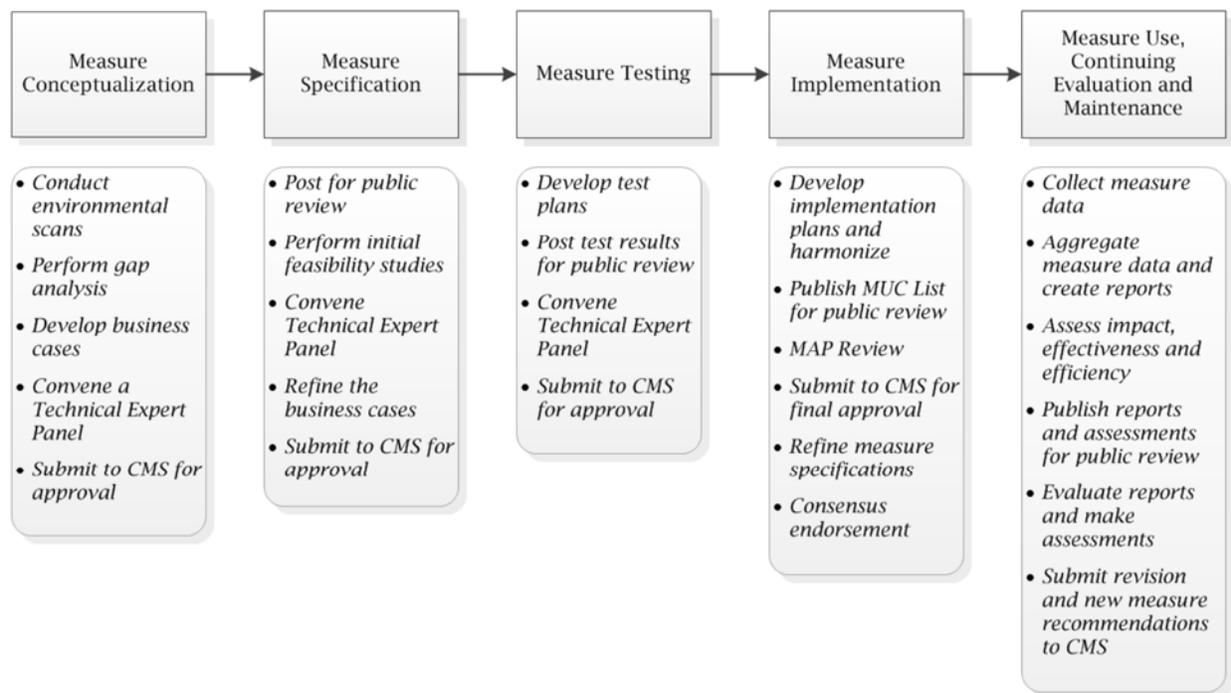# Quality Measure Development and Management Overview

Quality measures are tools that help measure or quantify healthcare processes, outcomes, patient perceptions, and organizational structure and/or systems that are associated with the ability to provide high-quality health care and/or that relate to one or more quality goals for health care. These goals include: effective, safe, efficient, patient-centered, equitable, and timely care. CMS uses quality measures in its quality improvement, public reporting, and pay-for-reporting programs for specific healthcare providers.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) manages a standardized approach for developing and maintaining such quality measures that are used in various quality initiatives and programs. This approach, known as the Measures Management System, comprises a set of business processes and decision criteria that CMS-funded measure developers follow in the development, implementation, and maintenance of quality measures. Standardized processes include quality measure reviews by Technical Expert Panels (TEP), online posting for public comment, and rigorous testing of measures before they are submitted to CMS for approval.

The Measures Management System Blueprint ("the Blueprint") documents and describes the Measures Management System set of business processes and decision criteria. CMS updates this document periodically and publishes it on the CMS website. Measures and measure sets, or measures that support one or more quality programs, must align with CMS' quality measurement agenda that establishes priorities for the next 5-10 years.

