



**PPS-Exempt Cancer Hospital Quality Reporting (PCHQR) Program**  
**Inpatient Value, Incentives, and Quality Reporting (VIQR)**  
**Outreach and Education Support Contractor**

**PCHQR Program Refresher:  
COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among  
Healthcare Personnel Measure**

**Presentation Transcript**

**Speakers**

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**Lisa Vinson:**

Good afternoon and thank you for tuning in to today's PCHQR Program educational event entitled, *PCHQR Program Refresher: COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Healthcare Personnel Measure*. My name is Lisa Vinson, and I am the PCHQR Program Lead for the PPS-Exempt Cancer Hospital Quality Reporting, or PCHQR, Program with the Inpatient Value, Incentives, and Quality Reporting, or VIQR, Outreach and Education Support Contractor. I will be one of the speakers for today's event. Our focus for today is a recap of the COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Healthcare Personnel measure, or COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure, also known as PCH-38. This is a process measure developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC, and follows the same submission process you are familiar with for the healthcare-associated infection, or HAI, and Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Healthcare Personnel measures. These measures are submitted via the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network, or NHSN, system. Since the data submission deadline for this measure is approaching, which is May 16, 2022, we felt that it was necessary to revisit this measure, and additionally, we will discuss a few frequently asked questions. Lastly, a transcript, along with a question-and-answer summary document, will be posted on both QualityNet and Quality Reporting Center websites.

If you have questions while viewing today's presentation, you may submit them to the following email address: [WebinarQuestions@hsag.com](mailto:WebinarQuestions@hsag.com). When sending questions, please use the webinar title in the subject line. The webinar title is *PCHQR Program Refresher: COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Healthcare Personnel Measure*. In the email body, please include your question, and, if your question pertains to a specific slide, please include the slide number. This will allow us to assist you more efficiently. We will answer your questions as soon as possible. If you have questions unrelated to the current webinar topic, we recommend searching for the topic in the [QualityNet Inpatient Question and Answer Tool](#). If you do not find a similar topic, please feel free to submit a new question. If you are unfamiliar with this tool, I will discuss the steps to successfully submit an inquiry later in this presentation.

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Today, we are joined by Hannah Rese, who is an epidemiologist from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Elizabeth Kalayil, who is a public health analyst with the Lantana Consulting Group.

The purpose of today's event is to provide a refresher on the COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage Among Healthcare Personnel measure, also known as the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure; show the steps to enter COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure data into the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network, or NHSN, for the upcoming data submission deadline; and address frequently asked questions.

At the culmination of this event, we hope that program participants understand the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure specifications, apply the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure requirements for the PCHQR Program, successfully perform the steps required to enter COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure data into NHSN, and, lastly, answer common questions regarding the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure.

This slide provides a list of acronyms and abbreviations you may hear and see today. These include CDC, for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; HAI, for healthcare-associated infection; HCP, for healthcare personnel; NHSN, for National Healthcare Safety Network; and PDC, for Provider Data Catalog.

Before I hand the presentation over to our guest speaker, I would like to provide an overview of the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure. We will begin with the denominator statement on the next slide.

The COVID-19 HCP Vaccination denominator is the number of healthcare personnel, or HCP, eligible to work in the healthcare facility for at least one day during the reporting period, excluding persons with contraindications to the COVID-19 vaccination that are described by the CDC.

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As the slide indicates, the CDC considers only two contraindications to the COVID-19 vaccine: severe allergic reaction, such as anaphylaxis, after a previous dose or to a component of the COVID-19 vaccine and immediate allergic reaction of any severity to a previous dose or known allergy to a component of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Of note, other medical issues or religious preferences are not recognized as contraindicators for this measure.

The measure numerator is the cumulative number of HCP eligible to work in the healthcare facility for at least one day during the reporting period and who received a completed vaccination course against COVID-19 since the date the vaccine was first available or on a repeated interval, if revaccination is recommended.

You may be wondering: What is a completed vaccination course? A completed vaccination course is defined as receiving dose 1 and dose 2 of COVID-19 vaccines requiring two doses – such as Pfizer or Moderna – or completion or receiving one dose of COVID-19 vaccine – such as Johnson & Johnson – requiring one dose for completion. As we know, booster shots are currently being administered. At this time, this measure does not take the booster vaccine into account; however, for surveillance purposes, the CDC is requiring that the number of HCP eligible to receive a booster be entered into NHSN.

