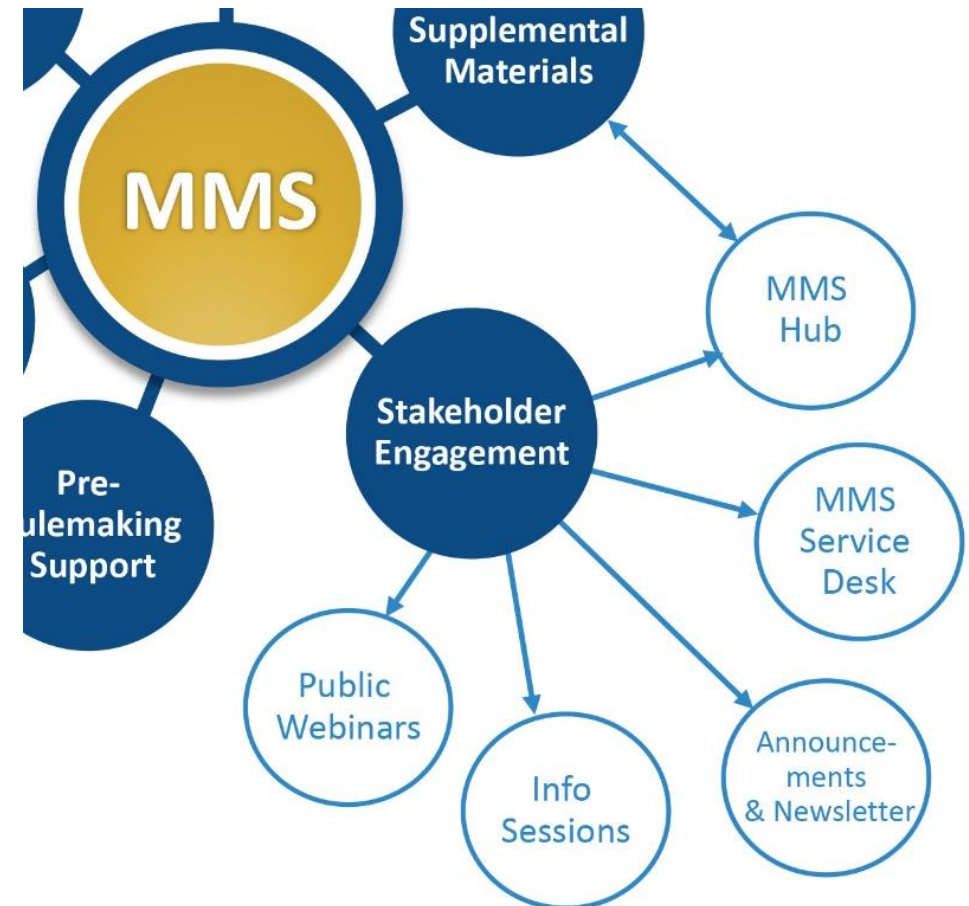# What's in a Name?

Terminology & Current Linguistic Trends in Measure Specification

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Welcome

- Info Sessions are stakeholder outreach and education activities to engage those interested in CMS measure development.

- Info Sessions are an activity of the Measures Management System (MMS) contract

Presentation Objectives

- Review the measure specification phase

- Discuss terms/definitions that can be confusing

- Provide guidance on how to handle definition discrepancies

1/24/2023

Measure Specification

https://mmshub.cms.gov/measure-lifecycle/measure-conceptualization/overview

Measure Specification

- The goal is for the measure to reach its intended population

- Consists of both technical specification and harmonization

- Involves stakeholder engagement through public comment and technical expert panels (TEPs)

- Measure Specification is often concurrent with **measure testing**

Measure Specification (cont.)

