have two separate public commenting periods, but what we've been proposing or what we've been hearing is the timing for comments during the pre-meeting and the post meeting is way too short.

It's not an opportunity for organizations to compile their comments and react to deliberation or provide kind of their feedback. So what we're going to do is kind of expand that 12 -- expand that commenting period into one large period, and that would expand over 12 weeks. That would allow an opportunity for you to provide feedback on the measures prior to the committee's deliberation.

And what we're saying is if, in fact, you do provide your comments prior to the deliberation, anything that is submitted at least one week in advance, all of those comments would be submitted to the committee and they will be able to consider those comments as they deliberate on their endorsement decision.

And then we'll do follow the same pathway of, you know, after the committee evaluation meeting, we'll also have that 30-day commenting period, and that would be an opportunity for anyone to provide or react to the decision of the

committee. And similar to what we do now, the committee will have a post-comment call and they will review those comments a day after.

One other aspect of the public commenting is it will also allow NQF membership to vote as part of that process. So if you are an NQF member, you can voice your expression of support or non-support during that period. So we would be stripping out that 15-day voting period that we generally have in the process. You would be able to, you know, voice support or do not support as part of your comment and you can make changes to that throughout the process.

And, again, as I've mentioned, we need to obviously set a deadline by which comments are sent to the committee prior to the evaluation, so we're saying about a week beforehand that we would provide those comments to the committee.

One key element that we also heard was increase emphasis on training and education, really beefing up, so to speak, the resources that are offered to all stakeholders, so staffs here at NQF, our committee members, developers and other stakeholder who is engaged in this process. Some of the innovative ways we plan on looking at is really on-demand virtual references.

So if, in fact, that you weren't able to get on the call, there are opportunities for you to listen to playbacks, developer educational webinars, really using this mechanism by which we have this monthly education session as an avenue to really educate our developers on our processes and, you know, new changes in the process, but also doing some other specialized training for developers.

Written guidance, many of you know, we have our measure evaluation criteria guidance book. We have standing committee guidance book. Those materials will definitely enhance those, but also really focusing in on our consumer and patient voice, making that they are aware of the process and making sure that we can engage them at various points of the process, so they can participate.

And also another thing we heard was meeting facilitation, so really helping our developers -- I'm sorry -- our co-chairs, outstanding committee co-chairs with the facilitation of these meetings, really to ensure that we have consistency for our projects; but also our staff, ensuring again that consistency aspect in our meetings and proceedings.

Another recommendation we did here was really stripping out the CSAC in this process, in the sense that they would no longer be the final endorsement body. Many mentioned that it's a duplicative process by having the CSAC relook at what the committee -- the standing committees have done, so really having the committee as the final endorsement body as opposed to the CSAC, as well as the elimination of the Appeals Board. So CSAC would be the body that will review those submitted appeals.

This is a very -- this is a very huge initiative and there are a lot of considerations to take into place. As many of you know, we recently set our Appeals Board so this isn't something that we can do pretty immediately. What NQF will do is really start to look at all of the considerations involved and reevaluate incorporating this into the process. So this recommendation per se would probably -- if at all, would be included as part of the process in 2018.

Next, and lastly, the improvement in the information exchange and access, what we heard was there are so many different points of the process by which you can find information about a measure, whether it's in the CDP, whether it's in the MAP; but really having a centralized system by which you can find all the information about one measure, really having that access to real-time information both for the MAP and CDP data.

So if a measure went through the endorsement process, if it in fact went through the MAP process, the way to find out all of that information in one central location. And then, you know, there were key attributes of what this would look like. So really ensuring that there's version control, knowing, you know, when the latest and greatest information, what people can use as the authoritative source; consistency between NQF projects, finding information



on one page versus the other is maybe slightly different. So really making sure that we can centralize that information and make it consistent, and also to easily pull that information.

A lot of it is on our QPS site now, but making sure that there is a comprehensive mechanism that encompasses everything and being able to pull that in real time; but also making it a little more user-friendly. We heard a lot of our sites or certain access where you can find information isn't per se user-friendly, so really identifying ways where we can make that more user-friendly for every audience that actually come to our website.

A lot of these initiatives within this particular recommendation is kind of a long-term solution, so we're looking at kind of our technology solutions that we can incorporate, but NQF is committed to developing short-term solutions to kind of help deal with some of the concerns that we've heard during the Kaizen.

And that was the last of the recommendations and I know there were a lot there, but I will stop to see if there are any questions from anyone on the call. Operator, could you open the lines please?

Operator: Absolutely. At this time, if you would like to ask a question or make a comment, please press star then the number 1. Again, that is star-1 to ask a question.

Wunmi Isijola: And for those who are on the web platform, you can also chat in your question.

Operator: OK. We do have a question from Nicole Keane with Abt Associates.

Wunmi Isijola: Great. Hi, Nicole.

Nicole Keane: Hi, Wunmi. How are you?

Wunmi Isijola: I'm good.

Nicole Keane: Thank you for the presentation. I was just wondering, previously we had been following for maintenance endorsement from that maintenance cycle of A, B and C. We've kind of had a rough sight of the -- of when your measure might be due within a three-year period. Is that going to remain or go away?

