PQA Measure Development Process

PQA uses a systematic, transparent, consensus-based process to draft, test, refine, and endorse measures of medication-use quality.

**Step 1:** Measure concepts for development are prioritized by PQA staff based on input from PQA’s Measure Advisement Group, Implementation Advisory Panel, and Patient & Caregiver Advisory Panel. Environmental scans are conducted to identify whether similar measures exist, ensuring harmonization and avoiding duplication. Selected concept ideas are considered to represent areas in which there are measurement and performance gaps to have the greatest chance of implementation in existing measure sets and performance systems, and to align with the National Quality Strategy.

**Step 2:** PQA Measure Development Teams (MDTs) and Task Forces (TFs), comprised of experts in all phases of drug use and management, discuss and draft specifications for measure concepts that may be appropriate for development into fully specified performance measures (or quality improvement indicators). The MDTs/TFs focus on specific aspects of the medication-use system and/or specific therapeutic areas and benefit by having their development work reviewed by larger groups, Stakeholder Advisory Panels. They may also receive input from the Patient & Caregiver Advisory Panel, Implementation Advisory Panel, and Risk Adjustment Advisory Panel.

**Step 3:** PQA MDTs/TFs recommend measure concepts to the PQA Quality Metrics Expert Panel (QMEP) for evaluation and refinement. The QMEP reviews the measure concepts to provide an initial assessment of the key properties of performance measures (i.e., importance, scientific acceptability, feasibility and usability). The measure concepts that are rated highly on these key properties will undergo testing and possibly further technical specification as draft measures.

**Step 4**: The draft measures are provided to PQA member organizations for their comments prior to preparing technical specifications (including National Drug Code [NDC] lists) for pilot testing. PQA staff use member comments and MDT/TF and QMEP recommendations to formulate a testing plan for each draft measure.

**Step 5:** PQA selects partners to test the draft measures. These partners are often PQA member health plans or academic institutions with expertise in quality and performance measure testing that also have access to the data sources needed to calculate the measure rates. The testing partner implements the draft technical specifications within their existing datasets and provides a report to PQA that details testing results and recommendations for modifications of the technical specifications.
Step 6: The QMEP reviews the testing results and recommendations and determines final criteria for the measure based on the findings. The QMEP provides a final assessment of the feasibility and reliability of the draft measures.

Step 7: The Measure Validity Panel, an independent group of individuals not involved in the development or review of the measure concept or draft measure, determines through discussion and vote whether the performance measure score is an accurate reflection of quality and can distinguish good from poor performance (i.e., face validity).

Step 8: Performance measures that are recommended by the QMEP for endorsement consideration by the PQA membership are posted on the PQA web site for member review, written comments are requested, and a webinar for member organizations is held to gather feedback and address any questions. This process allows members to discuss their views on the measures in advance of the voting period.

Step 9: PQA member organizations vote on endorsement of performance measures and approval of quality improvement indicators.

*NOTE: Step 4, above, is omitted in the development process for quality improvement indicators.*

Updated: 1/26/2018