- Measure specifications describe the
  - **Data source** (e.g., administrative, claims, etc.)
  - **Data elements**, the pieces of information extracted from the data source that describe part of the clinical care process
  - **Timing and frequency** of data collection and reporting
  - **Specific instruments used** (if applicable, an example is a survey)
  - **Implementation strategies**

Why Definitions Matter

The goal of measure specification is to create precise technical specifications (instructions for how to build and calculate a measure)

A clear understanding of terminology related to measure conceptualization helps measure developers achieve this goal
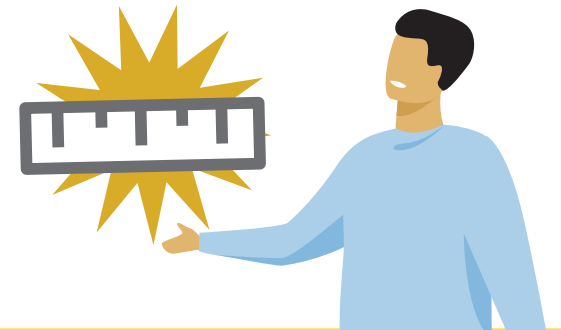
Specification errors may waste resources and could generate misleading conclusions about care quality

Clarifying Terminology

- We will now go through some examples of terms that, in our experience, can be confusing or are newer terms and people are less familiar with them

  - **Patient-reported terminology**

  - **Level of analysis & accountable entity**

  - **Exceptions & exclusions**

  - **Digital quality measure (dQM)**

- For each term we will explain why a thorough understanding of its definition is essential to measure conceptualization

Terminology Review: Patient-reported

▶ **Patient-reported terminology**

- Level of analysis & accountable entity

- Exceptions & exclusions

- Digital quality measure (dQM)

Patient-Reported Terms

- CMS's National Quality Strategy takes a person-centered approach to quality and safety

- Patient-centeredness is embedded in all aspects of the measure development process

Terms you might be familiar with:

- Patient-reported outcome (PRO)

- Patient-report outcome measure (PROM)

- Patient-reported outcome-based performance measure (PRO-PM)

- Patient-reported data

- Patient/encounter level testing

1/24/2023

Patient-Reported Measure Type

- ## Patient-reported outcome (PRO)
  - **Information on person's health care that comes directly from the person**
    (e.g., responses on a questionnaire related to pain or function)

- ## Patient-report outcome measure (PROM)
  - **An instrument, scale, or single-item measure used to assess the PRO**
    (e.g., Hip Injury and Osteoarthritis Outcome Score [HOOS])

- ## Patient-reported outcome-based performance measure (PRO-PM)
  - **A performance measure that is based on PROM data**
    (e.g., Functional Status Assessment for Total Hip Replacement)

Patient-Reported Data Source

- Patient-reported data is information reported **directly** by patients (or a representative) to their care teams.

- Patient reported data may be collected via:

  - Discussions with a care team, either in-person or over the phone

  - Paper-based questionnaires completed at a physician's office

  - Online questionnaires via a patient portal

To be used in measurement, patient-reported data must be stored in the patient medical record
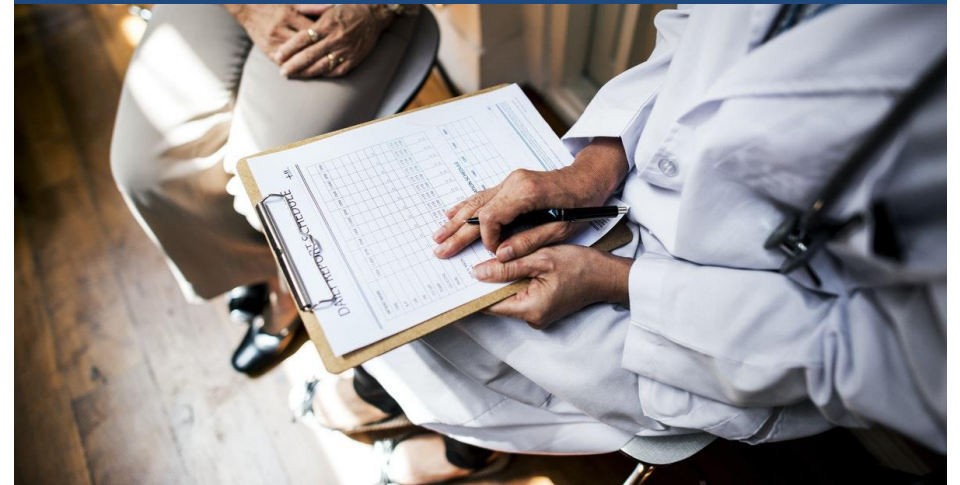
For more information, visit the
MMS Hub page on PROMs

Patient/Encounter Level Testing

- Related to measure testing, the next phase of the measure development lifecycle

- CMS's Consensus Based Entity (CBE), currently National Quality Forum, updated its terminology

- "**Person or encounter level testing**" is the new terminology for data element testing.