There are two HCP categories. All core: All core HCP includes the sum of employees, licensed independent practitioners, adult student or trainees, and volunteers. All HCP includes the sum these categories, including other contract personnel.

This slide provides detailed information about who is included in the HCP categories provided on the previous slide, which are employees. These are individuals receiving a direct paycheck from the healthcare facility; licensed independent practitioners, including physicians, advance practice nurses, physician assistants, and post-residency fellows who are only affiliated with the healthcare facility, but not directly employed; adult

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students, trainees, and volunteers who are medical, nurses, interns, and other health professional students over the age of 18 and affiliated with the healthcare facility, but are not directly employed by the facility; and finally, other contract personnel. These are persons providing care, treatment, or services through a facility contract, such as agency and/or PRN staff scheduled to work at least once a week at the facility.

Now, I would like to review PCHQR Program requirements as they relate to this measure.

This measure was finalized for inclusion in the PCHQR Program in the Fiscal Year 2022 IPPS/LTCH PPS Final Rule, published this past August. The final rule page citation is included on this slide for your convenience. This measure was also finalized for the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program, the Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Quality Reporting Program, the Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program, and the Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting Program.

PCHQR Program participants are required to collect numerator and denominator values for the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure for at least one self-selected week during the month of the reporting quarter and submit these data via NHSN before or by the quarterly deadline, which we will review shortly. For fiscal year 2023 or calendar year 2021, the reporting period is Quarter 4 2021, which is October 1 through December 31, 2021. Then, beginning with fiscal year 2024 or calendar year 2022 and moving forward, data will be submitted on a quarterly basis following the reporting deadlines for the program. Of note, each quarter, the CDC will calculate a single quarterly COVID-19 HCP vaccination coverage rate for each PCH by taking the average of the data from three weekly rates. Also, CMS will only publicly report each quarterly COVID-19 HCP vaccination coverage rate as calculated by the CDC.

Although only one week of data is required to report, CMS and the CDC encourage weekly reporting. Please keep in mind that you are only required to submit your data by the quarterly submission deadline.

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For instance, for the Quarter 4 2021 reporting period, hospitals will be required to submit all three months of data by the May 16, 2022, submission deadline.

If the CDC can calculate a quarterly rate, then the submission requirement is met. As a reminder, since this is the same process for the HAI measures, CMS typically allows four and half months for hospitals to add new data, submit, resubmit, change, and delete existing data up until the submission deadline. We encourage data to be submitted well in advance of the deadline to allow time to review data for accuracy and make corrections. Data can be modified in NHSN at any time; however, if modified after the submission deadline, data are not transmitted to CMS or used in CMS programs.

This slide lists out the upcoming data submission deadlines for the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure for calendar years 2021 and 2022. As shown on this slide, and mentioned earlier, Quarter 4 2021 COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure data are due on May 16, 2022. Calendar year 2022 quarterly submissions are outlined here as well, and we will see on the next slide that the deadline dates align with the healthcare-associated infection measures you already submit.

The PCHQR Program Measure Submission Deadlines by Due Date table has been updated and posted to QualityNet and Quality Reporting Center websites. This includes data submission deadlines through November 2022. This resource also includes the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure along with the other program measures. You can access this document via the hyperlink on this slide, which will take you to the [QualityNet PCHQR Program Resources](#) page.

As stated previously, the CDC will calculate a single quarterly COVID-19 HCP vaccination coverage rate for each PCH. This is done by taking the average of the data from the three weekly rates submitted by the PCH for that quarter. If more than one week of data is submitted for the month, for measure calculation purposes, the most recent week of the month will be utilized. This rate will be submitted to CMS each quarter.

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Per the final rule, specifically in the preamble language, public reporting of the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure will begin with the October 2022 release. This will be the public display of data collected from Quarter 4 2021, which again is October 1 through December 31, 2021.

Please note that CMS will not publicly report data averaged over four rolling quarters, but CMS will report the most recent quarter of data. This means that each refresh cycle of this measure will only contain one quarter of data, the most recent quarter, rather than the average over four quarters of data. As this is not the customary public display process for CMS measures, CMS believes this will result in more meaningful, current information for the consumer.

I would now like to turn the presentation over to our speaker, Elizabeth. The floor is yours.

**Elizabeth Kalayil:** Thank you. My name is Elizabeth Kalayil, and I work in the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotions at the CDC.

