

National Quality Forum (NQF) Report Identifies Key Measures for Improving Health Outcomes for Rural Populations

New report, updated list to help rural healthcare providers improve care using measures tailored to their communities

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 10, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Quality Forum (NQF) today released a report outlining 37

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*Dana Gelb Safran, ScD,
President & CEO, NQF*

measures of health to address the specific needs of communities in rural areas. [The report](#), 2022 Key Rural Measures: An Updated List of Measures to Advance Rural Health Priorities, builds on the work of the NQF Rural Health Advisory Group and updates the list first developed by the group in 2017–2018.

In addition to updating the key rural measures list, the Advisory Group also looked at remaining gaps in measurement topic areas, i.e., areas yet to be addressed

by the list of measures. Identified gaps include intentional and unintentional injury, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), telehealth-relevant measures, cancer screening measures, and cost. The report is designed to be used by healthcare providers in rural settings as guidance for selecting the measures that are most relevant to their local populace, and most feasible to implement.

Nearly 60 million Americans, approximately 19 percent of the U.S. population, live in rural areas. Compared to nonrural residents, people in these communities experience significant health disparities, often related to issues that are rural-specific, including geographic isolation and transportation challenges.

“Rural populations are experiencing persistent disparities in health outcomes, and the COVID-19 pandemic has put these in stark relief,” said Dana Gelb Safran, ScD, President & CEO, NQF. “It is imperative that we address the issues that are unique or particularly extreme for rural communities. With nearly one in five people living in rural counties, these issues affect a significant segment of our country’s population. The measures described in this report are indispensable tools for providers working to improve care and outcomes for people in rural

settings.”

The Advisory Group’s review emphasized behavioral and mental health, substance use, infectious disease, access to care, and equity and social determinants of health (SDOH). The final list also addresses admissions, readmissions, and hospital visits; care coordination; dementia; diabetes; hypertension; kidney health; maternal health; mortality; patient experience; preventative care; and patient safety. For a detailed explanation of the process, selection criteria, and methodology, as well as more information about the individual measures, [download the full report](#).

The project is funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of the agency’s ongoing strategic focus on rural health.

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About National Quality Forum

The National Quality Forum (NQF) works with members of the healthcare community to drive measurable health improvements together. NQF is a not-for-profit, membership-based organization that gives all healthcare stakeholders a voice in advancing quality measures and improvement strategies that lead to better outcomes and greater value. Learn more at www.qualityforum.org.

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