



# Measure Management and You

Volume 3, Edition 9

## Welcome!

This month’s newsletter provides an overview of technical specifications for electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs) and provides an overview of the latest version of the CMS MMS Blueprint (14.0). Every edition includes links to the [CMS Blueprint](#) (the version in use at the time of publication), as well as a calendar of upcoming events and opportunities.

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](mailto:MMSSupport@battelle.org).

## Technical Specifications for eCQMs

This month’s newsletter provides an overview of technical specifications for electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs). Like other quality measures, eCQMs are tools that help improve healthcare quality by measuring healthcare processes or outcomes. In general, they are made up of an initial population, denominator, numerator, and exclusions/exceptions.

However, eCQMs are unique from other measure types in one major way. They are designed to pull measure data from an electronic health record (EHR) without help from a human abstractor. As such, eCQM specifications must be written in a format that can be interpreted by both people and computers. Measure developers rely on standards like Clinical Quality Language (CQL) and the Quality Data Model (QDM), and tools like the Measure Authoring Tool (MAT) to create these specifications. These electronic specifications include:

- Computer-readable files representing the eCQM that contain details about

the measure, how the data elements are defined, and the underlying logic of the measure. The files include:

- Health Quality Measure Format (HQMF) XML syntax
- CQL
- Expression Logical Model (ELM) XML document
- ELM JavaScript Object Notation (JSON)
- The human-readable representation of the eCQM that displays the eCQM content in a web browser, Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) file
- Value sets and direct reference codes (DRCs) that define data elements using specific codes or code lists.

For more information on how developers use CQL, QDM, and the MAT to create technical specifications for eCQMs, see the [full article](#) on the Measures Management System (MMS) website.

## Blueprint 14.0

We are pleased to announce the release of the latest version of the MMS *Blueprint*, version 14.0.

The format remains the same, but many footnotes have been replaced with hyperlinks. All documents and websites cited are in the appendices, most with hyperlinks to the sources. Also new is an appendix on the use of JIRA in the different phases of the measure lifecycle. A notable update is the inclusion of a discussion of CMS Priorities and the Meaningful Measures Initiative and Framework.

### Blueprint 14.0

*The Blueprint version 14.0 has been published. You can access it on the [MMS Blueprint Page](#).*

The following chapters have been updated and/or reorganized:

- Chapter 1: Healthcare Quality Priorities - highlights the updates to the CMS goals and priorities
- Chapter 2: Priorities Planning - updated
- Chapter 16: Measure Technical Specification - updated

- Chapter 22: Measure Testing - now includes the alpha and beta testing information
  - Chapter 6: Introduction to eQMs and Chapter 7: eQCM Standards-Based Guidance and Tools – updated to reflect the adoption of the Health Level Seven International (HL7) standard Clinical Quality Language.
  - Chapter 24.2: eQCM testing - updated
- We created two new graphics, one showing the connections between eQCM standards and a second depicting the relationship between eQCM standards and tools.
- The National Quality Forum (NQF) revised their processes so the Measure Information Form, Measure Justification Form, and Measure Evaluation Report templates and instructions have been updated with cross references to the NQF submission documents.
- For more information, see the [full article](#) on the MMS website. Please send questions, comments, or suggestions to [MMSSupport@Battelle.org](mailto:MMSSupport@Battelle.org). You can find the *Blueprint* on the [MMS Blueprint webpage](#).

## Upcoming Events

*All times shown are Eastern Time zone*

- FY 2019 IPPS Final Rule Acute Care Hospital Quality Reporting Programs Overview on September 12, 2018 at 2:00 PM
  - Register for event [here](#)
- Discovery: Planet Data on September 19, 2018 at 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM
  - Register for event [here](#)
- Discovery: Planet Data on September 26, 2018 at 2:00 PM
  - Register for event [here](#)
- Cooking with CQL: or How to Incorporate CQL into HQMF for eQCMs on September 27, 2018 at 4:00 PM
  - Register for event [here](#)
- Final Modifications to the Quality of Patient Care Star Rating Algorithm Call on October 3, 2018 at 2:00 PM
  - Register for event [here](#)

## Upcoming Opportunities

**Opportunities for [Public Comment](#) on quality measures**

- Outcome and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) Quality Measure Development and Maintenance
  - The Call for Public Comment opened on September 5, 2018 and closes on October 4, 2018.

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 \(TEP\)](#)**

- 2018 Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) Improvement Activities (IA) TEP
  - The TEP nomination period opened on August 22, 2018 and closes on September 21, 2018.
- MACRA Episode-Based Cost Measures – Call for Clinical Subcommittee
  - The TEP nomination period closed on March 20th, but nominations are being accepted on a continuous basis.

Please check the [CMS Quality Measures Call for TEP Web Page](#) for current TEP membership lists and meeting summaries.

### New to the Listserv?

*New to the listserv or missed a month? Find all our announcements as well as printer-friendly versions of past newsletters [here](#).*



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