



Outpatient Quality Program Systems and Stakeholder Support Team

Successful Reporting for the COVID-19 Vaccination Among Healthcare Personnel (HCP) Measure

Presentation Transcript

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On Demand Event

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Pam Rutherford: Hello, everyone. Thank you for joining us. My name is Pam Rutherford. I have with me Karen VanBourgondien. Together, we will be going over the new COVID-19 measure, the program requirements, as well as reporting and submission of the measure. We'd like to thank the Centers for Disease Control and the National Healthcare Safety Network for assistance in collaboration with this event.

The program objectives are listed here on this slide, and we're going over the program requirements as they relate to the new COVID-19 measure. We will review the measure specifications and program requirements, and we will also cover data submission of the COVID-19 measure in NHSN.

Let's begin with the new COVID-19 measure and how it relates to the Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program requirements but, first, let me just say that this measure is the same across the inpatient and outpatient programs. It is only reported once. These data are reported per CCN, so if your hospital is reporting the numbers per CCN, that reporting will suffice for both the inpatient and outpatient quality reporting programs.

Before we discuss the COVID-19 vaccination measure, let's first bring up the issue of mandates versus program requirements. As we all are aware, there are various mandates being issued lately. Any mandates are separate from the [Hospital] OQR Program requirements. The statutory authority for the Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program states that hospitals that do not submit data required for the measures selected with respect to such a year, in the form and manner, will incur a 2.0 percentage point reduction to their annual Outpatient Department fee schedule increase factor. Now, the bottom line is, whatever happens with the mandates, you will still need to meet the program requirements in order to avoid a payment penalty. This will not change regardless of what the end result is for any of the federal vaccine mandates.

Moving on, let's review the requirements for the COVID-19 measure specifically. In the Calendar Year 2022 OPSS Final Rule, CMS finalized



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the reporting of the Healthcare Personnel COVID-19 Vaccination measure for the multiple programs, such as the [Hospital] Inpatient Quality Reporting, the PPS-Exempt Cancer Hospital Quality Reporting, the Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Quality Reporting, the Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting, and the Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting Programs. The reporting of this measure is by CCN. Acute care facilities would count healthcare personnel working in all inpatient or outpatient units that are physically attached to the acute care facility and share the same CCN regardless of the size or type of the unit. Now, facilities would also count healthcare personnel working in inpatient and outpatient departments that are affiliated with the specific acute care facility, such as sharing medical privileges or patients, regardless of the distance from the acute care facility.

The measure denominator for this measure is the number of healthcare personnel eligible to work in the healthcare facility for at least one day during the reporting period, excluding those personnel with contraindications to the vaccine. As noted on the slide, the only contraindications to the vaccine are those personnel with a severe allergic reaction, such as anaphylaxis, after a previous dose to a component of the vaccine and those personnel with an immediate allergic reaction to a previous dose or known allergy to a component of the vaccine. Now, these are the only two contraindications. For purposes of this measure, the CDC does not recognize any other medical issue or religious preference as a contraindication.

The measure numerator is the cumulative number of healthcare personnel eligible to work in the healthcare facility for at least one day during the reporting period and who have received a completed vaccination course against COVID-19. A completed course is defined as dose 1 and dose 2 of those vaccines that are required two doses for completion, such as the Pfizer or Moderna, or one dose of the vaccine that requires only one dose for completion.



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Although you will be entering additional information into NHSN, for example those who have received only one dose, the CDC will only be reporting to CMS those healthcare personnel that have received a complete course. At this time, the measure does not include the administration of the booster vaccine. Although for surveillance purposes, the CDC is requiring the entry of this data.

For purposes of reporting the measure to CMS, there are two healthcare personnel categories. The All Core healthcare personnel is the sum of employees, licensed independent practitioners, adult students/trainees, and volunteers. All Healthcare Personnel are those included in the All Core healthcare personnel, along with other contract personnel.

Now, I won't go through all the details on this slide, but the slide outlines what is included in each of the four healthcare personnel categories. We're just giving you some inclusions here to help tie this together. We want to let you know that there have been some recent updates to the Other Contract Personnel category. Now, previously, in this category, vendors were not included. However, now vendors will be included in this category. So, vendors providing care, treatment, or services should be included in the Other Contract Personnel category if they work in the facility on a regular, weekly, basis, regardless of the clinical responsibility or patient contact. You can also find this information by accessing the resources on the Healthcare Personnel COVID-19 Vaccination page on NHSN. We have that link right here on this slide. Now, there are many other tools available on NHSN that will assist you with measure specifics. Now, being aware of the measure specifics will assist you in determining which categories to submit data in the NHSN system. We will review the reporting aspect in more detail later in the presentation.

