Meeting Summary

Implementation Workgroup Web Meeting 3

The National Quality Forum (NQF) convened a web meeting for the Implementation Workgroup on June 4, 2020.

Welcome and Review of Web Meeting Objectives

NQF staff and Workgroup co-chairs welcomed participants to the meeting. NQF staff reviewed the following meeting objectives:
- Update on Implementation Guide
- Review and Discuss Guide

Update on Implementation Guide

NQF staff began with updates on the Implementation Guide. The goal for the guide is to be a user-friendly resource consisting of "how-to's" and "best practices." NQF staff assured the workgroup that although the guide is currently in text format for review, edit, and public comment, the final version will use layout changes and graphics to become more user-friendly. The Implementation Guide is focused on use of core measures in value-based payment programs, primarily by health plans. While the resource maintains its focus, staff also tried to include useful information for all stakeholders. A question rose from the workgroup as to whether the guide should be delayed or reworked based on the changing healthcare landscape due to the implications of the coronavirus. There was resounding agreement from the group that the current healthcare landscape emphasizes the importance of this resource and the group should remain on track with its release. The AHIP team ensured workgroup members that these discussions have risen within the CQMC and the general consensus has landed similarly.

Review and Discuss Guide

NQF staff then transitioned into a detailed review of the Implementation Guide in its current text format. Workgroup members emphasized the importance of addressing gaps in data. Additionally, workgroup members posed the question of who the target audience of the guide would be. Some members noted that a more focused approach may create for a more effective guide. A workgroup member suggested that insurance companies should be the primary target audience as achieving buy-in from this stakeholder group has proven to be an obstacle in the past. Further, workgroup members suggested it may be effective to provide real life examples of success stories. One workgroup member also suggested that instead of using the term "stakeholder buy-in," the phrasing "stakeholder partnerships" may be more effective.

Workgroup members also noted that a one to two-page summary of the guide in the beginning of the document will help make the resource more user-friendly. One workgroup member emphasized the importance of a neutral facilitator in the process of stakeholder alignment around core measures. NQF staff noted that they can work to make it clearer which sections are most relevant to specific stakeholder groups through formatting and layout.

One workgroup member stated that it should be communicated that program goals are very much linked to quality of care goals. The intertwining of these two shifts the conversation away from compliance and more towards quality improvement. Other workgroup members stressed the importance of this sense of collaboration among stakeholders rather than taking a more heavy-handed approach.

On the topic of barriers, a workgroup member noted that quantity of measures and topics may serve as an obstacle for implementation. The group also mentioned several barriers to engagement including natural disasters and unforeseen organizational circumstances, while stressing the importance of contingency plans for these scenarios. Competition among electronic health record vendors creating obstacles in data integration was another barrier cited by the workgroup. NQF staff referenced the Health Care Payment Learning & Action Network whitepaper on data sharing as an effective resource on this topic.

NQF staff stated the final "Implementation Strategies" section will include more strategies than are currently included. Workgroup members suggested including illustrations to make some of these strategies clearer in practice. Workgroup members also noted specifically that it is very important to consider the impacts of small numbers in reference to sample sizes when collecting data.

Next Steps

NQF staff closed by noting that they will incorporate feedback into the guide. The Implementation Guide will be posted for public comment in late June, the group will meet again in late July to review any public comments, and the final Implementation Guide will be finalized by August 14.