

March 22, 2020

CMS Grants Blanket Exceptions and Extensions Across Its Quality Measurement Programs

In response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) today it is granting a range of data reporting exceptions and extensions across its quality reporting and value-based payment programs for hospitals, post-acute care facilities and clinicians. Specifically:

- CMS is making it optional to submit data from the 4th quarter of 2019 (October through December), as well as the first two quarters of 2020 (January through March, and April through June); and
- CMS will not use data from Jan. 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 to calculate performance in its quality reporting and value-based purchasing programs.

CMS indicates these policy changes are intended to relieve provider data reporting burden during this emergency, and to ensure it does not tie provider performance or payment to a time period that does not represent their true quality performance. CMS says it will continue to monitor the impact of the situation and assess additional options for providing relief.

CMS’s specific quality measurement program exception and extension policies are outlined in the tables below.

If you have further questions, please contact Akin Demehin, AHA director of policy, at ademehin@aha.org.

Hospital and Other Facility Quality Reporting / Payment Programs

Programs	2019 Data Submission	2020 Data Submission
Hospital-Acquired Condition Reduction Program	Deadlines for October 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019 (Q4) data submission optional.	CMS will not count data from January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 (Q1-Q2) for performance or payment programs. Data <u>does not</u> need to be submitted to CMS for this time period. * For the <i>Hospital-Acquired Condition Reduction Program</i> and the <i>Hospital</i>
Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program	If Q4 is submitted, it will be used to calculate the 2019 performance and payment (where appropriate). If data for Q4 is unable to be submitted, the	
Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program		

Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program	2019 performance will be calculated based on data from January 1, 2019 – September 30, 2019 (Q1-Q3) and available data.	<i>Value-Based Purchasing Program</i> , if data from January 1, 2020 – March 31, 2020 (Q1) is submitted, it will be used for scoring in the program (where appropriate).
Hospital Value-Based Purchasing Program		
Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Quality Reporting Program		
PPS-Exempt Cancer Hospital Quality Reporting Program		
Promoting Interoperability Program for Eligible Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals		
Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting Program		
CrownWeb National ESRD Patient Registry and Quality Measure Reporting System		
End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Quality Incentive Program		

Post-Acute Care Quality Reporting / Payment Programs

Programs	2019 Data Submission	2020 Data Submission
Home Health Quality Reporting Program	Deadlines for October 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019 (Q4) data submission optional. If Q4 is submitted, it will be used to calculate the 2019 performance and payment (where appropriate).	Data from January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 (Q1-Q2) <u>does not</u> need to be submitted to CMS for purposes of complying with quality reporting program requirements.
Hospice Quality Reporting Program		
Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Quality Reporting Program		
Long Term Care Hospital Quality Reporting Program		
Skilled Nursing Facility Quality Reporting Program		
Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing Program		<p><i>Home Health and Hospice Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey data from January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020 (Q1-Q3) does not need to be submitted to CMS.</i></p> <p>For the <i>Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Value-Based Purchasing Program</i>, qualifying claims will be excluded from the claims-based SNF 30-Day All-Cause Readmission Measure (SNFRM; NQF #2510) calculation for Q1-Q2.</p>

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Clinician Quality Payment Program and Medicare Shared Savings Program

Program	2019 Data Submission	2020 Data Submission
Quality Payment Program – Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS)	Deadline extended from March 31, 2020 to April 30, 2020. MIPS eligible clinicians who have not submitted any MIPS data by April 30, 2020 will qualify for the automatic	CMS is evaluating options for providing relief around participation and data submission for 2020.
Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs)	extreme and uncontrollable circumstances policy and will receive a neutral payment adjustment for the 2021 MIPS payment year.	