

Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Measure

Draft Cost Measure Methodology

October 2018 Field Testing



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1.0 Introduction

This document details the draft methodology for the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels measure and should be reviewed along with the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List file, which contains the medical codes used in constructing the measure. These documents have been shared as part of field testing, where clinicians and clinician groups attributed at least 10 episodes from one or more of 11 episode-based cost measures received Field Test Reports containing measure performance information.

Field testing allows the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the measure development contractor Acumen, LLC (referred to as “Acumen”) to gather feedback on new episode-based cost measures and re-evaluated measures from clinicians and other stakeholders.¹ All stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft measure specifications and a Mock Field Test Report by reviewing this document and other publicly posted supplemental documentation. For more information about the development process for this measure please see the [Episode-Based Cost Measures Development Process document](#).²

We are collecting stakeholder feedback from **October 3, 2018, to October 31, 2018**. To provide feedback on any aspect of field testing please navigate to [this feedback survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018-macra-cost-measures-field-testing): <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018-macra-cost-measures-field-testing>

1.1 Measure Name

Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode-based cost measure

1.2 Measure Description

Episode-based cost measures represent the cost to Medicare for the items and services provided to a patient during an episode of care (“episode”). In the Field Test Reports and all supplemental documentation, “cost” generally means the Medicare allowed amount, which includes both Medicare and trust fund payments and any applicable beneficiary deductible and coinsurance amounts.³

The Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode-based cost measure evaluates a clinician’s risk-adjusted cost to Medicare for beneficiaries who undergo surgery for lumbar spine fusion during the measurement period. The cost measure score is the clinician’s risk-adjusted cost for the episode group averaged across all episodes attributed to the clinician. This procedural measure includes costs of services that are clinically related to the attributed clinician’s role in managing care during each episode from 30 days prior to the clinical event that opens, or “triggers,” the episode through 90 days after the trigger.

1.3 Measure Rationale

The Musculoskeletal Disease Management - Spine Clinical Subcommittee recommended the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode-based cost measure for development because of its high impact in terms of patient population and Medicare spending.

¹ CMS worked with Acumen to develop and re-evaluate cost measures for potential use in the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS).

² “Measure Development Process,” *MACRA Feedback Page* (October 2018), <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Value-Based-Programs/MACRA-MIPS-and-APMs/MACRA-Feedback.html>

³ Claims data from Medicare Parts A and B are used to construct the episode-based cost measures used in the Field Test Reports.

Between 2006 and 2012, over 6 million Medicare patients were diagnosed with lumbar degenerative conditions,⁴ and lumbar spine procedures are increasingly used in elderly patients to treat these conditions. One study found that 5.9 per 100 patients progressed to lumbar fusion within one year of diagnosis with lumbar degeneration, and there was an increase of 18.5 percent in the incidence of fusion procedures within one year of diagnosis.⁴ Based on a review of the Medicare Provider Analysis and Review file, total spending on lumbar spinal fusion surgery is also one of the highest admission expenditures in the Medicare program, costing over \$3.6 billion dollars in 2013.⁵

1.4 Measure Numerator

The cost measure numerator is the sum of the ratio of observed to expected payment-standardized cost to Medicare for all Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episodes attributed to a clinician.⁶ This sum is then multiplied by the national average observed episode cost to generate a dollar figure.

1.5 Measure Denominator

The cost measure denominator is the total number of episodes from the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode group attributed to a clinician.

1.6 Data Sources

The Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels cost measure uses the following data sources:

- Medicare Parts A and B claims data from the Common Working File (CWF)
- Enrollment Data Base (EDB)
- Long Term Care Minimum Data Set (LTC MDS)
- Provider Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System (PECOS)

The measurement period for the Field Test Reports is January 1, 2017, through December 31, 2017.

1.7 Care Settings

The Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels cost measure can be triggered based on claims data from the following settings: ambulatory surgical centers (ASC), hospital outpatient departments (HOPD), and inpatient (IP) hospitals.

⁴ Buser, Z., B. Ortega, A. D'Oro, W. Pannell, J. R. Cohen, J. Wang, R. Golish, M. Reed, and J. C. Wang. "Spine Degenerative Conditions and Their Treatments: National Trends in the United States of America." [In eng]. *Global Spine J* 8, no. 1 (Feb 2018): 57-67.

