

June 8, 2020

Blue Cross Waives Reporting Requirements for the Hospital Quality Program due to COVID-19

Dear Provider:

The battle with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is affecting healthcare providers nationwide. To align reporting requirements with the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana is waiving reporting requirements for the first and second quarter 2020 measures in its Hospital Quality Program.

Measures with waived reporting for this timeframe are as follows:

Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI)

As described in the Hospital Quality Program manual, any HAI with an expected infection " <1 " and actual infections of " ≥ 1 " will not be scored. All measures with enough data to calculate a standardized infection ratio will be scored according to the targets listed in the manual.

- Central line-associated bloodstream infections
- Catheter-associated urinary tract infections
- Surgical site infections for colon surgery and hysterectomy
- Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*
- *Clostridium difficile*

Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Rate

As described above, if rates are not reported for the 2019 flu season, the measure will be removed from the total score. If results are reported, but below the threshold to earn full points, the measure will be removed from the total score.

Sepsis

There is not a minimum case for scoring; as such, third and fourth quarter 2020 results will be used for final scoring based on the targets listed in the manual.

-over-

Perinatal Measures

There is not a minimum case for scoring; as such, third and fourth quarter 2020 results will be used for final scoring based on the targets listed in the manual

Patient Experience

Patient Experience Surveys, such as the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS), may not be submitted to CMS during this time. As outlined in the Hospital Quality Program manual, the most recently available data from Hospital Compare in April 2021 will be utilized for final scoring. Alternatively, providers may still be able to survey patients using their vendor. Results from the vendor for discharges between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020, may be submitted to Blue Cross by April 30, 2021, if unavailable on Hospital Compare. Final scoring will be based on the targets listed in the manual.

Leapfrog Hospital Survey

The Leapfrog Group has also reduced the reporting requirements for the 2020 Hospital Survey. Hospitals may maintain their 2019 survey results in lieu of reporting to the 2020 Leapfrog Hospital survey. However, hospitals choosing to submit the 2020 Leapfrog Hospital Survey must complete the five sections of the survey that constitute Leapfrog's minimum requirements for submission. Additional survey sections will be publicly reported as "Not Available" due to COVID-19. Submission is also extended to August 31, 2020, and survey results will be published in September 2020. The Leapfrog Survey minimum requirement for submission will meet the requirement for full points.

All other measures will be scored as defined in the program manual. If any measure is not applicable to a specific facility, the denominator is adjusted to include only those measures that are applicable.

Be sure to visit our COVID-19 Provider Resources page, where you can easily access our latest provider communications. Go to www.BCBSLA.com/providers, then click on the "COVID-19 Provider Resources" link at the top of the page. We will continue to add updated information to this page as it develops.

Thank you for working with us to serve our members, especially during this time of uncertainty. We value you as a key part of our provider networks and the services you bring to our members—your patients.

Sincerely,



Hiral Arges

VP, Provider Relations and Contracting
Network Administration

HA/bg