



**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**

# **Electronic Clinical Quality Measure (eCQM) Naming and Terminology Guide**

**Version 1.12**

**April 22, 2024**

## Record of Changes

Version	Date	Author / Owner	Description of Change
1.0	March 16, 2018	CMS	Version 1.0 for publication
1.1	May 23, 2018	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of Meaningful Measures: eCQM Elements Published in Tables</li> <li>• Clarification on program-specific naming requirements for rulemaking:- Format for Listing eCQMs by Reporting / Performance Year</li> <li>• EP and EC</li> </ul>
1.2	July 18, 2018	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table 4, NQF number is now listed as a mandatory publication element</li> </ul>
1.3	January 7, 2019	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Section 2.3 - Requirement of CMS eCQM ID in machine readable format</li> </ul>
1.4	June 24, 2019	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated File Formats 2.6 and file names in Tables 6 and 7</li> </ul>
1.5	July 23, 2020	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated to include Section 2.7 covering correct eCQM DERep</li> </ul>
1.6	February 16, 2021	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated CMS definition of eCQM</li> <li>• Updated year references in tables</li> </ul>
1.7	October 26, 2021	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated with file format versioning guidance</li> </ul>
1.8	January 4, 2022	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removed references to Eligible Professional and updated corresponding file naming convention for eCQM Annual Update</li> </ul>
1.9	June 28, 2022	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added formats for eCQM and supporting files published outside of eCQM Annual Update in Table 7</li> <li>• Added additional guidance for Measure-specific eCQM File Formats in Table 6</li> </ul>
1.10	January 23, 2023	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added guidance on the preferred use of 'health care' rather than 'healthcare'</li> </ul>

Version	Date	Author / Owner	Description of Change
1.11	October 23, 2023	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated stakeholder to interested party</li><li>• Clarified date naming convention for eCQM Annual Update files</li><li>• Updated NQF to CBE</li><li>• Updated Pre-Rulemaking to Program Candidate</li><li>• Updated years and versions within examples and provided OQR examples</li></ul>
1.12	April 22, 2024	CMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated naming convention for AU resource and eCQM files</li><li>• Added section on corrections of files within zips</li></ul>

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# 1 Introduction – Dos and Don'ts for Referencing eCQMs

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed this terminology document to provide guidance for common words, phrases, technical terms, and file formats used in conjunction with electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs).

eCQMs quantify and measure aspects of quality in our health care system by measuring the performance of hospitals, clinicians, and other measured entities who provide health care services.

Whenever possible, the guidance in this document should inform the publication of eCQMs and supporting materials by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies and other federal health partners using eCQMs in their quality programs. eCQM publication vehicles include, but are not limited to:

- Proposed and final rules
- Public Comment webpages
- Websites
- eCQMs and supporting files
- Communications
- Education and outreach materials

Terminology alignment is important to advancing the CMS goal of reducing burden on interested parties implementing eCQMs. Use this terminology guide to promote clear and consistent publication of eCQM terms.

**Note:** National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has an extensive [Document Drafting Handbook](#) addressing publication requirements for all U.S. government agencies. If there are any differences between this terminology document and the Document Drafting Handbook, the NARA document overrules. Additionally, CMS requests the use of 'health care' rather than 'healthcare' in CMS communications.

## 2 General eCQM Terminology

### 2.1 Electronic Clinical Quality Measure

An electronic clinical quality measure (eCQM) is a measure specified in a standard electronic format that uses data electronically extracted from electronic health records (EHR) and/or health information technology (IT) systems to measure the quality of health care provided. eCQMs include data elements, logic, and definitions in a Health Level Seven International® (HL7®) standard, which represent a clinical quality measure in an electronic document that can be captured, stored, shared, and read electronically.

Table 1 presents correct and incorrect references for eCQMs.

**Table 1. eCQM References**

Correct eCQM Reference	Incorrect eCQM Reference	Notes
eCQM	eMeasure	Term is no longer in use
eCQM	CQM or Clinical Quality Measure	Should not be used to describe an eCQM
eCQM	Electronic Health Data	Should not be used to describe an eCQM

## 2.2 CMS eCQM Identifier

The CMS eCQM identifier is a unique number with a version number to indicate the published version of the eCQM. The correct terminology for the unique identifier is **CMS eCQM ID**. Table 2 shows the correct and incorrect eCQM ID references.