  – Person/patient or encounter level data ≠ patient-reported data

Terminology Review: Level of analysis & accountable entity

- Patient-reported terminology
- **Level of analysis & accountable entity**
- Exceptions & exclusions
- Digital quality measure (dQM)

Level of Analysis and Accountable Entity

Level of analysis refers to how the measure score is to be calculated and reported, specifically related to the tier of the healthcare system being measured (e.g., clinician, facility, health plan, county populations).

The **accountable entity** reports on the measure and receives performance scores on the measure

An accountable entity may be responsible for reporting on measures at varying levels of analysis

Terminology Review: Exceptions & exclusions

- Patient-reported terminology

- Level of analysis & accountable entity

▶ **Exceptions & exclusions**

- Digital quality measure (dQM)

Exclusions and Exceptions

- When measure developers define the denominator and numerator, **exclusions and exceptions should be included**

- While the terms are similar, there are some important differences

Exclusions

Exclusions - **Cases that need to be removed prior to calculating the measure score**

Numerator Exclusions
Define instances that measured entities should not include in the numerator data (only in ratio and proportion measures)
e.g., patients who refuse the flu vaccine

Denominator Exclusions
Cases the that need to be removed from the measure population and denominator before determining whether numerator criteria are met
e.g., excluding patients with cognitive impairment from patient-reported measures

Exceptions

- A **Denominator exception** is any condition that should remove a patient, procedure, or unit of measurement from the denominator of the performance rate only if the numerator criteria are not met

  – Patients who refuse to participate

- Allows for adjustment of the calculated score for those providers with higher risk populations

- Exceptions are not used in numerators

Terminology Review: Digital quality measure (dQM)

- Patient-reported terminology

- Level of analysis & accountable entity

- Exceptions & exclusions

▶ **Digital quality measure (dQM)**

Digital Quality Measure Definition

In spring 2022, CMS released a definition for **dQMs**:

- Quality measures, organized as self-contained measure specifications and code packages, that use one or more sources of health information that is captured and can be transmitted electronically via interoperable systems.

- dQMs improve the patient experience including quality of care, improve population health, and reduce costs.

- Data sources for dQMs include administrative systems, electronically submitted clinical assessment data, case management systems, EHRs, laboratory systems, prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs), instruments (for example, medical devices and wearable devices), patient portals or applications (for example, for collection of patient-generated data such as a home blood pressure monitor, or patient-reported health data), health information exchanges (HIEs) or registries, and other sources.

dQM Definition Closer Look

- Several key points of the definition to keep in mind

  - Use **one or more sources** of health information that is captured and can be transmitted electronically via interoperable systems

 - **eCQMs** are one example of a dQM
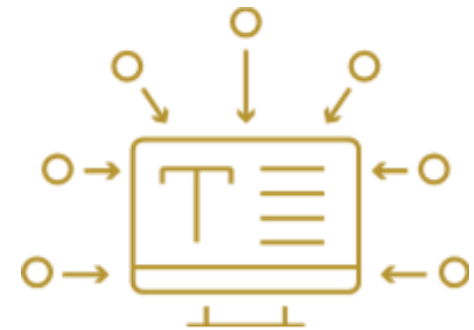
How to Approach Differences

- **Measure developers may encounter differences in terminology from different sources**

- CMS-funded measure developers should use the **Measure Lifecycle** on MMS Hub to guide their work