⁵ Culler, S. D., D. S. Jevsevar, K. G. Shea, K. J. McGuire, M. Schlosser, K. K. Wright, and A. W. Simon. "Incremental Hospital Cost and Length-of-Stay Associated with Treating Adverse Events among Medicare Beneficiaries Undergoing Lumbar Spinal Fusion During Fiscal Year 2013." [In eng]. *Spine (Phila Pa 1976)* 41, no. 20 (Oct 15 2016): 1613-20.

⁶ Claim payments are standardized to account for differences in Medicare payments for the same service(s) across Medicare providers. Payment standardized costs remove the effect of differences in Medicare payment among health care providers that are the result of differences in regional health care provider expenses measured by hospital wage indexes and geographic price cost indexes (GPCIs) or other payment adjustments such as those for teaching hospitals. For more information, please refer to the "CMS Price (Payment) Standardization - Basics" and "CMS Price (Payment) Standardization - Detailed Methods" documents posted on QualityNet:

<http://www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?c=Page&pagename=QnetPublic/Page/QnetTier4&cid=1228772057350>

1.8 Cohort

The cohort for this cost measure consists of patients who are Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare fee-for-service and who undergo surgery for lumbar spine fusion that triggers a Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode.

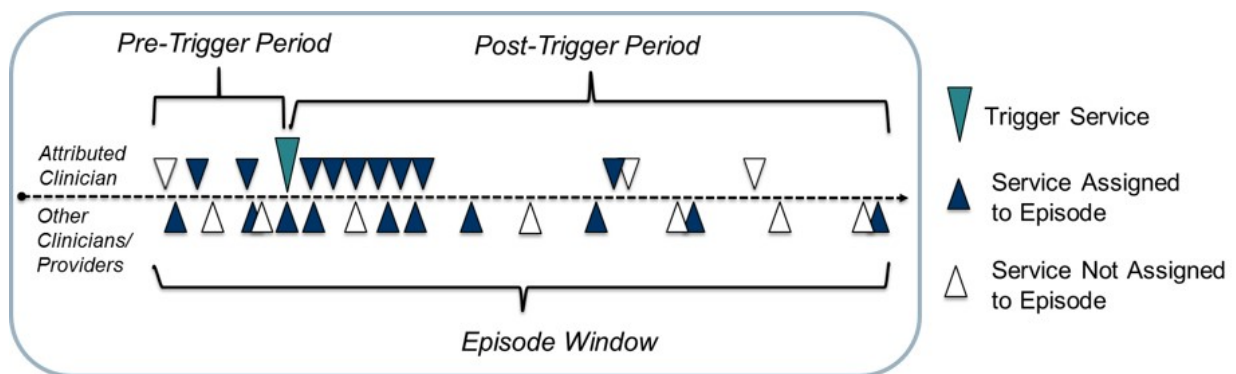
The cohort for this cost measure is also further refined by the definition of the episode group and episode group-specific exclusions (see Section 3).

2.0 Overview of Measure Methodology

There are two overarching processes in calculating episode-based cost measure scores: episode construction (Steps 1-3) and measure calculation (Steps 4-6). This section provides a brief summary of these processes for the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels cost measure, and Section 3 describes the processes in detail.

1. **Trigger and define an episode:** Episodes are defined by billing codes that open, or “trigger,” an episode. The episode window starts 30 days before the trigger and ends 90 days after the trigger. To enable meaningful clinical comparisons, episodes are placed into more granular, mutually exclusive sub-groups based on clinical criteria. Some episodes may also be excluded based on other information available at the time of the trigger.
2. **Attribute the episode to a clinician:** For this procedural episode group, an attributed clinician is any clinician who bills a trigger code for the episode group on the day of the procedure.
3. **Assign costs to the episode and calculate the episode observed cost:** Clinically related services occurring during the episode window are assigned to the episode. The cost of the assigned services is summed to determine each episode’s standardized observed cost.

