



Rural Health Clinic Technical Assistance Educational Series

Module 5

RHC Performance Measurement & Quality Improvement

National Organization of **State Offices of Rural Health**



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Rural Health Clinic Committee

The Rural Health Clinic (RHC) Committee provides technical assistance and education to State Offices of Rural Health that are interested in providing technical assistance to RHCs and safety net providers, like Free and Charitable Clinics.

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Toolkits

- [Recruitment and Retention Toolkit Draft](#)
- [NOSORH Media Toolkit](#)
- [NOSORH Rural Veterans Health Guide for SORH](#)
- [Addressing the Health Care Needs of Rural Veterans \(03/2014\)](#)
- [Partnerships for Patients Initiative Toolkit 2nd Edition – August, 2012](#)
- [SORH Toolkit \(9-3-14\)](#)
- [Focus Group Toolkit for State Offices of Rural Health](#)
- [EMS Toolkit for FLEX – 2011-2012](#)
- [Toolkit for Health-Related Project Planning and Evaluation](#)
- [Mental Health Resources Toolkit](#)
- [Health Information Technology Toolkit – 2008](#)
- [Rural Health Conference Agendas Toolkit – March, 2012](#)
- [Template for Community Health Needs Assessment Toolkit – 2010](#)
- **Working with Rural Health Clinics:**
 - [An Introduction to the Rural Health Clinic Program: Module 1 – 2010](#)
 - [Learning About Certified Rural Health Clinics: Module 2 – 2010](#)
 - [Helping SORH's Make Decisions About Providing Technical Assistance and Support to Rural Health Clinics: Module 3 – 2010](#)
 - [Helping Rural Health Clinics Work Effectively with Other Key Rural Health Providers: Module 4 – 2010](#)



Introduction to Module 5

- Why was this module developed?
 - It is important for primary care practices (including RHCs) to engage in quality related activities in today's environment
 - New initiatives incentivize providers through public reporting or financial reward to demonstrate performance
 - National Quality Forum Report commissioned by HHS & released in 2015 recommends mandatory quality measurement programs for rural providers
 - This module serves as a guide to assist SORHs in providing technical assistance to RHCs in performance measurement & quality improvement

Target Audience & Objectives



Audience

- State Office of Rural Health (SORH) staff with experience/interest in working with RHCs in program evaluation, quality & performance improvement

Objectives

- Review current RHC requirements related to performance measurement & quality improvement
- Review history of CMS proposed revisions
- Learn about the RHC survey and certification process
- Learn about the national RHC Quality Pilot Project
- Understand the changing environment and relationship between quality and payment
- Identify programs and activities SORHs can engage in related to performance measurement & quality



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Current Requirements

- RHC Conditions of Participation (Appendix G of Medicare State Operations Manual)
- The survey process & deeming entities
- Current CMS Quality Requirements
 - Program Evaluation
 - Determines if utilization of services is appropriate
 - Determines if policies & procedures are being followed
 - Recommends any necessary changes
 - Requires a written “Program Evaluation Plan”
 - Requires a “Program Evaluation Committee” or “Professional Advisory Group” to carry out the program evaluation



CMS Proposed QAPI Rule

- Initially proposed by CMS in February 2000 to replace annual program evaluation with a more comprehensive QAPI (Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement) program
- Final rule issued in December 2003
- Due to technicalities related to issuance of proposed rules, the final rule was withdrawn by CMS in September 2006
- CMS has indicated the intention to reissue a new proposed rule
- RHCs may voluntarily implement a QAPI program as outlined in the final rule



The Changing Environment

In an effort to create a high quality healthcare system in the US, payers, providers, government agencies, and delivery systems are developing quality initiatives to improve primary care practice performance. Examples described in the module include:

- Accountable Care Organizations
- Chronic Care Management Reimbursement
- Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting (OQR) Program
- Medicare Access & CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA)
- Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive “Meaningful Use” Program
- Patient Centered Medical Home
- Physician Compare and the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS)
- Value Based Payment Modifier Program



National RHC Quality Project

- FORHP convened key stakeholders to develop a core set of proposed RHC quality measures
- Project Goals:
 - Identify core quality measures actionable and feasible for RHCs
 - Pilot test, evaluate and refine the measures
- The pilot project is a vehicle to:
 - Gain access to quality reporting tools
 - Engage a cadre of like-minded RHCs to benchmark performance and learn from one another
 - Influence and shape measures to monitor RHC quality performance
 - Document and improve clinical performance



Promising Practices

Promising practices for SORHs in Performance Measurement and Quality Improvement

- Kansas – Quality Health Indicator (QHI) Project
- Michigan – RHC Quality Network
- South Carolina – Center for Practice Transformation



Program Evaluation and Quality Programs: How the SORH can help

- Develop toolkit for sample Program Evaluation resources
- Direct RHCs to experts
- Provide education and training
- Compile & distribute FAQs
- Share best practices
- Start an RHC Quality Network
- Train staff in performance measurement and quality improvement
- Reach out to state survey agency to understand expectations/process
- Develop relationships with deeming entities
- Proactively engage in learning about national initiatives
- Track and share the progress of the RHC Quality Project

Resources

- Regulations & other CMS resources
- Related articles
- HRSA/FORHP resources
- FORHP resources
- Toolkits
- Manuals and guidance
- Links to webinars
- Links to national organizations working on quality improvement
- Sample Program Evaluation tools



Questions?

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