- The MMS Hub updates its materials on a quarterly basis

    - At the bottom each MMS Hub webpage is the "last updated" date

For more information on measure development visit: https://mmshub.cms.gov/
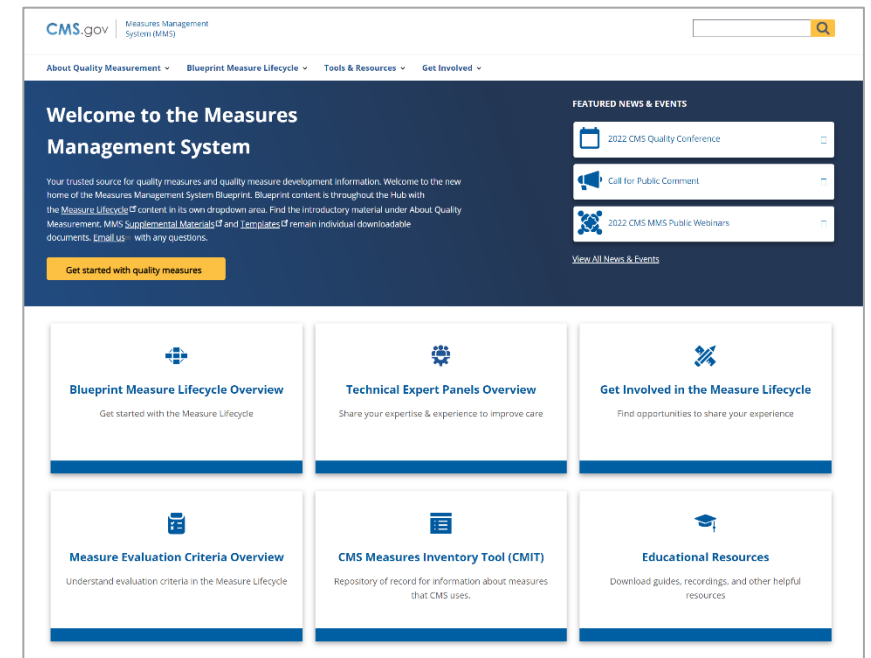
Key Takeaways
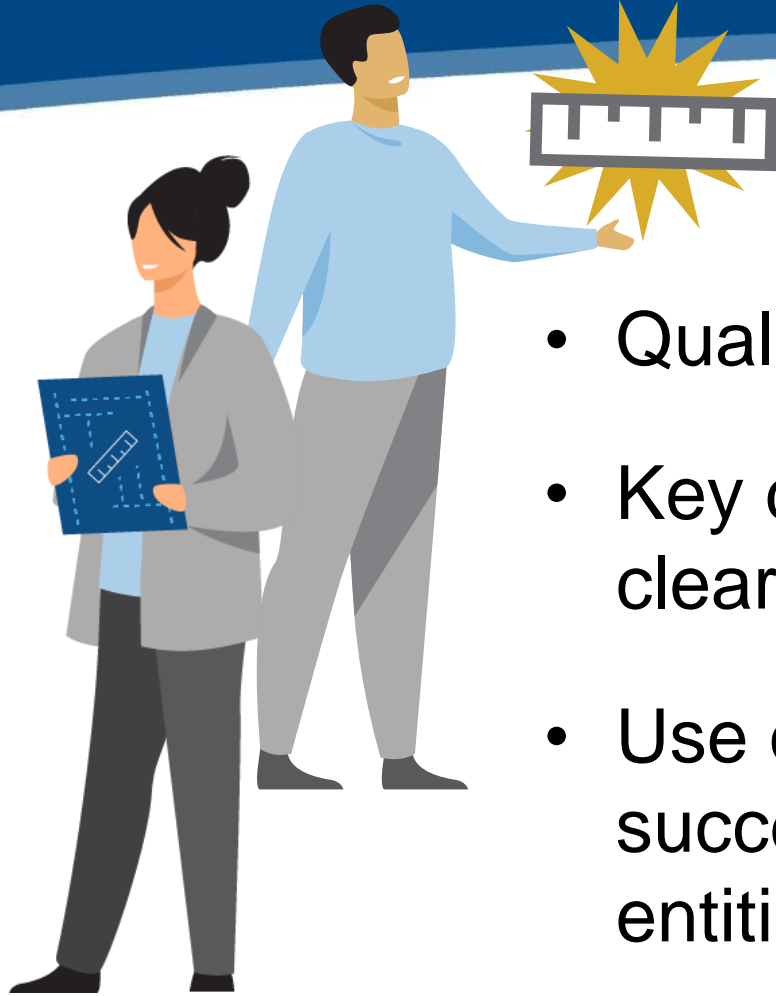
- Quality measurement relies on precise language

- Key definitions and standardized language enable clear and unambiguous measure specification

- Use of up-to-date nomenclature promotes successful collaboration across measurement entities and minimizes confusion

We Want to Hear from You!

- What topics and/or speakers would you like to hear from in 2023?
  - Session on health equity accreditation
  - Information on how to ways to develop equity measures
  - Other (please specify)

Questions

Announcements

- February 22 Info Session from 2-3pm ET
- Topic is on digital quality measure specification
- Registration: https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_yw4q39_3QxmcZO-TEO736Q

For more information on measure development visit: https://mmshub.cms.gov/

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