Figure 1. Diagram Showing a Constructed Episode



4. **Exclude episodes:** Exclusions remove a small, unique group of patients from cost measure calculation in cases where it may be impractical and unfair to compare the costs of caring for these patients to the costs of caring for the cohort at large.
5. **Calculate expected costs for risk adjustment:** Risk adjustment aims to isolate variation in clinician costs to only costs clinicians can reasonably influence (e.g., accounting for beneficiary age, comorbidities and other factors). A regression is run using the risk adjustment variables as covariates to estimate the expected cost of each episode. Then, statistical techniques are applied to reduce the effect of extreme outliers on measure scores.
6. **Calculate the measure score:** For each episode, the ratio of standardized total observed cost (from step 3) to risk-adjusted expected cost (from step 5) is calculated and averaged across all of a clinician or clinician group’s attributed episodes to obtain the average episode cost ratio. The average episode cost ratio is multiplied by the national average observed episode cost to generate a dollar figure for the cost measure score.

3.0 Detailed Measure Methodology

This section details the two overarching processes in calculating episode-based cost measure scores in more detail: Sections 3.1 through 3.3 describe episode construction and Sections 3.4 through 3.6 describe measure calculation.

3.1 Trigger and Define an Episode

Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episodes are defined by Current Procedural Terminology / Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (CPT/HCPCS) codes on Part B (PB) claims that open, or trigger, an episode. For the codes and logic relevant to this section please see the “Triggers” and “Trigger_Exclusions” tabs of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List.

The steps for defining an episode for the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode group are as follows:

- **Identify** PB claim lines with positive standardized payment that have a trigger code.
- **Trigger** an episode if all the following conditions are met for an identified PB claim line:
 - It was billed by a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, certified registered nurse anesthetist, or a clinician group.
 - It is the highest cost claim line across any Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels trigger code billed for the beneficiary on that day. If multiple trigger PB claim lines occur on different days within a concurrent IP stay, an episode will be triggered by the trigger PB claim line with the earliest expense date during the IP stay.
 - It does not have a post-operative modifier code.⁷
- **Identify** episodes that have a concurrent IP stay by identifying the first IP stay with a relevant Medicare Severity Diagnosis-Related Group (MS-DRG) code for the beneficiary that is concurrent to the expense date for the trigger PB claim line.
- **Establish** the episode window as follows:
 - Establish the episode trigger date as the date of admission if an IP stay with a relevant DRG concurrent with the trigger is found, otherwise the expense date of the trigger code.
 - Establish the episode start date as 30 days prior to the episode trigger date.
 - Establish the episode end date as 90 days after the episode trigger date.
- **Define trigger exclusions** based on information available at the time of the trigger, if applicable.

Once a Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode is triggered, the episode is placed into one of the episode sub-groups to enable meaningful clinical comparisons based on clinical criteria developed by the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels measure-specific workgroup. Sub-groups represent more granular, mutually exclusive patient populations defined by clinical criteria (e.g., information available on the beneficiary's claims at the time of the trigger). Sub-groups are useful in ensuring clinical comparability so that the corresponding cost measure fairly compares clinicians with a similar patient case-mix.

⁷ Post-operative modifier codes indicate that a clinician billing the service was not involved in the main procedure but was involved in the post-operative care for that procedure, and as such the post-operative clinician would not be responsible for the trigger.

Codes used to define the sub-groups can be found in the “Sub_Groups” tab of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List file. This cost measure has three sub-groups:

- One-Level Lumbar Fusion
- Two-Level Lumbar Fusion
- Three-Level Lumbar Fusion

3.2 Attribute Episodes to a Clinician

Once an episode has been triggered and defined, it is attributed to one or more MIPS-eligible clinicians. Clinicians are identified by Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and National Provider Identifier (NPI) pairs (TIN-NPI), and clinician groups are identified by TIN. Only MIPS-eligible clinicians are attributed episodes. For codes relevant to this section, please see the “Attribution” tab of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List.

The steps for attributing a Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode are as follows:

- **Identify** claim lines with positive standardized payment for any trigger codes that occur on the episode trigger day.
- **Designate** a TIN-NPI as a main clinician if the following conditions are met:
 - No assistant modifier code is found on one or more claim lines billed by the clinician.
 - No exclusion modifier code is found on the same claim line.
- **Designate** a TIN-NPI as an assistant clinician if the following conditions are met:
 - The TIN-NPI was not designated as a main clinician.
 - An assistant modifier code is found.
 - No exclusion modifier code is found.
- **Attribute** an episode to any TIN-NPI designated as a main or assistant clinician.
- **Attribute** episodes to the TIN by aggregating all episodes attributed to NPIs that bill to that TIN. If the same episode is attributed to more than one NPI within a TIN, the episode is attributed only once to that TIN.

