Guidance for PQA Measure Endorsement Voting Process

The Pharmacy Quality Alliance is a consensus-based, multi-stakeholder membership organization committed to improving health care quality and patient safety by developing quality performance measures with a focus on the safe and appropriate use of medications. PQA currently has over 200 members, including pharmacy providers, pharmacy benefit managers, health plans, academia, patient advocacy organizations, community pharmacies, health technology vendors, life sciences organizations, and state and federal agencies.

Casting a vote on the endorsement of a measure is an important member benefit. Since 2006, PQA has operated within a "one member, one vote" model in which the primary contact or their designee from each member organization is provided a vote on new measures being considered for endorsement by PQA. PQA members often contribute to the development of quality measures and have a vested interest in voting on the endorsement of performance measures and the approval of quality improvement indicators. Beginning in 2017, the report of the voting pattern analysis will be made available following the completion of a voting process.

Preparing to Vote

Participate in the process before the vote

- **Stakeholder Advisory Panels**: These workgroups play a critical role in overseeing the development of and providing input into the quality measures throughout the development process. Each Stakeholder Advisory Panel provides input into 2-4 measures. Member organizations appoint representatives to these panels at the beginning of each calendar year.

- **Measure Development Teams**: These teams refine, develop, and draft the measure concepts. These teams require specific expertise and there is an application process for all appointments to these teams. The application and selection process generally takes place at the beginning of each calendar year.

Submit comments

- The key contact of each member organization and those involved in the measure development process are notified when new measures will be considered for endorsement. The notice includes information about the measure’s development, testing and supporting evidence and asks members to provide comments regarding the measure prior to the All Member Webinar. This Member Comment period takes place two to four weeks prior to the All Member Webinar and is an opportunity for your organization to provide input on the measures under voting consideration, even if your organization’s representatives have not been extensively involved with the measure development process.

Attend the All Member Webinar

- Held two to four weeks before the measure endorsement voting, the All Member Webinar provides an opportunity for your organization to provide input on the measure concepts under voting consideration. During the All Member Webinar, the measure specifications, rationale and testing are reviewed. Comments and questions from the Member Comment period are reviewed, answered and discussed.

Build consensus

- Voting to endorse a new measure is done by organization. It is critical a consensus within your organization exists so the vote cast during the process most appropriately represents the position of your organization on the measure under consideration.
Stay informed

- **Quality Connection E-newsletter:** This newsletter, issued six times throughout the course of the year, includes updates and a summary of the development of measures throughout the process of specification, testing, and endorsement recommendation to the membership.

Who can vote?

Each PQA member organization can submit one vote per each performance measure or quality improvement indicator. Voting privileges are granted to the designated key contact from each member organization. These key contacts are maintained and updated based on the information provided by each member organization. Voting privileges can be transferred to another individual from the same member organization by communicating the request to transfer with PQA.

Casting a Vote

Voting occurs by electronic tabulation through electronic voting device during the Business Session at the PQA Annual Meeting and/or through a secure balloting website at other times throughout the year. In either case, any new measures endorsed by PQA will be reported on during the PQA Annual Meeting and the PQA Leadership Summit. Additionally, any new PQA endorsed measures will be communicated via press releases, through PQA’s website, via e-newsletters, and communications to the full membership and through social media.

If voting takes place at a PQA meeting, in a live forum, an opportunity will be made available for a member organization to vote by absentee ballot.

The following three options are presented to members during the voting session.

- Yes; Support the endorsement of the performance measure or approval of a quality indicator
- No; Oppose the endorsement of the performance measure or approval of a quality indicator
- Abstain

Abstaining from a Vote

Submitting an abstention as a response records that your organization participated in the voting process; however, your vote will not register as support (Yes) or opposition (No) to the measure under consideration. Abstaining from a vote communicates your organization’s position and acknowledges your organization’s engagement in the process. Abstention is a reasonable option if any of the following applies to your organization:

- Your organization does not have sufficient or relevant clinical or data expertise in the measure or therapeutic area;
- Your organization has an inherent or potential conflict of interest in voting on a measure due to an investment in a particular therapeutic area;
- Your organization is not going to be held accountable to that metric in the marketplace, and
- Your organization’s legal counsel advises against participation in voting to avoid a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Voting is a Privilege and Responsibility

Casting a vote in the measure endorsement process is the responsibility of all PQA members. As a consensus-based, multi-stakeholder measure developer, the endorsement of new measures by PQA is a critical function of the organization and an important benefit to your organization. Measure endorsement voting is the final phase in the measure development process and it is imperative the highest number of member organizations are involved in the voting process.

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1 Performance Measures: Metrics with pre-established criteria with no opportunity for modification providing a benchmark. These allow for comparison across organizations or systems. They are often mandated by government programs or payers and used for contract fulfillment, public reporting, and pay-for-performance programs.

2 Quality Improvement Indicators: Metrics used within organizations to establish a baseline, to implement quality improvement strategies, and to better understand the efficiency and outcomes of internal processes. They may become performance measures when information can support full specification and standardization.

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