Per the final rule, facilities will collect the numerator/denominator for at least one self-selected week during each month of the reporting quarter and will need to enter that into NHSN Healthcare Personnel Safety Component before the quarterly deadline to meet the quality reporting program requirements.



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For example, for the Quarter 1 2022 reporting period, you will be required to submit all three months of data, January, February, and March, by the August 15, 2022, submission deadline. The facility meets the program submission requirements if the CDC can calculate a quarterly rate. A quarterly rate is calculated by taking the average of the data from the three submission periods submitted by the facility for that quarter.

CMS allows four-and-a-half months for facilities to submit, resubmit, change, add new data, or delete existing data up until the submission deadline. Now, we encourage facilities to submit their data well before the submission deadline to allow time to review and correct the data, if necessary. I would also like to note that data in the NHSN tool can be modified at any time. However, data that are modified in NHSN after the submission deadline will not be sent to CMS and will not be used in any of the CMS programs or for public reporting. So, if you go in there after the submission deadline and make changes, those changes will not be sent to CMS and would not be part of your rate calculation. This includes if you submit your data after the deadline. The data will be accepted into NHSN but, again, will not be sent to CMS. So, if you submit data after the deadline, you will not meet program requirements.

This slide provides you with the submission deadlines moving forward for payment year 2024.

At the top you have Quarter 1, the quarter I just discussed on the previous slide. That quarter will use the reporting period of January 1 through March 31, 2022, with the submission deadline of August 15, 2022. Hospitals submit these data for inpatient and outpatient together. You would have submitted data earlier for the inpatient. Now, here on this slide, you can see the deadlines as they relate to the outpatient program.

For Quarter 2, 2022, which is April 1–June 30, 2022, that deadline will be November 15, 2022. You can view the rest of the quarterly deadlines here on the slide. We will have an updated document posted to our website.



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Now, once the quarter's worth of data has been submitted, the CDC will calculate a single quarterly rate for each hospital or facility. They will do this by taking the average of the data from the three weekly rates submitted by the hospital or the facility for that quarter. If you do submit more than one week's worth of data, the most recent week of the month will be used. This calculated rate is what will be submitted to CMS each quarter.

As with other CMS measures, the Healthcare Personnel COVID-19 Vaccination measure will be publicly displayed on Care Compare. Public reporting will begin with the January 2023 refresh or sooner if feasible. However, the public reporting of this measure will be different from the other measures. Instead of adding one additional quarter of data with each refresh, only the most recent quarter of data will be displayed for each refresh.

So, here to take you through the reporting process is Karen VanBourgondien. Karen?

Karen

VanBourgondien: Thanks, Pam. So, now you know the program requirements. Now, let's review entering the data into the NHSN system.

For the purposes of this presentation, we are going to assume your hospital is registered and enrolled in NHSN. The person who will be entering the data must register with Secure Access Management Services, or SAMS. SAMS is a federal information technology system that gives authorized personnel secure access to non-public CDC applications. The SAMS portal is a website designed to provide centralized access to public health information and computer applications operated by the CDC. For the NHSN program, SAMS will provide healthcare facilities and other partners, such as health departments and QIOs, with secure and immediate access into the NHSN application. So, there's two parts to this secure access. The first one is your username and password, and the second is the multi-factor authentication.



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This is the same thing you have when you report data into QualityNet. You have the multi-factor authentication to get in that system as well. This is the same thing. So, for NHSN, the first option is what they refer to as a soft token, which is an app you can download onto things such as your phone, your tablet, computer. Once you've downloaded that, you will have immediate access into the system. The second option for the multi-factor is referred to as a hard token and is a physical Grid Card. This card is a hard card similar to the feel of a credit card with numbers and letters on it, and you can see a view of that on the slide here. The grid card is mailed to your home, so you have to wait until that arrives before you have access into NHSN. You can see an image of both options here. The soft token is the app and a code will come up. That will be the code you enter when you're logging in. If you have a SAMS grid card, the hard token, as seen here on the right, the system will ask you questions like A1. You would have to obtain the number from the column A and number 1, so you would enter E for that question. Once you've downloaded the app or received your grid card, you're now ready to complete this process and log into SAMS and then into NHSN.

So, let's begin here with the login page for SAMS. You will enter your username and password and then whichever multi-factor option you are using, which is either the hard or the soft token.

So, once you enter your credentials, you are in the SAMS portal, and you will now need to get into NHSN to report your data. The SAMS portal is the key that gets you into the NHSN building. So, to get into NHSN, you are going to select NHSN Reporting.