Future attribution rules may benefit from the implementation of patient relationship category codes. CMS will consider how to incorporate the patient relationship categories into episode-based cost measurement methodology as clinicians and billing experts gain experience with them.

3.3 Assign Costs to an Episode and Calculate Total Observed Episode Cost

Services, and their Medicare costs, are assigned to an episode only when clinically related to the attributed clinician’s role in managing patient care during the episode. Assigned services may include treatment and diagnostic services, ancillary items, services directly related to treatment, and those furnished as a consequence of care (e.g., complications, readmissions, unplanned care, and emergency department visits). Unrelated services are not assigned to the episode. For example, the cost of care for a chronic condition that is concurrent to the episode but not related to the clinical management of the patient relative to the lumbar spine fusion surgery would not be assigned.

To ensure that only clinically related services are included, services during the episode window are assigned to the episode based on a series of service assignment rules, which are listed in

the “SA_[Pre/Post]_[Service_Category]” tabs of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List file.

For the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels episode group, only services performed in the following service categories are considered for assignment to the episode costs:

- Emergency Department (ED)
- Outpatient (OP) Facility and Clinician Services
- IP - Medical
- IP - Surgical
- Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) - Medical
- Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DME)
- Home Health (HH)

As an overview, service assignment rules may be modified based on the service category in which the service is performed, as listed above. Service assignment rules may also vary based on (i) additional criteria determined by other diagnosis, procedure, or billing codes appearing alongside the service code, or (ii) number of days from trigger. Services may be assigned to the episode based on the following criteria:

- Service code alone
- Service code in combination with other diagnosis, procedure, or billing codes such as:
 - The first three digits of the International Classification of Diseases – Tenth Revision diagnosis code (3-digit ICD-10 DGN)
 - The full ICD-10 DGN
 - Additional service information

Additionally, services may be assigned only if they occur during a specific time period within the episode window, and may be assigned for a period shorter than the full duration of the episode window.

The steps for assigning costs are as follows:

- **Identify** all services on claims with positive standardized payment that occur within the episode window.
- **Assign** identified services to the episode based on the types of service assignment rules described above.
- **Sum** standardized Medicare allowed amounts for all claims assigned to each episode to obtain the standardized total observed episode cost.

Example – Service Assignment

- Clinician A performs surgical treatment for renal or ureteral stones for Patient K on January 1, 2017. This service triggers a Renal or Ureteral Stone Surgical Treatment episode, which is attributed to Clinician A.
- Clinician B inserts a catheter, which is considered a clinically related service, during the episode window on January 7, 2017.
- Because insertion of a catheter is considered to be clinically related to the surgical treatment for renal or ureteral stones, the cost of the catheter will be assigned to Clinician A’s Renal or Ureteral Stone Surgical Treatment episode.

3.4 Exclude Episodes

Before measure calculation, episode exclusions are applied to remove certain episodes from measure score calculation. Certain exclusions are applied across all procedural episode groups, and other exclusions are measure-specific. The measure-specific exclusions were developed based on input from the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels workgroup and are listed in the “Exclusions” and “Exclusions_Details” tabs in the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List file.

The steps for episode exclusion are as follows:

- **Exclude** episodes from measure calculation if:
 - The beneficiary has a primary payer other than Medicare for any time overlapping the episode window or 120-day lookback period prior to the trigger day.
 - The beneficiary was not enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B for the entirety of the lookback period plus episode window, or was enrolled in Part C for any part of the lookback plus episode window.
 - No main clinician is attributed the episode.
 - The beneficiary’s date of birth is missing.
 - The beneficiary’s death date occurred before the episode ended.
 - The episode trigger claim was not performed in an ambulatory/office-based care, IP hospital, OP hospital, or ASC setting based on its place of service.
 - The IP facility is not one that is paid under the Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) when an IP stay concurrent with the trigger is found.⁸
- **Apply** measure-specific exclusions, which check the beneficiary’s Medicare claims history for certain billing codes (as specified in the Draft Measure Codes List file) that indicate the presence of a particular procedure, condition, or characteristic.

