

Quality Oversight in the Health Care Marketplace, Spring 2010 Tufts Health Care Institute

Session 16: C.1. Performance Reports

National Reports

Some reports present information on a category of providers or health plans throughout the country. Sponsors include organizations that accredit or monitor others, which includes their setting standards, defining measures, collecting information, and posting results. Among these are the following:

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) maintains online reports on various providers, in its “Compare” series (<http://www.medicare.gov/>): hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, and dialysis facilities.
- The Joint Commission’s Quality Check® (<http://www.qualitycheck.org/consumer/searchQCR.aspx>) has information about hospitals and other organizations and programs accredited and certified by the Commission.
- The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) has summary reports on health plans and their accreditation status in its Health Plan Report Card, <http://reportcard.ncqa.org/plan/external/plansearch.aspx>.

Health Plan-Sponsored Reports

Introduction

Sample Reports from Health Plans

Oversight of Health Plan Reports

Introduction

Health plans and self-insured employers are increasingly seeking to measure the performance of providers in their networks. Measures are derived from the plans’ own claims data and satisfaction surveys completed by members.

WellPoint and Anthem health plans are using the Zagat Health Survey, an online survey tool that will allow its members to share their physician experiences with other members. Ratings are given for elements of trust, communication, availability and office environment (BCBS 2009). A growing number of plans are also reporting on provider costs, using Wellpoint’s Cost Comparison tool. In 2009, the insurers provided the total estimated cost ranges associated with approximately 35 specific medical procedures performed at more than 2,800 local hospitals,

outpatient surgery centers, free-standing radiology facilities or other medical facilities (BCBS-WellPoint, 2009).

References: Anthem Blue Cross And Blue Shield In Virginia Launches Zagat Health Survey Tool. October 6, 2009. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/10/06/idUS147789+06-Oct-2009+PRN20091006>

WellPoint, BCBSA, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida and HCSC Collaborate to Expand Access to Health Care Cost Information. July 30, 2009. <http://www.smartbrief.com/news/aaaa/industryPR-detail.jsp?id=17AA2FDD-2128-4A36-B588-8ADF82366062>

Sample Reports from Health Plans

Giving comparative profiles to the participating providers can prompt the provider units to improve their performance where most needed. Providing similar data to plan members has two benefits: 1) it enables members to select the best performing providers which in turn improves the plan's overall performance, and 2) it further encourages providers to improve by making their data publicly available and influencing member choice.

Examples that you can view online:

- Health Net of California's Medical Group Comparison Report
- Medica Quality Resources
- Harvard Pilgrim Physician Group Honor Roll
https://www.harvardpilgrim.org/portal/page?_pageid=213,201498&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Oversight of Health Plan Reports

An important development in health plans' performance reports came in 2007. The New York Attorney General challenged the actions of health plans that rated physician performance to ensure that health plans used valid, national performance measures and were transparent about their physician measurement activities. The AG created the Doctor Ranking Model Code, requiring plans to base rankings not solely on cost, identify the degree to which any ranking is based on cost, use established national standards to measure quality and cost efficiency, disclose to consumers and physicians how the assessment is designed, and provide a process for physicians to appeal incorrect rankings (King 2008). Another aspect of the Code is engaging an independent Ratings Examiner to evaluate health plan assessment programs to confirm that health plans use methods that meet the requirements of the New York Attorney General. The Examiner selected is the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)
<http://nyrxreport.ncqa.org/Overview.aspx> .

Reference: King A. 'Physician Transparency' Movement Advances Thanks to New York Attorney General. ABA Health eSource. February 2008;4(6). <http://www.abanet.org/health/esource/Volume4/06/King.html>

Collaborative Reports

Regional Reports

Collaboratives and Reports: Online Examples

Evolution of Public Reports

Goals for Measurement and Reporting Initiatives

Regional Reports

Public reports of providers' performance based on data from one health plan may be accurate for that plan, and these data may indicate the providers' overall practice patterns and patient satisfaction. Still, performance results calculated on a single health plan's data are not the preferred methodology for public reports. It would be better to aggregate claims data and other information from several sources for the same provider unit.