On the NHSN Landing Page, under Select Component, at the top here, you will select Healthcare Personnel Safety from the drop-down menu. Under Select Facility/Group, you will select your hospital from the drop-down options. Then, click Submit.



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From the navigation bar on the left-hand side, hover your cursor over Reporting Plan. Then, select Add.

From this page, you will select the month, which you have. We've selected January here and the year. Now, you may get this alert box here. It's telling you no data are found for January 2022. Well, if this is your first time going into the month of January, that would be true. Right? You haven't entered it yet. So, don't worry about that. Just click on the OK box. You will go down to Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Module and select COVID-19 Vaccination Summary. Then, hit Save.

This page will then display, letting you know that your HCW plan has been successfully created. Go ahead and check your dates. Then, select Save.

You will go back to the left-hand navigation bar and hover over Vaccination Summary and select COVID-19 Weekly Vaccination Summary.

You will then see a screen in a calendar format for the vaccination summary data. This is just a screen shot, so the dates you will see will, of course, depend on the time frame you have entered. One thing to note is a week for this reporting tool ends on Sunday. So, the first week shown here, it ends January 2. So, the first week shown here would correlate with the first week of January. For example, if you submit data for that week, it includes data from December and January. The system will put the data submitted under the month of January, as that is the month the week ended on. So, you will select the week you wish to enter data. Any week that does not have data entered will have a tan color. The color map is located at the top. So, let's click on that first week there.

Once again, red asterisks indicate mandatory fields. Let me just say, you will have to enter your information in one sitting. If you do not complete your data entry, you know, if you have to leave, when you come back, the data will not be there. Just an FYI, and do the whole thing at once. If you want to see what this entire data entry tool looks like, there is a blank one available on NHSN.



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We have the direct link to that document here on the slide. You can just print it off and keep it available, if you need it. So, you can enter it on the hard copy if you want and then go into the system and enter all the data at once. So, enter “0” if no HCP are reported for a required field. For question number 1, you will enter your data, which is the number of healthcare personnel that are eligible to have worked at your hospital for at least one day during the week of the data collection. For number 2, the cumulative number of healthcare personnel in question number 1 who received COVID-19 vaccinations at your hospital or elsewhere, you will click on the drop-down arrow, and the box showing the different vaccines will open. You will fill in the appropriate data for each vaccine as it is applicable. So, let me show you this just a little bit closer.

What you are seeing here are completely made-up data. The grey-colored boxes are auto-filled based on the data that you enter. So, for question number 2, you will click on the drop-down menu and select the vaccine you are entering data for. For this scenario here on the screen, the Janssen-Janssen vaccine is displaying in the box in this screen shot, but you would enter the applicable data for the vaccine you are entering data for. The entire column above the auto-filled 30 adds up to 50, which is the number of workers you entered to answer question number 1, but the 30, which is auto-filled next to Any Completed COVID-19 Vaccine Series, is calculated for individuals who have completed a vaccine series, which you get from adding question 2.2, 2.4, and 2.5.

Question number 3 relates to medical contraindications, offering the vaccine but the person declined, and unknown status. Since our numbers that we just discussed matched, then question number 3 will be all 0s. Question number 4 will be the cumulative number of healthcare personnel from question 2 that are eligible to receive an additional dose or booster. So, in this scenario, we are saying 25. For question 5, you will once again select the vaccine from the drop-down menu and enter the appropriate data in the fields below, which are 5.1 and 5.2. Again, the grey boxes are auto-filled and should match the data above them.



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If you happen to enter your data incorrectly, you will get a message box letting you know that there's an error and that your data are not adding up.

Question number 6 refers to the vaccine supply. You will enter the data accordingly. Here for question 6.1, we are selecting No to the question: Is your facility enrolled as a COVID-19 vaccination provider? If you selected Yes to that first question, then the box for the next question would open and it would not be greyed out, as you see here. Once you've completed the data entry, you will select Save.

You will be redirected here, and the week of the calendar will turn green. You will receive a pop-up message indicating that you have successfully saved your record. Then, you will just simply repeat this process the next time you enter data.

Now, we do have some resources here available for you. We do encourage you to access the NHSN website. With any questions, contact the NHSN help desk. NHSN also has an Frequently Asked Questions document that answers many of the questions people ask. So, before reaching out to them, go ahead and take a look at that document and just see if that answers your question. NHSN also has some very valuable tools available on the Training page. Of course, we're always glad to hear from you. Feel free to reach out to us and our help desk at (866) 800-8756.

We hope that this has helped you with your understanding and reporting of the new COVID -19 vaccination measure. Thanks for joining us.