3.5 Estimate Expected Costs through Risk Adjustment

Risk adjustment is used to estimate expected episode costs in recognition of the different levels of care beneficiaries may require due to comorbidities, disability, age, and other risk factors. The risk adjustment model includes variables from the CMS Hierarchical Condition Category Version 22 (CMS-HCC V22) 2016 Risk Adjustment Model,⁹ as well as other standard risk adjustors (e.g., beneficiary age) and variables developed with input from the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels workgroup. A full list of risk adjustment variables can be found in the “RA_Vars” and “RA_Vars_Details” tabs of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Draft Measure Codes List file.

Steps for defining risk adjustment variables and estimating the risk adjustment model are as follows:

- **Define** HCC and episode group-specific risk adjustors using service and diagnosis information found on the beneficiary’s Medicare claims history in the 120-day period prior to the episode trigger day (or the timing specified in the “RA_Vars_Details” tab of

⁸ Only stays at IP facilities that are paid under IPPS (i.e., that are subsection (d) hospitals) will be included. Subsection (d) hospitals are hospitals in the 50 states and D.C. other than: psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, hospitals whose inpatients are predominantly under 18 years old, hospitals whose average inpatient length of stay exceeds 25 days, and hospitals involved extensively in treatment for or research on cancer.

⁹ CMS uses an HCC risk adjustment model to calculate risk scores. The HCC model ranks diagnoses into categories that represent conditions with similar cost patterns. Higher categories represent higher predicted healthcare costs, resulting in higher risk scores. There are over 9,500 ICD-10-CM codes that map to one or more of the 79 HCC codes included in the CMS-HCC V22 model.

the Draft Measure Codes List file) for certain billing codes that indicate the presence of a procedure, condition, or characteristic.

- **Define** other risk adjustors that rely upon Medicare beneficiary enrollment and assessment data as follows:
 - Identify beneficiaries who are originally “Disabled without end-stage renal disease (ESRD)” or “Disabled with ESRD” using the original reason for joining Medicare field in the Medicare beneficiary enrollment database.
 - Identify beneficiaries with ESRD if their enrollment indicates ESRD coverage, ESRD dialysis, or kidney transplant in the Medicare beneficiary enrollment database in the lookback period.
 - Identify beneficiaries who reside in a long-term care institution as of the episode trigger day using MDS assessment data.
- **Drop** risk adjustors that are defined for less than 15 episodes nationally for each sub-group to avoid using very small samples.
- **Categorize** beneficiaries into age ranges using their date of birth information in the Medicare beneficiary enrollment database. If an age range has a cell count less than 15, collapse this with the next adjacent higher age range category.
- **Include** the MS-DRG of the episode’s trigger IP stay, if found, as a categorical risk adjustor.
- **Run** an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model to estimate the relationship between all the risk adjustment variables and the dependent variable, the standardized observed episode cost, to obtain the risk-adjusted expected episode cost. A separate OLS regression is run for each episode sub-group nationally.
- **Winsorize**¹⁰ by assigning the value of the 0.5th percentile to all expected episode costs below the 0.5th percentile.
- **Renormalize**¹¹ values by multiplying each episode's winsorized expected cost by the sub-group's average expected cost, and dividing the resultant value by the sub-group's average winsorized expected cost.
- **Exclude**¹² episodes with outliers as follows. This step is performed separately for each sub-group.
 - Calculate each episode's residual as the difference between the re-normalized, winsorized expected cost computed above and the observed cost.
 - Exclude episodes with residuals below the 1st percentile or above the 99th percentile of the residual distribution.

3.6 Calculate Measure Scores

Measure scores are calculated for a TIN or TIN-NPI as follows:

- Calculate the ratio of observed to expected episode cost for *each* episode attributed to the clinician/clinician group.

¹⁰ Winsorization aims to limit the effects of extreme values on expected costs. Winsorization is a statistical transformation that limits extreme values in data to reduce the effect of possible outliers. Winsorization of the lower end of the distribution (i.e., bottom coding) involves setting extremely low predicted values below a predetermined limit to be equal to that predetermined limit.

