

About the Washington State Common Measure Set for Health Care Quality and Cost

WHAT IS THE COMMON MEASURE SET?

The Washington State Common Measure Set for Health Care Quality and Cost is a set of measures that enables a common way of tracking important elements of health and health care performance and is intended to inform public and private health care purchasing. It helps determine how well the health care system is performing and will enable a shared understanding of areas that should be targeted for improvement. The focus of the measures includes access, prevention, acute care and chronic care.

WHO DEVELOPED THE COMMON MEASURE SET?

Based on legislation passed in 2014 (ESHB 2572), a statewide performance measurement committee was appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to oversee creation of the performance measures set. Technical workgroups, which included representatives from health research, medicine, behavioral health, insurance plans, public health, health care practices, consumer groups, minority populations and the business community, researched and recommended health and health care quality measures.

Full results for the Common Measure Set are available on the Washington Health Alliance's Community Checkup website:
www.wacommunitycheckup.org

WHAT DO THE MEASURES FOCUS ON?



ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

Are children and adults visiting a primary care doctor at least once per year?



ACUTE CARE

Are hospitals doing what they can to promote patient safety and the best outcomes for patients?



PREVENTION

Are patients getting recommended health screenings and immunizations they need to help them stay well?



CHRONIC CARE

Are patients with chronic conditions getting care from their doctor that is recommended to help them manage their health?

HOW ARE THE MEASURES COLLECTED AND REPORTED?

The Washington Health Alliance, a private nonprofit organization in the state of Washington dedicated to improving health care transparency, has the responsibility for publishing results for the Common Measure Set.

The Common Measure Set relies on three categories of data to produce results:

- The Washington Health Alliance maintains a robust database that includes health care claims and encounter data and reflects care provided to millions of people in Washington.
- Results for other measures in the Common Measure Set are provided by partner organizations, including the Washington State Hospital Association, the Washington State Department of Health, the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, the Washington State Health Care Authority and the National Committee on Quality Assurance.
- Patient experience results (primary care) are from a survey on patient experience administered by the Center for the Study of Services (CSS) on behalf of the Washington Health Alliance.

IMPROVING CARE, REDUCING VARIATION

Variation in health care delivery among doctors and hospitals is an important signal of poor quality. In a highly functioning health care system, everyone would receive a similar high level of evidence-based care for the same condition. However, we know this is not the case in Washington and elsewhere around the country.

An important first step in reducing variation is measuring it and sharing results to develop a clear understanding of what needs to improve. The Common Measure Set enables a shared way of tracking health and health care performance. The Common Measure Set sends a clear market signal about expected performance and provides an opportunity for everyone to be measured in the same way across the state.

WHY DOES WASHINGTON NEED ITS OWN MEASURE SET?

The Healthier Washington initiative aims to broadly improve health and health care and lower health care costs.

Having broad agreement around a Common Measure Set for Washington helps to focus and align efforts by key stakeholders to address specific opportunity areas in our state. National information provides important guidance and, in fact, the use of nationally agreed upon measures of health care quality is a priority here in Washington. However, it is at the state and community levels where change occurs. We select measures that target and help us address problems here in Washington.

Healthier Washington will transform health care in Washington state so that people experience better health during their lives, receive better care when they need it, and care is more affordable and accessible.

WHY NOW?

It's time to move boldly to capitalize on the momentum of the Healthier Washington initiative as the state and others take concrete steps to move the health care market to better value. We must work together. No single business, hospital or medical group can change the health care market on its own.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE COMMON MEASURE SET

It is expected that the measure set will evolve over time. Because the work is ongoing, the Common Measure Set will be able to flex and adapt to changing conditions to include other priority issues in the future.

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