



**Pioneers in Quality:
Electronic Clinical Quality Measure (eCQM) Clinical Quality Language (CQL) Basics
Webinar for Hospitals
November 29, 2018
Q & A Document**

QUESTION 1: Will there be a copy of the slides and a recording available?

A: A webinar replay link, and the slide presentations will be available on The Joint Commission website within approximately 30 business days of the webinar at

https://www.jointcommission.org/topics/pioneers_in_quality.aspx.

QUESTION 2: If we signed in by our name / via as guest as directed, how to receive the CE units?

A: CE/CME/CEU credits are available for the live audio only. Credits will not be available for webinar replays. To claim credits, you **must** have:

- Individually registered for the webinar through The Joint Commission website.
- Listened to the webinar in its entirety. Only those listening live on the day of the call will be eligible to receive credit. This is an educational program being offered exclusively to Joint Commission-accredited organizations.
- Completed a post-program evaluation/attestation. A link to the post-program evaluation/attestation will be sent to your registered email 24-48 hours after the webinar. After completion of the survey, you will receive a printable certificate available to download. Please note: The survey will close approximately 2 weeks after the "live" webinar.

QUESTION 3: Will there be a transcript of the presentation as well?

A: The transcript will be available on The Joint Commission website within approximately 30 business days of the webinar at https://www.jointcommission.org/topics/pioneers_in_quality.aspx

QUESTION 4: When is the next webinar in this series?

A: The Pioneers in Quality CQL basics webinar presented today kicked off our six-webinar Pioneers in Quality Expert to Expert series. The next Pioneers in Quality Expert to Expert series will be held December 11, 2018 with five upcoming sessions scheduled. Each one-hour session is dedicated to specific measures and specifically the new CQL expression language. Sessions will begin with a comprehensive review of the measure logic, followed by a discussion of common questions and issues.

Information on the Pioneers in Quality Expert to Expert series with dates and registration links is available at: https://www.jointcommission.org/piq_expert_to_expert_series/

QUESTION 5: How can one subscribe to notifications of these upcoming CQL webinars?

A: Information on the Pioneers in Quality Expert to Expert series with dates and registration links is available at: https://www.jointcommission.org/piq_expert_to_expert_series/. Anyone who has previously registered for any Pioneers in Quality session will receive the email invitation to registration. You can also find upcoming CQL events and other related webinars and news items on the Electronic Clinical Quality Improvement (eCQI) Resource Center at <https://ecqi.healthit.gov/>.

QUESTION 6: Is Union the same as OR?

A: "union" is conceptually the same as "or" but serves a different purpose in CQL. "union" works on lists of elements, whereas "or" works on "Yes or No" values. For example, if I have two lists of encounters, I can use union to get a single list with the unique encounters from both lists. But if I have criteria, like "Patient is 18 or over" and "Patient is male", I can use "or" to combine them so that the result is true if either condition is true.

QUESTION 7: Please explain what "Return" means.

A: A query is an expression that takes a "source" as input, applies some operations such as filtering and sorting, and returns the result. Without a "return" clause, a query will return the same type of elements that are present in the "source". The "return" allows you to change what is returned for each element in the "source". For example, if I have a query that takes a list of encounters, without a return the result will also be a list of encounters. By using "return," I can say "return LengthInDays(Encounter.relevantPeriod)" and I'll get a list of numbers, where each number represents the length in days for each encounter in the source.

QUESTION 8: CMS 160, CMS 159 have introduced a new screening tool PHQ-9M in the definition of the specification and not included in the CQL of the measure logic, is this an optional tool added, if so the measure is stratified and why?

A: For inquiries about the content of Electronic Clinician and Electronic Professional eCQMs, please submit your question to the Electronic Clinical Quality Measure (eCQM) Issue Tracker in JIRA: <https://oncprojectracking.healthit.gov/support/projects/CQM/summary>.

QUESTION 9: Are healthcare facilities using or planning to use this language to standardize internal metrics?

A: The specifications would certainly support defining healthcare system- or facility-specific quality measures, but whether individual institutions and organizations decide to use them for that purpose is of course up to them.

QUESTION 10: Can you explain the .id and the exclamation point?

A: The ".id" is an `_attribute_` reference, it's accessing the "id" attribute of the data element. The exclamation point together with the equal sign ("!=") is the symbol for inequality ("<>" in many expression syntaxes).

QUESTION 11: In Coalesce function, how the expressions are ordered, is there any logic to it? In the example, relevant period comes before author datetime. Any other functions related to coalesce?

A: The Coalesce function takes expressions in the order in which they are listed in the expression. A relevant period typically goes first, and if not found, then coalesce will pick up an author date/time.

QUESTION 12: Following up on the Coalesce question, what if I want to include an encounter? For example, ["Encounter, Performed": "Comfort Measures Encounter"]CME, can I include it into the

parentheses? Then it will be “Coalesce(ComfortMeasures.start of relevantperiod, ComfortMeasures.authordatetime, CME.start of relevantperiod)?

A: To include a reference to an element of some encounter in the Coalesce, you would need to introduce a `_source_` into the query that ranged over the encounters you wanted to use. You could do this using a "with", for example, to bring in related encounters, and then you could reference elements of each encounter within the Coalesce.

QUESTION 13: Can you confirm that 2018 eCQM data submitted in 2019 will not have to use CQL?

A: CQL expression language will start with discharges beginning Jan 1, 2019. Both CMS and The Joint Commission will move from the previous quality data model (QDM) logic expression language to CQL for the 2019 reporting period.

QUESTION 14: What is the best reference for those interested in writing eCQMs (CQL user guide)? Are there any type of developer training materials?

A: CMS hosts monthly “Cooking with CQL” webinar sessions that are focused on how to use CQL to write measures with CQL logic. You can find information on that at the [eCQI Resource Center](#). The [CQL Style Guide](#) is also available at the eCQI Resource Center. In addition, The Joint Commission’s website also has links on the Pioneers in Quality page for events that we host and collaborate on with CMS.