US Health Information Knowledge Base (USHIK) for Clinical Quality Measurement

Guide

Provided By:
The National Learning Consortium (NLC)

Developed By:
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The National Learning Consortium (NLC) is a virtual and evolving body of knowledge and resources designed to support healthcare providers and health IT professionals working towards the implementation, adoption and meaningful use of certified EHR systems.

The NLC represents the collective EHR implementation experiences and knowledge gained directly from the field of ONC’s outreach programs (REC, Beacon, State HIE) and through the Health Information Technology Research Center (HITRC) Communities of Practice (CoPs).

The following resource can be used in support of the EHR Implementation Lifecycle. It is recommended by “boots-on-the-ground” professionals for use by others who have made the commitment to implement or upgrade to certified EHR systems.

**EHR Implementation Lifecycle**

1. Access
2. Plan
3. Select
4. Implement
5. Meaningfully Use
6. Improve Quality

**DESCRIPTION & INSTRUCTIONS**

This guide provides a summary of how to use the United States Health Information Knowledgebase (USHIK) to access key information on the Meaningful Use Clinical Quality Measures (CQMs) and is intended to be shared with staff using an electronic health record (EHR).

The first section, Getting Started, provides a general overview of what is available on the home screen, and how a user can navigate to a CQM of interest.

The following seven sections correspond with available USHIK tabs, and illustrate what can be found in each of those areas on the USHIK site.

The final section, Comparing Measures, provides instructions on how to use USHIK to compare two or more measures, or different versions of a single measure.
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1 USHIK and Meaningful Use Clinical Quality Measurement

USHIK is an online resource developed, provided, and maintained by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), located on the web at http://ushik.ahrq.gov/.

USHIK provides clinical codes through the Unified Medical Language System (UMLS), part of the National Library of Medicine. Note that the user must create a UMLS account as prompted to access code sets on USHIK.

There are many ways to access information available on USHIK. The following pages contain screen shots of functions that would be most useful to those interested in clinical quality measures. This resource does not represent all the information or functions available on USHIK, nor all the ways to access the information and functions available. Independent exploration of USHIK is encouraged in order to determine how USHIK can best meet the needs of a particular REC or practice.

1.1 GETTING STARTED

To access CQM information on USHIK, click the Meaningful Use tab:
Notice there are tabs for each Stage of Meaningful Use. By default, the Stage 2 tab will be selected, though users can click on the “Stage 1” tab to see information pertaining to the Stage 1 measures.

After choosing the appropriate MU Stage, click on E.P. Clinical Quality Measures.
Clicking on a column will sort the table in ascending order by the selected column. For example, clicking on the NQF heading once, will sort the table from lowest NQF number to highest. Click on a column heading twice, and the table will be organized in descending order, e.g. highest to lowest NQF number.

Hovering over a measure of interest will provide a window with basic details about the measure. Click on the measure of interest from the list provided for further detail.

Because some of the codes sets associated with a measure are provided through UMLS, USHIK will prompt the user for UMLS log-in information before providing further measure details. Either enter your information, or click the link to obtain a UMLS username and password.
Once UMLS information is entered, the next screen provides seven tabs that display different information about the measure. Sections 1.3 through 1.9 provide an overview of the information contained in these tabs.

1.2 MEASURES AT-A-GLANCE
At a Glance provides high-level information about the measure, such as a description of the measure and its numerator, denominator, and exceptions/exclusions.

1.3 DOWNLOADS & RESOURCES
Downloads and Resources will provide a series of downloadable PDF, Excel, CSV, and XML documents related to the measure. The resources contain files that include code sets, population criteria, and metadata on each measure.
1.4 POPULATION CRITERIA

Population Criteria presents the “logic” of the measure: which components make up the initial population, numerator, denominator, and exclusions/exceptions. Note that each component is a hyperlink. Clicking on the link for any of the indicated elements will bring you directly to the code list for that specific element.
1.5 DATA CRITERIA

Data Criteria provides all codes associated with data elements of the measure. For example, the data element Diagnosis: Active Diabetes will be fulfilled by documenting any of the ICD-10-CM, SNOMED-CT, or ICD-9-CM codes shown in the EHR. Hovering the cursor over the code will display its definition.
1.5.1 Identifying Measures That Use the Same Data Elements

Sometimes, it can be useful to see if more than one CQM uses the same data element, i.e., to understand if data entry on the same data element affects multiple CQMs. For more information regarding a data element, click on the category in blue:

Additional information about the code set is displayed, including associated CQMs that use the same data element:
1.6 SUPPLEMENTAL DATA ELEMENTS

Supplemental Data Elements provide the codes affiliated with the more generic data elements, such as sex and race. As described above, clicking on the data element name will provide additional information, including associated clinical quality measures that use the same data elements.

1.7 REPORTING STRATIFICATION

If a measure needs to be stratified when reported, e.g., by age, this tab will display the required strata.
1.8 METADATA & REFERENCES

The Metadata tab displays high-level narrative information on the measure, such as the measure steward, the rationale, and clinical recommendations. References for information cited on the Metadata tab are located in the References tab to the right of the Metadata tab.
1.9 COMPARING MEASURES

USHIK allows users to compare different CQMs. From the list of CQMs, check the box in the leftmost column that corresponds with the measures to be compared, and click the Compare button:

Four tabs become available allowing the user to compare the Identifying Attributes, Data Criteria, Supplemental Data Elements, and codes across the selected measures. Rows flagged in red have differences, while those appearing in green do not. In the example below, the Measure Description is different between the two measures, but the Measure Steward is not. When the cursor is positioned over a Metadata Attribute, a box pops up noting whether the attribute is the same for the selected measures.
1.9.1 Comparing Codes across Measures

On the Code Comparison tab, codes shared between the measures are shown in blue; while codes unique to one of the selected measures are shown in grey.

1.9.2 Comparing Multiple Versions of a Measure

Some measures will appear with an icon that looks like little papers next to the measure name. This indicates there are multiple versions of the measure:
For these measures, the At-a-glance tab will provide a Compare Versions button:

This brings the user to a comparison page set up identically to the one described above, but compares the different versions of a single measure instead of different measures.