April 2017 Issue

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services   **April 2017**   **[Volume 2, Edition 4]**

Welcome!

This month's newsletter provides an overview of CMS program-specific measure needs and priorities, as well as a closer look at environmental scanning. Every edition includes links to the latest CMS Blueprint, as well as a calendar of upcoming opportunities and events.

We hope you find this newsletter useful and we welcome any feedback or suggestions to make it even better.

Please send comments or suggestions for future newsletters to MMSSupport@battelle.org.

CMS Program-Specific Measure Needs and Priorities

Every spring, CMS issues a report updating the healthcare quality and efficiency measure priorities and needs of each of the 18 programs taking part in the pre-rulemaking process of measure consideration and review. For 2017, CMS presented and discussed this report at a webinar held Tuesday, April 11.

For your future on-demand viewing, you can find both audio and video recordings of the webinar posted on the CMS Pre-Rulemaking website under "Educational Webinars." A copy of the 2017 Needs and Priorities report will also be posted on the "Additional Resources" area of the same web site.

The purpose of the report is to publicize known needs and high priorities for the kinds of measures that will most benefit the public. This will help ensure that candidate measures align with the DHHS National Quality Strategy and the CMS Quality Strategy. New candidate measures can be submitted to CMS using the JIRA online platform, until June 30, 2017.

Contents

An introduction to the Needs and Priorities Report lists 20 requirements that all candidate measures must meet for inclusion in CMS quality initiatives. Measure submissions must be fully developed and tested for the appropriate provider level (e.g., tested for eligible clinicians if intended for consideration under the Merit Based Incentive Program). Submissions must also include adequate documentation to support testing results.

Measure requirements include:

- Numerator, denominator, exclusions, measure steward
- Link to full specifications
- Established mechanism for data collection
- Responsive to program goals and statutory requirements.
- Addresses an important condition/topic with a performance gap
- Has a strong scientific evidence base
- Promotes alignment with CMS program attributes and across HHS and private payer programs
- Is feasible to implement; has been tested for reliability and validity

- Identifies opportunities for improvement.

The report also includes each program's history and structure are described, followed by a table listing the numbers of current and proposed measures per NQS domain. The kinds of new measures most needed within each program's high-priority domains, and any program-specific measure requirements, are summarized.

The intent of each programs' 1- to 4-page summaries is to help measure stewards, owners, developers, CMS and DHHS reviewers, and other stakeholders focus their efforts on the highest priority needs, and to fill current and future gaps that have been identified and that, if filled, will support healthcare quality improvement.

Pre-rulemaking was established through section 3014 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) (P.L. 111-148, enacted on March 23, 2010), which added Section 1890A to the Social Security Act. This requires that DHHS establish a process for the selection of certain categories of quality and efficiency measures for use by DHHS. The measures are described in section 1890(b)(7)(B) of the Act.

For more information, visit the CMS Pre-Rulemaking web site or contact Michelle Geppi at Michelle.Geppi@cms.hhs.gov.

Measures Management Up Close

Each month, we bring you an introspective look at a measures management topic.

A Closer Look at Environmental Scanning

In the October 2016 issue, we provided an overview of Information Gathering, the first step in the conceptualization phase of measure development. In this article, we provide a closer look at conducting an environmental scan. The environmental scan includes a literature review, a clinical practice guidelines search, interviews with key stakeholders, empirical data analysis, and other related activities.

The purpose of the environmental scan is to help determine the need for a measure and to build the business case. The goal is to determine the prevalence of a condition in the population, the optimal approach to addressing the condition, and the benefits and potential negative outcomes that may result from implementing the quality measure. You also want to determine if there are measures already in place that can be adopted or adapted to fill the gap or measures that you should harmonize.

Speaking with key stakeholders can help identify potential measures and the gaps they should address. They can inform you of what is important to persons who receive healthcare, their family representatives and lay caregivers, the healthcare professionals who work with them, or the facilities that manage care. The information gathered through these interviews will also assist in developing the research questions and search criteria used in the scan.

After gathering all the information from the interviews and the literature and clinical practice guidelines reviews, empirical data analysis can help you to identify what populations to include in the measure. It looks at the feasibility of the proposed measures—is there data available to measure performance?

