

# Electronic Clinical Quality Measure (eCQM) Annual Update Implementation Checklist

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires an eligible professional (EP), eligible clinician, eligible hospital (EH) or critical access hospital (CAH) to use the most current version of the eCQMs for quality reporting programs.

The Preparation and Implementation Checklists assume that a health care practice/organization has determined which measures to report on. It provides the necessary technical steps health information technology (IT) developers, implementers and health care organizations must take to update their systems and processes with the eCQM Annual Update for the upcoming reporting and performance periods. The most recent eCQM Annual Update should be applied to your system for use in CMS electronic quality reporting.

## Preparation Checklist

- 1) Sign up for a Unified Medical Language System (UMLS) account

[This account](#) will allow you to access the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) Value Set Authority Center (VSAC) to view all codes included in eCQM value sets.

- 2) Sign up for a JIRA account

Create an account by going to the [ONC Project Tracking System \(Jira\)](#) website and selecting the link in the upper right hand of the website to [Create an Account](#). Once you have an account, the ONC Project Tracking System has the link to allow you to use your account to obtain feedback on eCQM implementation questions by creating an issue ticket in the ONC Project Tracking System. Key topic areas include the eCQM Issue Tracker, eCQM Known Issues Tracker, Quality Data Model (QDM) Issue Tracker, Clinical Quality Language (CQL) Issue Tracker, Quality Reporting Document Architecture (QRDA) Issue Tracker, Bonnie and MAT Issue Tracker, and Cypress Issue Tracker.

- 3) Sign up for eCQM page change notifications on the eCQI Resource Center

Sign up for an [eCQI Resource Center account](#) and subscribe to the [Eligible Professional/Eligible Clinician](#) and/or [Eligible Hospital/Critical Access Hospital](#) pages by selecting 'Receive updates on this topic' at the top of the page. This will provide you with an email alert when the EP/EC or EH/CAH page has been updated.

- 4) Review the code versions used in the Annual Update

For example, SNOMED CT 2019-09, by reviewing the [eCQM Pre-Publication document](#) and the [VSAC download page](#).

- Work with your coding department and health IT vendor to ensure your systems have been updated to the latest code versions.
- Some value sets contain "legacy codes." These codes will be inactive in the current code system version but will be considered active in one of the prior code system versions noted in the file.

- 5) Review the standards, tools, and documents used in the Annual Update

Work with your health IT vendor to ensure your systems are using updated technical standards and testing tools found in the [eCQM Pre-Publication document](#) and [eCQM Standards and Tools versions table](#).

## Implementation Checklist

- 1) Access the appropriate eCQM Annual Update

[Eligible Professionals/Eligible Clinicians](#) or [Eligible Hospitals/Critical Access Hospital](#)

1. Review the updated eQMs used in CMS quality programs for the current reporting/performance period in the sortable table on the [Eligible Hospital/Critical Access Hospital](#) or [Eligible Professional/Eligible Clinician](#) webpages.
  - Read and verify if the Telehealth guidance for Eligible Professionals/Eligible Clinicians for [2020](#) and [2021](#) quality reporting periods affects your reporting.
2. Download the eQM annual update zip files and corresponding implementation resources on the [Eligible Hospital/Critical Access Hospital](#) or [Eligible Professional/Eligible Clinician](#) webpages.
- 2) Secure detailed information about each measure
  1. Click into an eQM on the online table to view detailed human-readable information on the measure.
  2. Download and open zip files for the individual eQMs your organization uses.
  3. Open the Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) document that contains the measure specification description.
  4. Review Health Quality Measure Format (HQMF) document (including specific reading instructions).
  5. Reference eQM data elements for each measure in the eQM Data Element Repository (DERep).
    1. Navigate to the [DERep](#).
    2. Filter on EP/EC eQMs or EH/CAHs eQMs.
    3. Select eQM of interest.
    4. Review data elements used by eQM to obtain additional information for use when implementing measure.
- 3) Download value sets

Download the corresponding annual update value sets and Binding Parameter Specification (BPS) from NLM's [VSAC](#) using your UMLS® license log in.

  1. eQM value set files with their associated data types and attributes and the BPS are available on the Download tab at the VSAC website under the CMS eQM Value Sets section.
  2. Review the BPS and value sets to track retired code lists and confirm your electronic health record is ready to support the most current eQM release.
- 4) Prepare to implement the updates by understanding changes to the eQM
  1. Perform a Gap Analysis
    1. Review updated value sets.
  2. Read the Technical Release Notes. The Technical Release Notes provide an overview of technical changes, e.g., logic and terminology to each eQM. Identify the updates that require action on your part such as updating diagnosis codes and/or data fields available in your EHR or an end user's workflow.
  3. Read the eQM Logic and Implementation Guidance. This guidance provides general logic and implementation guidance along with detailed information on topics such as measure versioning and time interval calculations.
  4. Define what system requirements are needed to implement the update.
  5. Consider potential workflow impacts.
  6. Compile a list of system requirements across the measures the organization will report, as well as overall workflow impacts.
  7. Implement system changes to support data capture for the updated measures.
  8. Educate clinicians on changes to data entry or workflow, if any.
- 5) Prepare to report the updated eQMs
  1. Review the [QRDA Reference and Implementation Guides](#) for eQMs.

6) Reach out for help

Visit the [Contact Us](#) page.

Send suggestions for improving this checklist to the eCQI Resource Center to [ecqi-resource-center@hhs.gov](mailto:ecqi-resource-center@hhs.gov).

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