**Table 2. eCQM ID References**

Correct eCQM ID Reference	Incorrect eCQM ID Reference	Notes
CMS eCQM ID	CMS ID	Information on eCQM naming conventions is found on the <a href="#">eCQM page</a> of the electronic Clinical Quality Improvement (eCQI) Resource Center
CMS eCQM ID	eCQM ID	N/A
CMS eCQM ID	CMS eMeasure ID	N/A
CMS eCQM ID	CMS Measure ID	N/A

## 2.3 Use of CMS eCQM Identifiers

There are multiple private and public references identifiers for eCQMs, such as the Consensus-Based Entity (CBE) ID, the CMIT Measure ID, the Measure Set (MS) ID, and the Program ID. The CMS eCQM ID should always be published when referring to eCQMs used in federal quality reporting programs. Whenever possible, refrain from creating new eCQM reference identifiers and use the CMS eCQM ID. Table 3 presents the correct and incorrect eCQM identifiers.

**Table 3. Use of eCQM Identifiers**

Correct Use	Incorrect Use	Notes
Language or a table consisting of: CMS eCQM ID, CMIT Measure ID, Measure Set ID, Program ID	Language or a table consisting only of: CMIT Measure ID, Measure Set ID, Program ID	Do not omit CMS eCQM ID

Note: The CMS eCQM ID is required to be present in a machine-readable format when sending CMS eCQM ID information to any CMS website, e.g., eCQI Resource Center, for posting.

## 2.4 eCQM Elements Published in Tables

There are many publication elements that may be published in conjunction with eCQMs. These elements include, but are not limited to:

- Full eCQM Title
- Short eCQM Title
- CMS eCQM ID
- Program/Quality ID
- CMIT Measure ID
- CBE ID
- **Cascade of Meaningful Measures Priority and/or Goal**
- Measure Set ID
- Measure Type
- Steward
- Description
- Initial Population
- Numerator
- Denominator

Rules and/or educational materials may require, recommend, or make optional the elements noted in Table 4 when publishing tables with eCQMs. CMS recommends the first column contain the CMS eCQM ID and the second column include the full eCQM title.

**Table 4. eCQM Publication Elements**

Required Elements	Optional Elements
CMS eCQM ID	Program/Quality ID
Full eCQM Title	Short eCQM Title
CBE ID, when endorsed and Not Applicable if not endorsed	CMIT Measure ID
	Measure Set ID
	Measure Type
	Steward
	Description
	Initial Population
	Numerator
	Denominator
	Cascade of Meaningful Measures Priority and Goal

## 2.5 Format for Listing eCQMs by Reporting/Performance Year

The format for listing the eCQMs for quality reporting for eligible hospitals (EHs), Outpatient Quality Reporting (OQR), and/or eligible clinicians (ECs) should include a reference to the reporting or performance period. Use the format: **{Year} {Performance or Reporting} Period {Eligible Party} eCQM**.

Please note eligible clinician and eligible hospital should only be abbreviated when referenced in filenames, pick lists, and publication tables that are character limited. Table 5 presents the correct and incorrect formats for eCQM reporting/performance year references.

**Table 5. eCQM Reporting/Performance Year References**

Correct Format	Incorrect Format	Notes
2024 Performance Period Eligible Clinician eCQMs Or if space is limited, 2024 Performance Period EC eCQMs	eCQMs for eReporting for the 2024 Reporting Period	N/A
2024 Reporting Period Eligible Hospital and Critical Access Hospital eCQMs Or, if space is limited, 2024 Reporting Period EH eCQMs	2024 eCQMs	N/A



Correct Format	Incorrect Format	Notes
2024 Reporting Period Outpatient Quality Reporting eCQMs  Or, if space is limited, 2024 Reporting Period OQR eCQMs	2024 eCQMs	N/A

## 2.6 eCQM File Formats and Versioning

Technical eCQM filenames are machine-readable and must remain consistent from update to update to ensure easy consumption and comparison by various tools, resources, and EHRs. Use the filename formats noted in Table 6 and Table 7 when naming and publishing eCQMs and supporting materials.

