Promoting Health Equity and Eliminating Disparities through Measurement

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What we mean by performance measure?

- Healthcare performance measures are tools used to \textit{quantify} the quality or cost of care provided to patients and their families.

- They allow us to \textit{gauge} the quality of care that is provided and help us understand whether and how much improvement activities \textit{improve} care and outcomes.
Why do we measure?

The primary goal of healthcare performance measurement is to **improve the quality of healthcare received by patients** (and ultimately, to **improve health**)

**Measurement is a quality improvement tool, not an end in and of itself**
What Are The Major Uses of Performance Measures?

- Internal quality improvement
- Benchmarking
- Accountability applications
  - Certification
  - Accreditation
  - Defining provider networks
  - Public reporting
  - Payment
A Roadmap for Promoting Health Equity and Reducing Disparities

**THE FOUR I’S FOR Health Equity**

**Identify**
and Prioritize Reducing Health Disparities

**Incentivize**
the Reduction of Health Disparities and Achievement of Health Equity

**Invest**
in the Development and Use of Health Equity Performance Measures

**Implement**
Evidence-Based Interventions to Reduce Disparities
Identify and Prioritize Reducing Health Disparities

• The volume of existing measures can make prioritization a challenge, but measures that can help to monitor and reduce disparities should be prioritized.

• The NQF Disparities Committee recommended four criteria to help stakeholders identify and prioritize disparities:

1. **Prevalence**: How prevalent is the condition among populations with social risk factors?
2. **Size of the Disparity**: How large is the gap in quality, access, and/or health outcome between the group with social risk factors and the group with the highest quality ratings for the measure?
3. **Strength of the evidence**: How strong is the evidence linking improvement in performance on the measure to improved outcomes in the population with social risk factors?
4. **Ease and feasibility of improvement (actionable)**: Is the measure actionable (e.g. by providers/clinicians/health plans, etc.) among the population with social risk factors?
Implement Evidence-Based Interventions to Reduce Disparities

- Many studies have documented interventions that reduce disparities; however, these interventions are rarely implemented in practice.

- The reduction of disparities will require multilevel, systemic, and sustained interventions.

- A large body of evidence and guidance demonstrates how all stakeholders can play a role in reducing disparities.

Roadmap outlines the current state of the evidence:

- Majority of research focuses on overall improvement of outcomes in populations that are socially at risk (in absolute terms).

- Paucity of health equity-focused implementation science studies.

- Few interventions address how to improve health systems for populations with social risk.

- Few interventions address disparities based on disability, income, social relationships, health literacy, and residential and community context.

- Many interventions have the potential to reduce multiple disparities.
### Collaboration and Partnerships
- Collaboration across health and non-health sectors
- Community and health system linkages
- Build and sustain social capital and social inclusion
- Promotion of public and private policies that advance equity

### Culture of Equity
- Equity is high priority
- Safe and accessible environments for individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Cultural competency
- Advocacy for public and private policies that advance equity

### Structure for Equity
- Capacity and resources to promote equity
- Collection of data to monitor the outcomes of individuals with social risk factors
- Population health management
- Systematic community needs assessments
- Policies and procedures that advance equity
- Transparency, public reporting, and accountability for efforts to advance equity

### Equitable Access to Care
- Availability
- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Convenience

### Equitable High Quality Care
- Person and family centeredness
- Continuous improvements across clinical structure, process, and outcome performance measures stratified by social risk factors
- Use of effective interventions to reduce disparities in health care quality
Incentivize the Reduction of Health Disparities and the Achievement of Health Equity

• The increased and varied use of performance measures offers numerous ways to incentivize the reduction of disparities

• Examples:
  • Accountable care models can include health equity measures that are linked to payment to spur both improvement and innovation.
  • Reporting the results of disparities sensitive and health equity measures can provide transparency as well as help identify and address disparities.
  • Public and private payers can adjust payments to providers based on social risk factors or offer additional payments for primary care or disease management programs (e.g., in-home monitoring of blood pressure).
Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** Collect social risk factor data
- **Recommendation 2:** Use and prioritize stratified health equity outcome measures
- **Recommendation 3:** Prioritize measures in the domains of Equitable Access and Equitable High-Quality Care for accountability purposes
- **Recommendation 4:** Invest in preventative and primary care for patients with social risk factors
- **Recommendation 5:** Redesign payment models to support health equity
Recommendations

- **Recommendation 6:** Link health equity measures to accreditation programs
- **Recommendation 7:** Support outpatient and inpatient services with additional payment for patients with social risk factors
- **Recommendation 8:** Ensure organizations disproportionately serving individuals with social risk can compete in value-based purchasing programs
- **Recommendation 9:** Fund care delivery and payment reform demonstration projects to reduce disparities
- **Recommendation 10:** Assess economic impact of disparities from multiple perspectives
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