

# An insider's view on improvements



The Measure Applications Partnership (MAP) provides pre-rulemaking guidance to HHS on measures being considered for different federal health programs. This work ensures that federal health programs measure important aspects of clinical care and gauge what can improve people's health. The MAP process depends on committed volunteers, who donate their time, energy, and expertise each year.

When the MAP pre-rulemaking process was established by law, its work was concentrated between December 1 and February 1 each year, which provides a short window for MAP members to review hundreds of potential measures and identify strategic measurement issues for approximately 20 federal health programs. To improve the process for this concentrated effort, NQF undertook an improvement effort in areas identified by feedback from MAP members, external stakeholders, and NQF staff. This document summarizes several major improvements resulting from that effort to streamline the work, improve the process for MAP members, and strengthen deliverables.

## Continuously Improving MAP

STREAMLINING ITS PROCESS

BETTER ENGAGING MAP MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC

STRENGTHENING MAP'S GUIDANCE ON MEASURES AND THEIR USE

### EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER PUBLIC FEEDBACK

To encourage early and broader public input, NQF staff has formalized a process where stakeholders can provide feedback immediately after HHS publicly releases the list of measures it is considering for federal programs that year. These public comments will be taken into account when MAP workgroups first review the measures under consideration. Additionally, there will be another opportunity for public input on the individual measures and broader measurement guidance for federal programs. These comments will

be considered by the MAP Coordinating Committee when it approves the final decisions on measures and strategic guidance to the programs.

### EASIER ACCESS TO INFORMATION THROUGH FOCUSED DELIVERABLES

When deliberating on measures for potential use in federal health programs, NQF identifies broader issues for each program, such as whether the program's metrics help the program achieve its goals, implementation challenges, and unintended consequences. This is one of the ways in which NQF

adds strategic value and captures the expertise of the multistakeholder group. In the past, all NQF findings were bundled into one final report, and they will now be separated to make it easier for readers to find the programmatic guidance and individual measure analysis most applicable to their needs.

Consistent with MAP's legislative mandate, the feedback on individual measures under consideration will be released before February 1. The recommendations and rationale will be released in a searchable table, with short accompanying text explaining how to navigate the table. In later February and March, MAP will release strategic guidance on measurement in different federal health programs, as well as analysis on issues that cut across federal programs or public and private programs. The specific topics and content for those deliverables will be derived from the deliberations by the workgroups and Coordinating Committee.

## CENTERING DECISIONS ON KEY PROGRAM NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES

In the fall, MAP workgroups will consider each of the programs in its setting, with the goal of identifying its specific measurement needs and objectives. After being reviewed and approved by the Coordinating Committee, each measure will be analyzed in light of how well it addresses a program's key measurement needs and objectives.

## BETTER NAVIGATION AND FOCUSED ANALYSIS IN MEETING MATERIALS

Given the volume and technical nature of the information needed to reach decisions, it is imperative that the background materials prepared for MAP members be easy to navigate and synthesize multiple information sources about the measures and programs. To support members for decisions on individual measures, staff will provide a preliminary analysis of all measures under consideration based on a pre-defined and transparent algorithm derived from the MAP measure selection criteria and other prior guidance.

## MORE CONSISTENT AND TRANSPARENT DELIBERATIONS PROCESS

The measures will be presented to the workgroups in a consent calendar format that groups similar measures. Members can then identify the specific measures that need discussion, which will allow the groups to spend more time on measures where there are differing stakeholder perspectives and less time on measures where there is already agreement. The new process establishes that consensus is reached when more than 60 percent agree with the measure decision. This transparent and standardized process will improve the efficiency and quality of the MAP's decisionmaking on measures.