July 2015: Monthly Measure Developer Webinar

NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

July 20, 2015

Agenda Items

- Welcome and Introductions
- NQF Announcements
- New Project
- Educational Session
- Q&A
- Next Steps

Announcements

- BONNIE Testing Criteria
- ICD-10 Policy

New Project:
Consensus-Based Endorsement and Maintenance of Pediatric Performance Measures

Pediatric Performance Measures

- This project will identify and consider for NQF endorsement performance measures to address high-priority topics within child health, including:
  - Services to promote healthy birth
  - Child- and adolescent-focused clinical preventive services and follow-up to preventive services
  - Child- and adolescent-focused services for management of acute conditions
  - Child- and adolescent-focused services for management of chronic conditions
  - Cross-cutting topics

Pediatric Performance Measures – Tentative Timeline

- Nominations: July 30 - August 28, 2015
- Call for Measures: July 30 - September 30, 2015
- In-person Meeting: December 1 - 2, 2015
- Comment: January-February 2016
- NQF Member Vote: March 2016
- CSAC & Board Review: April 2016

Educational Session:
Sociodemographic (SDS) Trial Period

Defining the NQF SDS trial period

- NQF will conduct a two-year trial of a temporary policy change that will allow inclusion of SDS factors in the risk-adjustment approach for performance measures.

- At the conclusion of the trial, NQF will determine whether to make this policy change permanent.

What prompted the SDS trial period?

- Previous NQF policy prohibited the inclusion of SDS factors in risk-adjustment approaches out of concern that doing so might conceal inequalities in care and result in lower standards of provider performance for certain subpopulations.

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) contracted with NQF to examine this policy and the broader issue of SDS risk adjustment. In 2014, NQF convened an expert panel to consider if, when, and how performance measures should be adjusted for SDS.

What prompted the SDS trial period?

- After its deliberations, the Expert Panel recommended that NQF should allow inclusion of SDS factors in the risk-adjustment approach for performance measures when conceptual reasons and empirical evidence demonstrate it is appropriate.

- The NQF Board of Directors reviewed the Expert Panel's recommendations and decided to temporarily change NQF's policy and evaluate its impact during the course of a two-year trial period.

Measures affected

- Starting April 2015, any new measure submitted for possible endorsement or any endorsed measure that is undergoing maintenance review will be included in the SDS trial.

- Each measure must be assessed individually to determine if SDS adjustment is appropriate.

The measure evaluation

- NQF Standing Committees will examine each measure submitted to their project to determine if there is agreement with the risk-adjustment approach used by a measure developer.

- Where there is a potential conceptual basis for SDS adjustment, the Standing Committee will evaluate whether the developer assessed SDS factors according to the guidelines for selecting risk factors recognized by the NQF Expert Panel.

- In addition, the Standing Committee will consider the utility of the SDS factors that are available, the developer's analyses and interpretation regarding the importance of SDS factors in their risk adjustment model, and comparison of performance scores with and without SDS-adjustment.

Specific elements in the NQF Measure Testing Attachment

- Patient-level sociodemographic variables that were available and analyzed during measure development **(*Section 1.8*)**
- The conceptual description (logical rationale or theory informed by literature and content experts) of the pathway between the patient sociodemographic factors, patient clinical factors, quality of care, and outcome **(*Section 2b4.3*)**
- The analyses and interpretation resulting in decision to include or not include SDS factors **(*Section 2b4.4b*)**
- The reliability and validity testing for the measure as specified
- A comparison of performance scores with and without SDS factors in the risk adjustment model **(*Sections 2b6.1-3*)**

Specific elements in the NQF Measure Submission Form

- If a performance measure includes SDS variables in its risk adjustment model, the measure developer must provide the information required to stratify a clinically-adjusted only version of the measure results for those SDS variables.

- The details of the final statistical risk model and variables.

Previously-endorsed measures not undergoing maintenance review

- A potential need for risk-adjustment for SDS factors can serve as the basis for an ad hoc review.
- Ad hoc reviews can be requested by any party.
- Requester(s) will indicate which criterion the ad hoc review should address and include adequate written evidence to justify the review.
- Measures undergoing an ad hoc review will be evaluated by the relevant Standing Committee using NQF's ad hoc measure review process.
- If inclusion of SDS factors in the risk-adjustment approach is the basis for an ad hoc review, developers will be asked to submit a revised testing attachment in order to provide additional information on the conceptual and empirical relationship of the risk-adjustment variables to the measure focus.

SDS adjustment and endorsement decisions

- If a Standing Committee determines that risk-adjustment for SDS factors is both conceptually and empirically appropriate for a particular measure, lack of that adjustment can be grounds for not recommending the measure for endorsement.

- This applies to both new and previously-endorsed measures evaluated in regular projects as well as to measures considered through the ad hoc evaluation process.

Evaluation of the NQF trial period

- The primary focus of evaluation during the trial period is to ensure that NQF structures and processes support committees and stakeholders in identifying performance measures that should and should not be adjusted for SDS.

- This will include descriptive information about the trial period, evaluation of relevant NQF structures and processes, and qualitative feedback from measure developers, Standing Committee members, NQF members, and members of the public.

Q&A

Next Steps

- Next scheduled webinar will be Monday, August 17, from 1:00-2:00 PM EST.