Wunmi Isijola: So that will actually help to inform that scheduling, so what we're anticipating on doing is really putting together a five-year perspective schedule so you'll know in every point in time where your measure is due, and that still is based on the three-year mark. So, yes, to your point, if still your measure with endorsement 2015, the expectation is in 2018, it would still be due for maintenance.

Nicole Keane: OK. And then just a follow-up question, are there measures that the committees not pulled together yet for certain measures, they might be overdue for maintenance?

Wunmi Isijola: I didn't hear the first part of that question, so would you repeat?

Nicole Keane: Sure. Some measures might be overdue for maintenance. They might be passed that three-year period where they might have been due for maintenance endorsement. Is that perhaps because maybe the committee hasn't been pulled it together to review that type of measure?

Wunmi Isijola: Sometimes what it is, we don't have a project that supports that measure being reviewed or a committee hasn't -- you know, a committee hasn't been convened for that. So, yes, that will also be part of that schedule. So if it hasn't been reviewed, we would -- obviously, there's a need to kind of put that in more of an earlier schedule cycle.

And then we have a question on the chat, when will proposed changes to the process begin, for example, the intent to submit form?

So we're anticipating including that, (Julie), in this new cycle hopefully this fall. Again, all of these changes are still proposed. We're in a commenting period so, again, we're encouraging you as developers and any other

stakeholders listening in to submit comments on the report. The intent to submit again will provide extensive education on what that would look like.

We know the first cycle maybe a little rough because we're really implementing this very new cycle and we want to make sure that you have time to really plan accordingly. So, (Julie), to your point, these changes will hopefully begin the fall of this year.

And then, (Mark Atmen), you have a question related to the new two cycles per year approach to submission scheduling. And, (Mark), what's your question per se, if you can type that in? Any other questions on the phone while we're waiting?

Operator: There are no questions at this time.

Wunmi Isijola: OK. Thank you. And, (Jacqueline Ryan), when will you share the list of 16 measure topics?

We hope to send that out fairly soon, within the next few weeks. Again, a lot of these changes are still proposed so we want to make sure that we're able to get all of the commentaries related to this. So please, we encourage you to make your comments through, as you see in your screen, the webpage. It links through the actual report in the commenting tool for that.

(Lisa), how will ad hoc reviews be handled? Because we're doing more ongoing cycles, the hope is those ad hocs would be as part of that cycle schedule. So if, in fact, it's not in that first cycle, it would be included in the second cycle.

(Valerie Bradley), will the slides be available? Yes, we will submit this following this. We'll send this around.

(Mark) sent another comment. Why is the second cycle to be convened via web meetings rather than in-person? Again, (Mark), because of the ongoing review of measures, we also don't want to burden our committee members.

This is volunteer work for them, so we want to ensure that we're able to get high levels of participation.

We're still working through the creative approaches. We're getting committees to review measures. But right now we're foreseeing there to be at least one in-person meeting for one cycle versus the second cycle which will potentially be the web meeting.

(Allison), when do you expect the five-year plan would be provided to developers if these changes are adopted? We hope to do this in the next few weeks. Again, these are rather new changes for us as well. NQF internally are thinking about resources and how we can truly adapt this into the current process.

We're definitely considering all sectors involved, so that's committee burden, developer burden, participation from our various stakeholders. So as soon as we're able to really finalize many of these, we would definitely share that broadly to you so that you are prepared to fully participate in the process.

Any more questions? OK. Another question, (Sheilah), how will the qualifications of the new technical advisory panel different from the standing committee? And will there be member overlap?

So, yes, I would say yes to member overlap. What we're going to do is look at similar to how we do nominations for our committee members. We want to make sure that this technical panel really exercises the need for statistical and methodological expertise, so those who are really privy that, in measurement science.

Not everyone on our committees obviously now are privies or understand that aspect of the measure, so we want to really focus on that level of expertise. So we'll do some targeted outreach to our members and others who are aware, that know kind of that area of measurement science. But, again, we'll keep you informed of that process and it will an open and transparent process. We

will be doing disclosure of interest and things of that nature, so the same rules pretty much apply.

Any other questions on the webinar? These are really good questions, by the way. So definitely -- and if we're not able to ask questions today, we encourage you to take a look at the report, provide your commentaries. We also encourage you to send us to [nqfkaizen@qualityforum.org](mailto:nqfkaizen@qualityforum.org) if you aren't able to ask your questions or you need to digest a lot of these changes.

But, again, we're trying to make this process as more efficient for you as developers, but also we really wanted to consider all of the stakeholders who are involved in this process as well. And I'll stop one more time to see if there are any other questions before we kind of end the call.

Operator: And once again, to ask a question via the phone, you may press star then the number 1.

Wunmi Isijola: OK. Well, having heard none. Again, if you have any questions, any comments on the new process, we encourage you to please, please take a look at the report. I know I've done a high level overview about some of these change. There's a little more detail in the actual report. Share it with your colleagues.

Please comment and any questions specifically on the process or anything else that we discussed today, please feel free to reach out to [nqfkaizen@qualityforum.org](mailto:nqfkaizen@qualityforum.org) and we'll get back to you on that.

I'll wait one more time to see if there are any questions. OK. Well, having heard none, thank you again for dialing in. I know that this is a lot to digest, but we thank you for dialing in. And, again, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to myself or the inbox and we'll definitely follow up accordingly.

OK. Well, have a great day and thanks again. We'll talk to you soon. Bye.

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