¹¹ Renormalization is performed after adjustments are made to the episode’s expected cost, such as bottom-coding or residual outlier exclusion. This process multiplies the adjusted values by a scalar ratio to ensure that the resulting average is equal to the average of the original value.

¹² This step excludes episodes based on outlier residual values from the calculation and renormalizes the resultant values to maintain a consistent average episode cost level.

- Calculate the *average* ratio of observed to expected episode cost across the *total* number of episodes attributed to the clinician/clinician group.
- Multiply the average ratio of observed to expected episode cost by the national average observed episode cost to generate a dollar figure representing risk-adjusted average episode cost.

The clinician-level or clinician group practice-level risk-adjusted cost for any attributed clinician (or clinician group practice) “j” can be represented mathematically as:

$$Measure\ Score_j = \left(\frac{1}{n_j} \sum_{i \in \{I_j\}} \frac{Y_{ij}}{\hat{Y}_{ij}} \right) \left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_j \sum_{i \in \{I_j\}} Y_{ij} \right)$$

where:

Y_{ij}	is the standardized payment for episode i and attributed clinician (or clinician group practice) j
\hat{Y}_{ij}	is the expected standardized payment for episode i and clinician (or clinician group practice) j , as predicted from risk adjustment
n_j	is the number of episodes for clinician (or clinician group practice) j
n	is the total number of TIN/TIN-NPI attributed episodes nationally
$i \in \{I_j\}$	is all episodes i in the set of episodes attributed to clinician (or clinician group practice) j

A lower measure score indicates that the observed episode costs are lower than or similar to expected costs for the care provided for the particular patients and episodes included in the calculation, whereas a higher measure score indicates that the observed episode costs are higher than expected for the care provided for the particular patients and episodes included in the calculation.

Appendix A. How to Use the Draft Measure Codes List File

The Draft Measure Codes List file is an Excel workbook that provides clinicians with the specific codes and logic that apply to this cost measure. It is intended to be reviewed along with the detailed measure methodology in Section 3.

Overview

The “Overview” tab provides introductory information on the measure, a Table of Contents with descriptions of and links to the tabs in the workbook, and a Key Terms and Acronyms section that introduces acronyms used throughout the file. Each tab has a hyperlink in the top right corner to proceed to the next tab and in the top left corner to return to the “Overview” tab.

Trigger and Define an Episode

The following tabs present the codes and logic that define an episode of the episode group, as well as those that specify the sub-groups that comprise the episode group if applicable, as described in Section 3.1.

- “Triggers” lists all of the codes which trigger (or open) the episode group, along with the logic accompanying those triggers.
- If applicable, “Trigger_Exclusions” lists codes that will cause the episode not to be triggered if they occur in conjunction with the trigger codes.
- If applicable, “Sub_Groups” contains all of the sub-groups for the episode group, as well as the codes and logic used to specify each sub-group.

Clinician Attribution

The “Attribution” tab presents the codes that aid in attributing episodes to clinicians, as described in Section 3.2.

Service Assignment

These service assignment (SA) tabs, with tab names containing the “SA” prefix, present the service assignment codes and logic for different service categories during either the pre-trigger period or the post-trigger period. These codes and logic determine services for which costs are assigned to an episode, as described in Section 3.3.

- “SA_Pre_[Service_Category]” tabs indicate services assigned in the pre-trigger period for various service categories/settings.
- “SA_Post_[Service_Category]” tabs indicate services assigned in the post-trigger period for various service categories/settings.

Risk Adjustment and Exclusions

The following tabs present the variables used during measure calculation to ensure that clinician performance is being compared on a like-to-like basis, as described in Sections 3.4 and 3.5.

- “RA_Vars” contains the risk adjustment variables used in the construction of the measure’s risk adjustment model, including variables used in the risk adjustment model for all episode-based cost measures and measure-specific variables (if applicable).
- If applicable, “RA_Vars_Details” provides more detail on the risk adjustment variables that are specific to this measure.
- If applicable, “Exclusions” contains a list of measure-specific variables that indicate that an episode is not clinically comparable. If these variables are present in an episode, that episode will not be included in measure score calculation.
- If applicable, “Exclusions_Details” provides additional information on measure-specific exclusion variables, including the codes and logic used to define the variables.