There are six steps to conducting an environmental scan: 1) Frame a series of unambiguous, structured questions—you want to ensure that you are focused in your review; 2) Determine the relevant databases and search engines; keywords and phrases; search criteria; and domain experts; 3) Assess the literature using qualitative techniques and quantitative metrics—determine if there is a gap in achieving better care, smarter spending and healthier people; 4) Qualitatively evaluate and summarize the evidence, assess the effectiveness and value of data sources used; 5) Interpret the findings by evaluating the similarities and differences among the findings; draw conclusions to inform data collection and analyses; and 6) Refine research questions and develop

hypotheses; generate a general analysis plan including data sources and estimation procedures.

For additional information, we encourage you to look at the Environmental Scan chapter of the MMS Blueprint and the Information Session slides on Environmental Scan on the Resources Page of the MMS site.

CMS Measure Development Plan TEP & Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis Report

CMS recently posted the following two documents, the **Measure Development Plan (MDP) Technical Expert Panel (TEP) Nov 17th Meeting Summary** and the **CMS MDP Environmental Scan and Gap Analysis report** at the following CMS webpage: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Value-Based-Programs/MACRA-MIPS-and-APMs/MACRA-MIPS-and-APMs.html (Follow the link and scroll down to section heading, "*Where can I find more information about the CMS MDP*").

Both documents focus on the initial set of priorities and specialty gap areas identified in the MDP, we anticipate identifying additional specialty and subspecialty priorities through ongoing environmental scans and gap analyses. Posting these documents underscores our commitment to transparency and knowledge sharing with stakeholders and contributes to our larger efforts to gather expert input, evaluate the landscape of quality measures, reduce clinician burden, and fulfill our vision of a person-centered, value-based measure portfolio to support the Quality Payment Program.

JIRA Updates for 2017

To get access to the JIRA MUC 2017 site: First, users must have an ONC JIRA account in place. Then, send an email to MMSSupport@battelle.org. The JIRA MUC 2017 User Guide has been posted on the Pre-Rule Making website, for further information on how to request access to the separate 2017 MUC project website.

Upcoming Events

All times shown are Eastern Time zone

- OQR: The Treasure Hunt: Valuable Tools for Successful Reporting webinar on April 19, 2017 at 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM
    - Register for the event here
- ASC: Tools to Help You Build a Successful Reporting Program webinar on April 26, 2017 at 2:00 PM
    - Register for the event here

Upcoming Opportunities

Opportunities for Public Comment on quality measures
- Quality Measure Development and Maintenance for CMS Programs Serving Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees and Medicaid-Only Enrollees
    - o Public comment period for Healthy Days in the Community (Duals-2) opened March 27, 2017, and will close on April 21, 2017.
    - o Public comment period for Non-Acute Mental Health Service Utilization (Duals-12) opened April 6, 2017, and will close on April 27, 2017.

Please check the CMS Quality Measures Public Comment Web Page for current Public Comment announcements and summary reports.

Opportunities to participate in a Technical Expert Panel (TEP)
- MACRA Episode-Based Cost Measures – Call for Clinical Subcommittee Nominations
    - o Nomination opened March 17, 2017, and will close on April 24, 2017.

- End-Stage Renal Disease Medication Reconciliation & Management
    - o TEP Nomination opened March 23, 2017, and will close on April 24, 2017.

- Development and Maintenance of Quality Measures for Skilled Nursing Facility Quality Reporting Program (SNF QRP)
    - o TEP Nomination opened April 7, 2017, and will close on May 12, 2017.

Please check the CMS Quality Measures Call for TEP Web Page for current TEP membership lists and meeting summaries.

Opportunities to participate in the Call for Measures
- The Annual Call for Measures and Activities for the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS)

CMS is posting a fact sheet and hosting a webinar to walk stakeholders through the process for the Annual Call for Measures and Activities. This process allows organizations representing eligible clinicians, such as professional associations and medical societies, to identify and submit measures for consideration from the following categories:
    - o Measures for the Quality performance category
    - o Measures for the Advancing Care Information performance category
    - o Activities for the Improvement Activities performance category

All information and supplemental documents must be submitted by June 30, 2017. The final MIPS measures and activities for 2018 will be posted by November 1, 2017.

New to the listserv or miss a month? Find all of our announcements [here](#).

Please send comments and suggestions to MMSSupport@battelle.org.