**Table 6. Measure-specific eCQM File Formats**

File Type	Filename Standard	Filename Example
HyperText Markup Language (HTML)	{measure-id}.html	CMS22v12.html
Extensible Markup Language (XML)	{measure-id}.xml	CMS22v12.xml
Zip	{measure-id}.zip	CMS22v12.zip
Technical Release Notes (TRN)	{measure-id}-TRN.xlsx	CMS22v12-TRN.xlsx
eCQM Flows	{measure-id}-eCQMFlow.pdf	CMS22v12-eCQMFlow.pdf
Clinical Quality Language (CQL)	{CQLLibrary}-{CQLLibraryVersion}.cql	MyLibrary-1.0.0.cql
File Type	Filename with Updated Version	Filename Example with Updated Version
HTML	{measure-id}.html	CMS22v12.html
XML	{measure-id}.xml	CMS22v12.xml
Zip	{measure-id}-vX.zip	CMS22v12-v2.zip
Technical Release Notes	{measure-id}-TRN-vX.xlsx	CMS22v12-TRN-v2.xlsx
CQL	{CQLLibrary}-{CQLLibraryVersion}.cql	MyLibrary-1.0.0.cql or MyLibrary-1.0.1.cql (to reflect the actual cql)

Measure developers are to submit measure materials files to the eCQI Resource Center for eCQM Annual Update publication without a version indicator. A version indicator such as v2, v3, v4, etc. is only used when a file is updated after the current corresponding Annual Update is published and before the next Annual Update is published. Note: the version indicator is for the name of the updated specification zip files and resource file names only.

Table 7. eCQM Materials File Formats

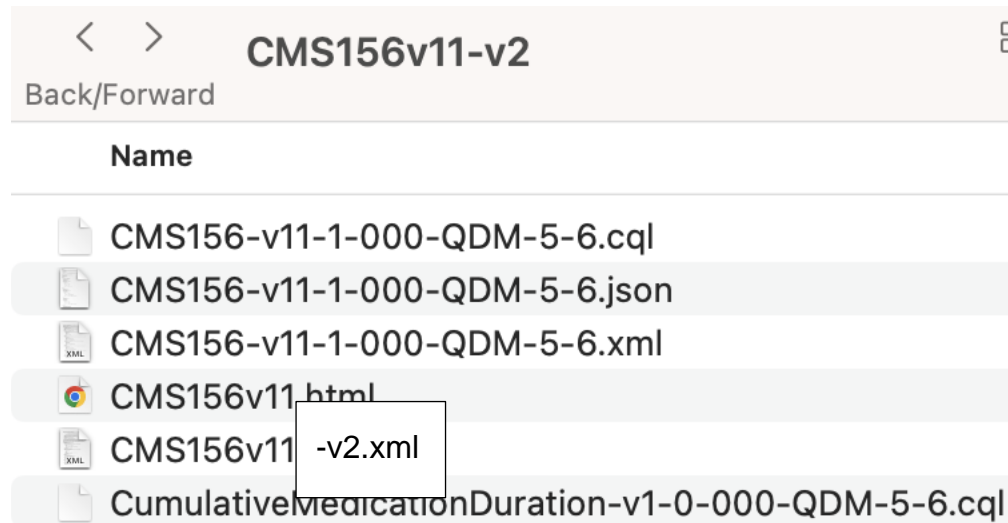
File Type	Filename Standard	Filename Example
Measures Package	YEAR-EH-CAH-eCQM.zip	2025-EH-CAH-eCQM.zip
	YEAR-EC-eCQM.zip	2025-EC-eCQM.zip
	YEAR-OQR-eCQM.zip	2025-OQR-eCQM.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-ProgramCandidate-eCQM.zip	2025-EH-CAH-ProgramCandidate-eCQM.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Hybrid-eCQM.zip	2025-EH-CAH-Hybrid-eCQM.zip
Measures Package – Correction	YEAR-EH-CAH-eCQM-v2.zip	2025-EH-CAH-eCQM-v2.zip
	YEAR-EC-eCQM-v2.zip	2025-EC-eCQM-v2.zip
	YEAR-OQR-eCQM-v2.zip	2025-OQR-eCQM-v2.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-ProgramCandidate-eCQM-v2.zip	2025-EH-CAH-ProgramCandidate-eCQM-v2.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Hybrid-eCQM-v2.zip	2025-EH-CAH-Hybrid-eCQM-v2.zip
Measures Table	YEAR-EH-CAH-MeasuresTable.pdf	2025-EH-CAH-MeasuresTable.pdf
	YEAR-EC-MeasuresTable.pdf	2025-EC-MeasuresTable.pdf
	YEAR-OQR-MeasuresTable.pdf	2025-OQR-MeasuresTable.pdf
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Hybrid-MeasuresTable.pdf	2025-EH-CAH-Hybrid-MeasuresTable.pdf
Measures Table – Correction	YEAR-EH-CAH-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf	2025-EH-CAH-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf
	YEAR-EC-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf	2025-EC-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf
	YEAR-OQR-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf	2025-OQR-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Hybrid-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf	2025-EH-CAH-Hybrid-MeasuresTable-v2.pdf