For this portion of the presentation, I will now go over a few key points about NHSN and data entry. For facilities to participate in the Healthcare Personnel Safety component, they must either enroll in NHSN or activate the Healthcare Personnel Safety component. Please note that the process of enrolling the facility can take a minimum of four to six weeks.

Enrollment in NHSN is required for facilities that are currently not participating in NHSN, but wish to participate. During this process, facilities may choose to participate in any NHSN component.

If a facility is already enrolled in NHSN and wishes to participate in the Healthcare Personnel Safety component, a facility must activate the component.

To enter COVID-19 vaccination data, you will first need to get to the NHSN landing page. Once you are on the NHSN landing page, facilities will need to select the Healthcare Personnel Safety component from the drop-down box.

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Once you're on the home page of the Healthcare Personnel Safety component, click on the COVID-19 Weekly Vaccination Summary on the left-hand navigation bar.

You will then see a screen in a calendar format with the vaccination summary data. Please select the week you wish to enter data.

Before beginning to enter data into NHSN for a particular month, facilities will now need to create a monthly reporting plan. The plan collects data on which modules and months the facility plans to participate. Users should select options to enter data from the Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Module section of the plan. Please note that units, such as inpatient psychiatric facilities or inpatient rehab facility units, with a different CMS Certification Number, should be reported separately from the acute care or critical access facility.

There are five key questions for this module in NHSN. First, what is the number of current healthcare personnel eligible to have worked at the facility? Second, what is the number of these healthcare personnel that have ever been vaccinated for COVID-19? This number is the cumulative number of vaccinated healthcare personnel. Third, what is the number of these healthcare personnel who did not receive vaccinations due to other conditions (for example, medical contraindications)? The fourth question asks for the number of healthcare personnel who have received an initial complete COVID-19 vaccine series and who are eligible to receive an additional dose or booster. The final question, number five, asks for the number of personnel who have received an additional vaccine dose or booster since August 2021.

You will now see the data entry screen for entering weekly COVID-19 vaccination data. Facilities must complete the questions with the red asterisks in order to save data. The tab key can be used on the computer keyboard to move across columns. If there are not any healthcare personnel reported for a required field, please enter 0.



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The CDC has created a Table of Instructions document that provides definitions for all categories and questions on the data collection form. Facilities should review all instructions before collecting and entering COVID-19 vaccination data into NHSN.

After completing data entry for the questions, please be sure to click on the Save button at the bottom of the screen.

After clicking on the Save button, a message should appear on your screen indicating that data have been saved successfully.

This slide reviews the data tracking worksheet that the CDC developed for non-long-term care facilities. This is an optional tool in an Excel spreadsheet format that is designed to help with data collection. Facilities can enter healthcare personnel vaccination information and select the week of data collection. The worksheet will automatically calculate data that should be reported to NHSN each week. Please note that these resources are meant to assist facilities, but facilities do still need to submit vaccination data through the NHSN application.

To generate reports, facilities can use the analysis tool. There are resources on the NHSN website that review how to generate these reports. However, please note that these reports are now organized differently into two folders. Reports in the COVID-19 Vaccination folder include a default variable list with new healthcare personnel categories. Reports in the Pre-10.0 folder contain the older default variable list. Freestanding facilities, for example inpatient psychiatric facility, or IPF, or inpatient rehabilitation facility, or IRF, should click on COVID-19 modules and COVID-19 vaccination facility folders. IPF and IRF units within other facilities should click on the COVID-19 module and COVID-19 vaccination IPF or IRF folders as appropriate.

The Healthcare Personnel Safety component website contains links to a variety of training materials such as data collection forms, Table of Instructions, data tracking worksheets, slide sets, analysis and reporting guides, and .CSV file resources.

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If you have any questions about NHSN, please send an e-mail to User Support at [NHSN@CDC.gov](mailto:NHSN@CDC.gov). Please include Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination in the subject line of the e-mail with the facility type.

This concludes my portion of the presentation. I will turn things back over.

**Lisa Vinson:**

Thank you, Elizabeth. I would now like to review a few frequently asked questions we have received regarding the COVID-19 HCP Vaccination measure. The questions will be broken out by topic or category, and we will begin with the denominator and numerator.

First question: For employees that have a religious exemption for the vaccine, will hospitals be penalized since it is entered as declined? Facilities should report COVID-19 vaccination summary data through NHSN per CDC guidance. For CMS, if the CDC can calculate a quarterly rate and submit it to CMS, then the facility will meet the reporting requirements and would not be subject to any penalties.

