

## CONFERENCE SUMMARY

### *Creating Physician Clinical Performance Measure Functionality Within Electronic Health Record Systems*

A conference co-sponsored by the American Medical Association (AMA) and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)

June 22, 2006

#### **Conference Overview**

The AMA and NCQA, working with the Executive Committee of the Health Information Management and Information Systems Society (HIMSS) Electronic Health Record Vendors Association (EHRVA), identified vendors to meet with the conference co-sponsors and other key leaders of several national health care organizations, including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the Certification Commission on Health Information Technology (CCHIT), eHealth Initiative (eHI), and the National Quality Forum (NQF). The conference was designed to provide information about the availability of physician-level performance measures and the technical specifications required to integrate physician-level measures into EHRS vendor products.

#### **Conference Objectives**

- To convene EHRS vendors — especially those vendors whose products are marketed primarily to ambulatory practice settings — with measures developers and implementers to provide consistent and timely information about physician performance measures data collection, extraction, analysis, and reporting needs and requirements
- To provide information about the availability of physician-level performance measures and about where and how to access complete technical specifications required to integrate physician-level performance measures into vendor products
- To share results of conference sponsors' pilot tests and review lessons learned from early implementation and demonstration projects
- To discuss challenges related to disparate data standards, electronic performance measures data submission, and data aggregation
- To determine if the provided specification information adequately meets vendors' needs and requirements for implementing and integrating physician-level measures in their EHRS products and, if not, precisely identify information that is still needed
- Review of Certification Commission for Health Information Technology (CCHIT) requirements of EHRS vendors in relation to performance measurement
- Identify strategies for creating ongoing interactions between measure developers and vendors as they map the clinical and technical specifications of physician-level performance measures to their existing data field definitions and to explore opportunities for new and/or revised measures

that take full advantage of electronic health records

**Conference participants discussed the following issues:**

*Standardization of performance measures*

- Standardized clinical performance measures will make it easier and more efficient for vendors to incorporate functionality
- Duplicative efforts will only slow down progress

*Technical barriers to adding performance measure functionality*

- Required data elements not currently in many EHRS should be identified and fields added
- Capturing data currently contained in text fields will be very difficult
- Measures exclusions, particularly those involving time or context parameters, are important but add complexity
- Multiple approaches of identifying denominator exclusions is critical
- The method of aggregation of longitudinal data should be addressed
- Measure specifications should be standardized in formats other than Word, Excel, and PDF
- Measure specifications should accommodate coordination with decision support functionality

*Performance measure functionality and practice workflow*

- Performance measure functionality should not impede efficient practice workflow
- Resolving data model issues and how data will be structured are key
- The methods of “encoding judgment” in relation to findings and symptoms should be addressed
- How EHR “problem lists” and “medication lists” are maintained, updated and archived has a significant impact on the ability to report performance measures in a comparable way across EHRS products
- Accurate and complete clinical information for generating performance measures should be a “by product” of EHRS products

*Vendors participation in performance measure development process*

- Measure integration timeframes may be shortened if vendors have input on measure rollout schedule
- Measure rollout should be prioritized based on the value of the data over the amount of work it takes to capture that data
- Coordinating vendor product development cycles with performance measure development and maintenance processes and coordinating these cycles with CMS timelines will be key to success
- A roadmap, model, and architecture are needed

*Data Aggregation*

- Vendor products will need to include performance measures calculation and reporting functions within the products, as well as to be able to export data for calculation and reporting after data are exported from a given product to a data warehouse
- There is a desire for reporting export format to be standardized

**Conference participants agreed to convene again. The conference co-sponsors will distribute conference notes broadly and determine the appropriate next steps.**