

2014 Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS): Qualified Clinical Data Registry Participation Made Simple

Background

The Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) is a reporting program that uses a combination of incentive payments and payment adjustments to promote reporting of quality information by individual eligible professionals (EPs). The program provides an incentive payment to individual EPs that satisfactorily participate or satisfactorily report data on quality measures for covered Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) services. Additionally, individual EPs that do not satisfactorily participate or satisfactorily report in the 2014 PQRS program year will be subject to a payment adjustment in 2016.

Purpose

This document describes Qualified Clinical Data Registry (QCDR) participation and outlines steps that individual EPs should take in selecting a QCDR to work with for the 2014 PQRS program year.

What is a Qualified Clinical Data Registry (QCDR)?

New for 2014, the QCDR method provides a new standard to satisfy PQRS requirements based on satisfactory participation. A QCDR is a CMS-approved entity (such as a registry, certification board, collaborative, etc.) that collects medical and/or clinical data for the purpose of patient and disease tracking to foster improvement in the quality of care furnished to patients. The data submitted to CMS via a QCDR covers quality measures across multiple payers and is not limited to Medicare beneficiaries.

A QCDR is different from a qualified registry in that it is not limited to measures within PQRS. A QCDR may submit measures from one or more of the following categories with a maximum of 20 non-PQRS measures allowed:

- Clinician & Group Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CG CAHPS)
- National Quality Forum (NQF)-endorsed measures
- Current 2014 PQRS
- Measures used by boards or specialty societies, and
- Measures used in regional quality collaborations

Criteria for Incentive and/or Avoiding a Payment Adjustment

EPs can earn a 2014 PQRS incentive by meeting the following criteria:

- Report on a minimum of 9 measures covering 3 National Quality Strategy (NQS) domains for at least 50 percent of the EP's applicable patients seen during the 2014 participation period
 - At least 1 of the 9 measures submitted must be an outcome measure (containing denominator data fulfilling both exceptions and exclusions, as well as numerator data)

EPs can avoid the 2016 payment adjustment by meeting one of the following criteria:

1. Satisfactorily participate and earn the 2014 PQRS incentive
2. Report at least 3 measures covering 1 NQS domain for at least 50 percent of the EP's applicable patients seen during the 2014 participation period

More information can be found in the *2014 PQRS Implementation Guide* in the Measures Codes section at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/MeasuresCodes.html>.

Steps for Successful Participation

STEP 1: Determine if the professional is eligible to participate

The list of EPs able to participate as individuals is available on the PQRS web page at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/>.

STEP 2: Choose the appropriate QCDR

A list of CMS-designated QCDRs will be available on the CMS PQRS website by the end of May 2014. The list of designated QCDRs will include:

- QCDR name
- Contact information
- Cost information
- Measures the QCDR has registered to report

STEP 3: Work directly with the QCDR

- Once a QCDR is selected, the EP will be required to enter into and maintain an appropriate legal agreement. Such arrangements provide for the QCDR's receipt of the patient-specific data and allow the QCDR to release quality measure data to CMS on the EP's behalf.
- The QCDR will provide the EP with specific instructions on how to collect and provide patient data for use by the QCDR. The QCDR will submit 2014 data during the first quarter of 2015. EPs will work directly with their QCDR to ensure data is submitted appropriately for PQRS incentive and avoidance of payment adjustment purposes.

Resources

- Additional guidance and information on the requirements to become a qualified clinical data registry, as well as information on how a qualified clinical data registry will submit quality measures data for participation periods occurring in 2014, will be located on the CMS PQRS website at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/PQRS/>.
- To find answers to frequently asked questions about PQRS, go to the CMS website at <https://questions.cms.gov/>.

Questions?

Contact the QualityNet Help Desk at 1-866-288-8912 (TTY 1-877-715-6222) or via email to Qnetsupport@sdps.org. They are available from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CST Monday through Friday.