

(i) *Factors for consideration for removal of quality measures.* CMS will weigh whether to remove measures based on the following factors:

(A) *Factor 1.* Measure performance among REHs is so high and unvarying that meaningful distinctions and improvements in performance can no longer be made (“topped-out” measures);

(B) *Factor 2.* Performance or improvement on a measure does not result in better patient outcomes;

(C) *Factor 3.* A measure does not align with current clinical guidelines or practice;

(D) *Factor 4.* The availability of a more broadly applicable (across settings, populations, or conditions) measure for the topic;

(E) *Factor 5.* The availability of a measure that is more proximal in time to desired patient outcomes for the particular topic;

(F) *Factor 6.* The availability of a measure that is more strongly associated with desired patient outcomes for the particular topic;

(G) *Factor 7.* Collection or public reporting of a measure leads to negative unintended consequences other than patient harm; and

(H) *Factor 8.* The costs associated with a measure outweigh the benefit of its continued use in the program.

(ii) *Criteria to determine topped-out measures.* For the purposes of the REHQR Program, a measure is considered to be topped-out under paragraph (e)(3)(i)(A) of this section when it meets both of the following criteria:

(A) Statistically indistinguishable performance at the 75th and 90th percentiles (defined as when the difference between the 75th and 90th percentiles for an REH’s measure is within two times the standard error of the full data set); and

(B) A truncated coefficient of variation less than or equal to 0.10.

(iii) *Application of measure removal factors.* The benefits of removing a measure from the REHQR Program will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Under this case-by-case approach, a measure will not be removed solely on the basis of meeting any specific factor.

(f) *Public reporting of data under the REHQR Program.* Data that an REH submits for the REHQR Program will be made publicly available on a CMS website in an easily understandable format after providing the REH an opportunity to review the data to be made public. CMS will publicly display REH data by the CCN when data are submitted under the CCNs.

(g) *Exception.* CMS may grant an exception to one or more data submission deadlines and requirements in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the hospital, such as when an act of nature affects an entire region or locale or a systemic problem with one of CMS’ data collection systems directly or indirectly affects data submission. CMS may grant an exception as follows:

(1) *Upon request by the REH.* Specific requirements for submission of a request for an exception are available on a CMS website.

(2) *At the discretion of CMS.* CMS may grant exceptions to REHs that have not requested them when CMS determines that an extraordinary circumstance has occurred.

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PART 420—PROGRAM INTEGRITY: MEDICARE

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