Measure Conceptualization	Measure Specification	Measure Testing	Measure Implementation	Measure Use, Continuing Evaluation and Maintenance
• Conduct environmental scans • Perform gap analysis • Develop business cases • Convene a Technical Expert Panel • Submit to CMS for approval	• Post for public review • Perform initial feasibility studies • Convene Technical Expert Panel • Refine the business cases • Submit to CMS for approval	• Develop test plans • Post test results for public review • Convene Technical Expert Panel • Submit to CMS for approval	• Develop implementation plans and harmonize • Publish MUC List for public review • MAP Review • Submit to CMS for final approval • Refine measure specifications • Consensus endorsement	• Collect measure data • Aggregate measure data and create reports • Assess impact, effectiveness and efficiency • Publish reports and assessments for public review • Evaluate reports and make assessments • Submit revision and new measure recommendations to CMS

The following descriptions summarize the key activities in the quality measure development and management process overview shown in the illustration.

1. *Measure Conceptualization*: Define measurement topic(s) within areas of interest as defined by the CMS Quality Strategy. Tasks involved in measure conceptualization include:

   - Conduct environmental scans to determine a list of potential measures that will support the selected measurement topic(s)
   - Perform a gap analysis to identify whether any of the potential measures could support the selected measurement topic(s), or if any existing measures could be repurposed or harmonized to meet the same objectives
   - Develop business cases to describe how and why new measures need to be created, as well as why some measures may need to be repurposed, to support one or more quality programs
   - Convene a TEP, composed of professionals with appropriate backgrounds and expertise, as well as patients and other stakeholders, to assess the list of potential measures and make recommendations on which one(s) to develop.
   - Submit a filtered list of potential measures to CMS to select measure development priorities

2. *Measure Specification*: Define and develop the selected measures and present them for review and feedback. Measure specification tasks include:

   - Post proposed measures online for public review and collect comments
   - Perform feasibility studies to identify and correct weaknesses before implementation testing
   - Reconvene the TEP to review public comments and determine if proposed measures could succeed in supporting the intended quality programs
   - Refine the business cases in response to public comments and TEP recommendations
   - Submit updated measure specifications to CMS for approval to move into full measure testing

3. *Measure Testing*: Plan comprehensive measure testing to evaluate whether the proposed measures will support the intended quality programs successfully. Measure testing tasks include:

   - Develop and execute Alpha and Beta test plans to determine whether measures can be reported and the data supports the evaluation of quality in targeted programs
   - Document and post test results for public review and comment
   - Reconvene the TEP to review test results and public comments to determine if quality measures support the intended quality programs adequately
   - Submit test results and TEP recommendations to CMS for approval to implement

4. *Measure Implementation*: Plan measure implementation to support rollout to the healthcare providers who will collect and report the new measures. Measure implementation tasks include:

   - Develop implementation plans and harmonize measures to determine if they meet business case criteria and to ensure that they do not adversely affect other quality programs
   - Publish and post online all new and repurposed measures in the Measures Under Consideration (MUC) list for public review and comment

- Submit measures to the Measures Application Partnership (MAP) for review and recommendation
- Submit MAP recommendations and MUC List reviews to CMS for final quality measure selection and implementation approval
- Refine measure specifications, develop and publish training materials and implementation instructions
- Submit approved measures for consensus endorsement

5. *Measure Use, Continuing Evaluation and Maintenance*: Monitor and measure the use of quality measures to ensure that they continue to support the quality programs they were designed to support, and identify opportunities to tweak or repurpose measures to improve reporting and the increase the value of quality program measurement results. Measure use, continuing evaluation and maintenance tasks include:

- Collect and review measure data for the various quality programs
- Aggregate measure data and create reports
- For each quality program, assess impact, effectiveness, and efficiency
- Publish measure reports and quality program assessments for public review
- Evaluate reports and assessments to determine if any changes could be made to improve quality measure reporting or quality program results
- Submit recommendations to CMS for consideration of new or revised quality measures or programs