File Type	Filename Standard	Filename Example
Measure(s) Value Set File (only used when not included in VSAC Annual Update downloadables)	YEAR-EH-CAH-ProgramCandidate-Valueset-{measure-id}.zip	2025-EH-CAH-ProgramCandidate-Valueset-CMS999.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Valueset-{measure-id}.zip	2025-EH-CAH-Valueset-CMS999.zip
	YEAR-EC-Valueset-{measure-id}.zip	2025-EC-Valueset-CMS999.zip
	YEAR-OQR-Valueset-{measure-id}.zip	2025-OQR-Valueset-CMS999.zip
Technical Release Notes	YEAR-EH-CAH-TRN.zip	2025-EH-CAH-TRN.zip
	YEAR-EC-TRN.zip	2025-EC-TRN.zip
	YEAR-OQR-TRN.zip	2025-OQR-TRN.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Hybrid-TRN.zip	2025-EH-CAH-Hybrid-TRN.zip
Technical Release Notes – Correction	YEAR-EH-CAH-TRN-v2.zip	2025-EH-CAH-TRN-v2.zip
	YEAR-EH-CAH-Hybrid-TRN-v2.zip	2025-EH-CAH-Hybrid-TRN-v2.zip
	YEAR-EC-TRN-v2.zip	2025-EC-TRN-v2.zip
	YEAR-OQR-TRN-v2.zip	2025-OQR-TRN-v2.zip
MAT Global Common Library Technical Release Notes	YEAR-MAT-GCL-TRN.zip	2025-MAT-GCL-TRN.zip
MAT Global Common Library Technical Release Notes - Correction	YEAR-MAT-GCL-TRN-v2.zip	2025-MAT-GCL-TRN-v2.zip

Note: The filename year is to reflect the reporting/performance year the file contents are to be used for.

## 2.7 Corrections to Files within Zip Files

If the content of a published zip file needs correcting, measure developers are to include an indicator of the correction on the components of the file which were corrected. Ex: CMS15611-v2.zip XML corrected.



## 2.8 eCQM Data Element Repository (DERep)

The eCQM Data Element Repository (DERep) provides additional clarification for all the data elements associated with published eCQMs used in CMS quality reporting programs as well as the definitions and clinical focus for each data element. There are other data element repositories in use by CMS and other federal health agencies. Be sure to use **eCQM** whenever referencing the eCQM DERep. Table 8 presents the correct and incorrect references for the eCQM Data Element Repository.

**Table 8. eCQM Data Element Repository (DERep) References**

Correct eCQM Reference	Incorrect eCQM Reference	Notes
eCQM Data Element Repository	Data Element Repository	Should not be used without eCQM precursor
eCQM DERep	DERep	Should not be used without eCQM precursor

## 3 Additional Publishing Information

Additional publication guidance and Federal Plain Language Guidelines are available at [PlainLanguage.gov](https://www.plainlanguage.gov).

Other helpful resources include:

- [\*APA Style\*](#)
- [\*The Elements of Style\*](#) (Strunk & White)
- The [\*Chicago Manual of Style Online\*](#)

U.S. government resources include:

- [\*Document Drafting Handbook\*](#)
- [\*The Government Printing Office Style Manual\*](#)

## 4 Additional Information on eCQMs

The [eCQI Resource Center](#) provides additional information on eCQMs.

## 5 Updates to This Guide

The eCQM Governance Group and CMS Measures Group reviews this guide annually and provides updates if significant changes are warranted.

Please direct suggestions for revisions to [ecqm-governance@icf.com](mailto:ecqm-governance@icf.com).

## Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>CAH</b>	Critical Access Hospital
<b>CMIT</b>	CMS Measures Inventory Tool
<b>CBE</b>	Consensus-based Entity
<b>CMS</b>	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
<b>CQL</b>	Clinical Quality Language
<b>DERep</b>	Data Element Repository
<b>eCQI</b>	Electronic Clinical Quality Improvement
<b>eCQM</b>	Electronic Clinical Quality Measure
<b>EC</b>	Eligible Clinician
<b>EH</b>	Eligible Hospital
<b>EHR</b>	Electronic Health Record
<b>HHS</b>	Department of Health and Human Services
<b>HL7</b>	Health Level Seven International
<b>HTML</b>	HyperText Markup Language
<b>ID</b>	Identifier
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>MS</b>	Measure Set
<b>NARA</b>	National Archives and Records Administration
<b>OQR</b>	Outpatient Quality Reporting
<b>TRN</b>	Technical Release Note
<b>VSAC</b>	Value Set Authority Center
<b>XML</b>	Extensible Markup Language