Appendix B. Example of Measure Calculation

1. Calculate the observed cost of each episode by summing all standardized allowed amounts for services assigned to episode cost.
2. Calculate the expected cost of each episode by running a risk adjustment model that includes only episodes within the same sub-group nationally.
 - *For measures with sub-groups*, this ensures that expected cost for an episode in an intrinsically lower cost sub-group is estimated separately from the expected cost for an episode in an intrinsically higher cost sub-group.
 - *If a measure does not have sub-groups*, the model includes all episodes within the episode group nationally.
3. Divide each episode's observed cost by the expected cost to obtain the observed to expected cost ratio for each episode.
 - If the observed to expected cost ratio is greater than 1, this indicates that the episode's observed cost was greater than expected. A ratio less than 1 indicates that the observed cost was less than expected.
 - For example, if an episode's observed cost is \$5,000, and the expected cost for the episode is \$3,000, then the ratio will be $\$5,000/\$3,000 = 1.67$, which would indicate that the episode cost is greater than expected.
 - If an episode's observed cost is \$3,000, and the expected cost for the episode is \$5,000, the ratio would be 0.6, which would indicate that the episode cost is less than expected.
4. Sum the observed/expected ratios for all episodes across the entire episode group (i.e., across all sub-groups for applicable measures) and divide by the total number of episodes across the episode group to get **the average observed/expected ratio** for all episodes attributed to the clinician.
 - As the expected cost is calculated for each sub-group (see step #2 above) for measures that have sub-groups, the average ratio calculated in this step accounts for the episode sub-group breakdown, where applicable.
5. Multiply the **average observed/expected ratio** by the average of the observed cost for all episodes nationally.
 - This step is done to convert the average observed/expected ratio into a more meaningful figure to clinicians, by having the clinician's average cost measure score represented as a dollar amount rather than a ratio.
 - Multiplying by the national average observed episode cost yields a measure score that is similar in scale to the amount a given episode might actually cost. Choosing to multiply by a different dollar constant would not affect clinicians' rankings on the measure, but the national average cost is used for ease of interpretation.

Appendix C. Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Measure-Specific Workgroup

Table A-1 lists the members of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels measure-specific workgroup along with their specialty, city, and state. For workgroup members who were unable to attend one or more of the meetings, the substitutes who attended in their stead are indicated underneath. The Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels workgroup is composed from the larger Musculoskeletal Disease Management - Spine Clinical Subcommittee. The composition list of the Clinical Subcommittee is included in the Episode-Based Cost Measures Development Process document. The workgroup chair is denoted with an asterisk (*), and workgroup members who were also Clinical Subcommittee co-chairs are denoted with a caret (^).¹³

Table A-1. Composition of the Lumbar Spine Fusion for Degenerative Disease, 1-3 Levels Workgroup

Name and Credentials	Primary Affiliation	City, State
Anand Rughani, MD	Congress of Neurological Surgeons	Cape Elizabeth, ME
Byron Schneider, MD	Spine Intervention Society	Nashville, TN
^David Seidenwurm, MD, FACR	American College of Radiology	Sacramento, CA
*Erica Bisson, MD, MPH	North American Spine Society	Salt Lake City, UT
Gregory Nicola, MD	American College of Radiology	Hackensack, NJ
Heather Smith, PT, MPH	American Physical Therapy Association	Alexandria, VA
Jay Nathan, MD	American Association of Neurological Surgeons	Ann Arbor, MI
Jonathan Gal, MD, FASA	American Society of Anesthesiologists	New York, NY
Kimberly Lenington, OTD, OTR/L	American Occupational Therapy Association	Los Angeles, CA
Mohamad Bydon, MD	Congress of Neurological Surgeons	Rochester, MN
Morgan Lorio, MD, FACS	International Society for the Advancement of Spine Surgery	Nashville, TN
Peter Sanderson, MD, MBA	American Medical Association	Stevens Point, WI
^Philip Schneider, MD	North American Spine Society	Chevy Chase, MD

¹³ The chair and co-chairs facilitated discussions and assisted in reaching consensus on cost measure development recommendations during workgroup meetings, webinars, and activities.