There are now many regionally focused, multistakeholder-driven initiatives that are accomplishing this goal of reporting more complete data for their providers. Several such projects are designated by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) as regional health improvement collaboratives. As of 2009 AHRQ was partnering with 24 collaboratives and maintaining a Learning Network to provide them with technical support and tools for measurement and reporting (AHRQ 2009).

Reference: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Budget Estimates for Appropriations Committees, Fiscal Year 2010: Performance Budget Submission for Congressional Justification. Online Performance Appendix. May 2009. See section Value / Implementation Partnerships / Community-Based Networks. Link through <http://www.ahrq.gov/>

Collaboratives and Reports: Online Examples

Link to these sites for sample reports

- California Cooperative Healthcare Reporting Initiative—<http://www.cchri.org>
- Massachusetts Health Quality Partners—<http://www.mhqp.org/default.asp?nav=010000>
- Minnesota Community Measurement—<http://www.mnhealthscores.org/>
- Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality—<http://www.wchq.org>

See Massachusetts Health Quality Partners: Report Measures for Physician Practices section below for a sample of one report's measures (MHQP).

Massachusetts Health Quality Partners: Report Measures for Physician Practices

I. Clinical Quality Performance Measures

<http://www.mhqp.org/quality/clinical/cqMASumm.asp?nav=032400> (accessed Dec. 2009)

Adult Diagnostic and Preventive Care

- Colorectal Cancer Screening Tests (Ages 50 to 80)
- High Blood Pressure Control
- Correct Imaging Test Use for Lower Back Pain
- Spirometry Test for COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

Depression

- Short-term Medication
- Long-term Medication

Medication Management

- Correct Use of Antibiotics for Acute Bronchitis
- Yearly Follow-Up for Patients on Long-Term ACE Inhibitors or ARBs
- Yearly Follow-Up for Patients on Long-Term Anticonvulsant Medication
- Yearly Follow-Up for Patients on Long-Term Diuretics

Asthma Care

- Medications for Children (Ages 5 to 17)
- Medications for Adults (Ages 18 to 56)

Heart Disease and Cholesterol Management

- Cholesterol Screening Test for Cardiovascular Disease
- Cholesterol (LDL-C) Good Control

Diabetes Care for Adults

- HbA1c Test
- HbA1c-Poor Blood Sugar Control (Lower score is better)
- HbA1c-Good Blood Sugar Control
- Blood Pressure Control
- Cholesterol (LDL-C) Screening Test
- Cholesterol (LDL-C) Good Control
- Tests to Monitor Kidney Disease

Pediatric Care

- Well-Visits for Children 0 to 15 Months of Age
- Well-Visits for Children Ages 3 to 6
- Well-Visits for Adolescents Ages 12 to 21
- Correct Antibiotic Use for Upper Respiratory Infections
- Follow-Up with Children Starting Medication for ADHD

Women's Health

- Breast Cancer Screening (Ages 40 to 69)
- Cervical Cancer Screening (Ages 21 to 64)
- Chlamydia Screening (Ages 16 to 20)
- Chlamydia Screening (Ages 21 to 25)

II. Patient Experience Survey Measures

<http://www.mhqp.org/quality/pes/pesMASumm.asp?nav=031600> (accessed Dec. 2009)

Care from Personal Doctors

- How Well Doctors Communicate with Patients
- How Well Doctors Coordinate Care
- How Well Doctors Know Their Patients
- How Well Doctors Give Preventive Care and Advice

Care and Service from Others in the Doctor's Office

- Getting Timely Appointments, Care, and Information
- Getting Quality Care from Other Doctors and Nurses in the Office
- Getting Quality Care from Staff in the Doctor's Office

Evolution of Public Reports

The movement to measure and report provider performance continues to evolve. One study of initiatives as of 2008 (Roski & Kim, 2010) found "... more than 100 regionally focused, multistakeholder-driven initiatives that aim to make performance information available in their communities." The authors cite problems to be addressed:

"Because of resource limitations and technical challenges, many initiatives currently are not measuring and reporting on health care outcomes, patients' care experiences, or the quality and cost of patient care along the continuum of care crossing physician practices, hospitals, home care, and other settings (i.e., episodes of care). Few initiatives are able to rely in any substantial fashion on clinical data from electronic sources such as electronic or personal health records and population-based registries."

