



Inpatient Quality Reporting Program

Support Contractor

eCQM Submissions Question and Answer (Q&A) Session

Question and Answer Transcript

Moderator/Speaker:

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Question 1: Would you be able to go over the requirements for when mandatory reporting is going to begin, please?

Answer 1: If you're talking about the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program, mandatory reporting begins in next year, so for 2016. And the way it's going to work next year is that you'll have to submit, or you'll be required to submit for the Inpatient Quality Reporting Program eCQM data for four of the 28 available eCQMs. That data will need to be submitted for just one quarter, and it can either be for the third quarter or the fourth quarter of calendar year 2016, and you'll have until February 28, 2017 to actually submit that data.

So, they lowered the number of eCQMs from this year to next year, so it goes from 16 [eCQMs] for 2015 down to only four [eCQMs] for 2016. There remains just one quarter of data, but again, it's only those last two quarters, quarter three or quarter four, and then you have until February 28, 2017 to submit it. this change has been made as part of the process to continue alignment with the Medicare EHR incentive program. So, for all the hospitals that participate in the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program and meet that requirement of submitting data for those four eCQMs, those hospitals also meet the Medicare EHR incentive program clinical quality measure requirement, and so both of those are done with one data submission process. So that's part of that continuing process of aligning the hospital quality reporting programs around these electronic clinical quality measures.

Question 2: So for that same year when the mandatory data reporting begins, is it going to be a 30-day time limit if a hospital wants to file an Extraordinary Circumstances Exemption? Will it fall in line with the IQR requirements where they have to file the request form within 30 days of the extraordinary circumstance?



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Answer 2: We have not received yet all the information on how the ECE waiver is going to work for eCQMs specifically. CMS has told us that we should receive the details on when that form would need to be submitted and what the requirements are to meet the ability to utilize that Exemption/Exception form. We should have those details right around the first of the year. So, we're hoping sometime in January to get that information, and then we'll be sharing that with everyone so that you understand what the reporting process is for that; what the requirements are to meet the utilization of the waiver; and then when it has to be submitted.

Question 3: How does one get started to be able to upload their eCQMs through the Secure Portal?

Answer 3: So, the first [step in the] process in that is that you may want to work with your EHR vendor. So if you're looking to submit eCQM data, your EHR vendor needs to be certified to the 2014 ONC standards that are published, and that means that they have the ability to produce QRDA files. That doesn't mean that those files that are produced out of that EHR system meet all the requirements to pass into the CMS system. There may be extra work that needs to be done on those files to make sure that they meet all the formatting requirements that are included in the 2015 CMS QRDA Implementation Guide, and then the addendum to that Implementation Guide, and both of those documents are located on the eCQM library page of the CMS website. So you can go and review those there to figure out all the file requirements, what information needs to be included in the files and how it needs to be formatted in those files so that once they're uploaded into the system they can pass through our validation checks and be successfully submitted in order for the measures calculation process to occur. But, you'll need to work with your EHR vendor. All facilities will need to make sure that they have the EHR Data Upload Role added to their *QualityNet* account. So if you don't have a *QualityNet* account, you'll have to get that first, and the *QualityNet* Help Desk can help with that. But then once you have that account, or if you already have one in place, you just need to make sure that EHR Data Upload Role is added to it, and the *QualityNet* Help Desk can help with that, as well.

The second step in that process is to determine if you're going to submit the files for yourself or for your facility, or if you're going to have your EHR vendor do that for you. If you choose to have your EHR vendor do that for you, sometimes there's a charge associated with that. You'll need to work out the details of that process with them. But, if they are going to submit the data files for you, then you'll need to make sure that they have the EHR Data Upload Role added to their *QualityNet* account. And then you'll need to log into the *QualityNet Secure Portal* and go to the Vendor Authorization page. On that page there's a



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dropdown box that includes IQR, OQR, I believe it's HCAHPs, and then EHR. You'll need to select that EHR option in the dropdown box, and then you'll be able to authorize your vendor from a selection of available vendors to be able to submit data on your behalf. And you can submit – when you authorize them, you can authorize them for specific reporting quarter or for specific sets of measures. So you can check all those boxes or whatever works for you, but you just have to make sure that they're authorized to submit data on your behalf if they're going to do that for you.

Now if you're going to submit for yourself, once you have your *QualityNet Secure Portal* account and you have that EHR Data Upload Role added to it, once that's done you'll be able to see the EHR options within the *QualityNet Secure Portal*. If you go into the Secure File Transfer area of that, you can navigate through those folders to where you get to the actual File Upload folder for EHR data. There are two folders within there; one is for test data and one is for production data. The test data folder allows you just to upload test files at any time within – once the system is up and available to accept test files, you can upload those at any time. And you can just check and make sure that your files are meeting those formatting requirements in those implementation guides. And then, once you have your files ready to go, you can submit those through the Production Data folder, and then those will actually go into the system and will help to meet program requirements if you choose to submit data that way for this year. And then, once you either submit through the Test or the Production Data folder, you'll get an email saying that a file has been uploaded. And then within the next 24 hours you should receive a follow-up email that says your data has been processed and whether files have been accepted or rejected. And then once you get that second email notification, you can then log into the Report area on the *QualityNet Secure Portal* and you'll be able to run reports to see if there were errors in your file, what those errors were, and what needs to be done to fix those so that you can successfully pass them to the validation engine. Or, you can see if your files were accepted, how the measure calculations went, and if people fell into the denominator (inaudible) and different things like that. So that's kind of a basic process of how that works.

We did do a webinar in October I believe it was, and it walked [you] step-by-step through those screens and shows you how to go through the actual upload process. And also, if you have the (inaudible) denominator declaration, there's a separate screen for entering that information that shows you how to access that and also how to access the report. And we can get that information to you if you would like it.

Question 4: Will we need to do an *Intent to Submit* for 2016?



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Answer 4: You will not need to do Intent to Submit for 2016. That was really a screen that we used when eCQM data submission was a voluntary option so that we knew which hospitals were thinking about submitting eCQM data so that we could do some outreach and calls to those hospitals and help them if they had questions, or to set up things like this call we're doing today, invite those people to attend so if they had questions they could get their answers to those questions and get the assistance that they needed to get successful data submitted to the system. But for 2016, since it's a requirement, you will not need to fill out the Intent to Submit screen anymore. And there is not a need to notify CMS of which four eCQMs you are going to be submitting data for. You just have to submit that data when you're ready and able to do that by the requirement, or by the deadline.