This question falls under the HCP categories, and the question states, “Is there any guidance for who qualifies as HCP versus Non-HCP?” The answer is that HCP are included regardless of clinical responsibility or patient contact. You can refer to the [Instructions for Completion of the Weekly HCP COVID-19 Vaccination Cumulative Summary](#) for further guidance. For your convenience, you can access this instructional document for completing the weekly HCP COVID-19 vaccination cumulative summary via the hyperlink on this slide.

There were two frequently asked questions regarding reporting requirements. The first question states, “How long will weekly reporting continue?” For CMS, the requirement to report at least one week per month of the HCP COVID-19 Vaccination measure will continue until further notice. Any substantive changes to the measure or removal of the measure would be proposed in future rule making. Second question: “Is it a federal requirement to report HCP COVID-19 Vaccination measure data via NHSN to pass the reporting of the measure?”

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Yes, in the Fiscal Year 2022 IPPS/LTCH PPS Final Rule, CMS finalized that hospitals would collect the numerator and denominator for the HCP COVID-19 Vaccination measure for at least one self-selected week during each month of the reporting quarter and then submit the data to the NHSN HPS Component before the CMS quarterly deadline to meet quality reporting program requirements.

“As it relates to data submission, what is the submission deadline? Are we required to report one week a month?” The submission of the HCP COVID-19 Vaccination measure follows the same submission timeline as the other healthcare-associated infection (HAI) measures. The deadline for submitting Quarter 4 2021 data is May 16, 2022. Again, please use the PCHQR Program Measure Submission Deadlines by Due Date table for future deadline dates.

Will CMS pull data out of NHSN, or will hospitals enter denominator and numerator data manually into the *Hospital Quality Reporting*, or HQR, *Secure Portal*? The CDC actually transmits data to CMS periodically during the submission period and immediately following the CMS quarterly submission deadline. As you may be aware, we, the support contractor, monitor your submission status and we update you if there are any outstanding requirements.

Will the COVID-19 vaccination metrics be publicly reported? With the adoption of this new measure, public reporting will begin with the October 2022 Provider Data Catalog, or PDC, or as soon as technically feasible, using data collected from Quarter 4 2021, which is October 1–December 31, 2021. We will only report the most recent quarter of data in each refresh. We will not add one additional quarter of data during each advancing refresh. So, for example, each refresh will not display four rolling quarters of data, but it will just display the one quarter of data that is designated to be publicly reported.

This question relates to calendar week, monthly reporting plan, and reporting. The question states, “Why does the CDC request weekly data if they are only going to use the most recent week submitted or reported?”

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Facilities are encouraged to report HCP COVID-19 vaccination summary counts on a weekly basis so data can be used to inform COVID-19 vaccination activities at the facility and to monitor national trends for public health surveillance purposes.

Lastly, will there be a CMS report in NHSN that will reflect what is sent to CMS for the HCP COVID-19 Vaccination measure? The answer is yes. Facilities can generate data reports using the NHSN analysis and reporting functions. It is recommended to allow ample time before the submission deadline to review and, if necessary, correct your HCP data. Data that are modified in NHSN after the CMS submission deadline are not sent to CMS and will not be publicly reported.

The questions and answers we have addressed today are just a handful of the common topics we have seen thus far. There is a formal frequently asked questions document available as a resource, as well. On this slide, you can access the document via the QualityNet PCHQR Program Resources page and the document is located as denoted by the red box on this slide. Again, you can access this page by clicking the hyperlink provided here on this slide.

Displayed on this slide is how you can access the PCHQR Program Question and Answer Tool via the QualityNet home page. You will access this tool by selecting the Help drop-down link as indicated by the red box and then selecting the PPS-Exempt Cancer Hospitals link to start the process.

Now you are at the QualityNet Question and Answer Tool landing page. After you select the Ask a Question link, as shown by the red box on this slide, you will be taken to a page where you will need to complete your personal information. Then, you will be asked to enter details regarding the inquiry you are submitting. On this page you are also able to browse program articles and search to see if your question may have been previously addressed and posted for viewing.

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Here is where you will submit your inquiry. Be sure to complete the required fields. Once this is complete, you will need to select Submit a Question as denoted by the red box on this slide to submit your inquiry. We encourage you to utilize this tool to ask any program-related questions you have, and you may also query the system, again, to see if the topic you are inquiring about has already been addressed.

Thank you for your time and attention. We hope that revisiting this information was beneficial and discussing some of the frequently asked questions was insightful. Thank you again and enjoy your day.