Goals for Measurement and Reporting Initiatives

Recommendations have been articulated by groups like the AQA (AQA 2006), formerly the Ambulatory Care Quality Alliance. Here is a summary by Roski and Kim (2010):

"The envisioned infrastructure is characterized by several key features:

- a technically sound, broad-based, and feasible implementation strategy that produces information about results of care that are patient-centered;

- consistency with and mutually reinforced by implementation of related reform efforts—“meaningful use” of health information technology, pay for reporting, and pay for performance;
- coordination across public and private sectors and initiatives through a multistakeholder effort;
- building on existing progress and accounting for alternative sources in exchanging data and generating functionally equivalent performance information;
- reducing the unnecessary burden on providers by relying on electronic data that are already used for care coordination for performance measurement;
- identification of nationally consistent methods and approaches through pilot efforts prior to nationwide implementation; and
- covering the vast majority of providers and patients in a timely fashion.”

Reference: adapted from Roski J, Kim M. Current efforts of regional and national performance measurement initiatives around the United States. *Am J Med Qual.* 2010 Jul-Aug;25(4):246-8.

Reference: AQA Alliance. Principles for Public Reports on Health Care. 2006.

Private Organizations' Online Report Cards

Several private companies maintain websites where patients can view information about physicians and other providers and, in some cases, complete their own evaluations of their physicians. The ratings are not statistically valid since respondents are a self-selecting sample, but the sites provide some anecdotal information. They are different from the sites and organizations mentioned elsewhere in this module that maintain more formal and rigorous programs of practice certification or recognition (e.g., NCQA, Joint Commission). For an account of a physician looking up his own ratings, see Jain 2010. For a case study of searching for information online, see Howell 2009.

Reference: Jain S. Googling ourselves – what physicians can learn from online rating sites. *NEJM.* Jan. 7, 2010;362(1):6-7.

Reference: Howell MD. A 37-Year-Old Man Trying to Choose a High-Quality Hospital: Review of Hospital Quality Indicators. *JAMA.* Dec. 2, 2009;302(21):2353-2360.

- **HealthGrades** <http://www.healthgrades.com/>. HealthGrades is an independent healthcare ratings organization. As of late 2009, its website includes profiles of 750,000 physicians, 5,000 hospitals, and 16,000 nursing homes.
- **WhyNotTheBest.org** <http://www.whynotthebest.org/>. The site was created and is maintained by The Commonwealth Fund. In 2009 the site included measures of hospital

quality that are publicly reported on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Web site, Hospital Compare.

- **DrScore** <http://www.drscore.com>. At this website, patients can both rate their physician and view scores submitted by other patients for this individual and other physicians. DrScore will also work with physicians to collect and report surveys from their patients. See the website for questions on the survey.
- **RateMDs.com** <http://www.ratemds.com> This is another site where consumers and patients can look up physicians, view ratings, and submit their own ratings and comments on their physician. The brief survey instrument asks about: Staff (quality of service), Punctuality, Helpfulness, and Knowledge.
- **UCompareHealthCare** <http://www.ucomparehealthcare.com> . This site aggregates process and outcome measures from several sources, to report on hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and physicians. Profiles of physicians include hospital affiliation, education, and actions by state or federal agencies, but no data on clinical quality nor patients' satisfaction. The hospital reports include data from Medicare on clinical performance.
- **Vimo** <http://www.vimo.com/doctor/>. Consumers can look up physicians; view their profiles including disciplinary actions; rate them on knowledge and skill, availability, punctuality, personal skills and office staff; and view ratings by others.
- **RevolutionHealth** <http://www.revolutionhealth.com/> Similar to other sites for searching physicians, the ratings include “likely to recommend” and “The results of my care met my expectations.” Also, consumers can enter comments on their experiences.
- **Vitals.com** <http://www.vitals.com/>. Another site where patients can look up physicians, rate them, and write comments.