

OCS QAPI Snapshot – Moving Forward with Strategic Quality Management

How do we know QAPI Snapshot has the right measures?

There is no single set of “right” measures. The QAPI CoP does not specify measures and CMS has not identified hospice measures for public reporting. With input from industry leaders – agency executives and quality managers, state and national association directors, information system vendors and consultants – OCS chose the specific QAPI Snapshot measures to

- ▶ address clinical and non-clinical organizational areas
- ▶ support emerging national quality initiatives, including NHPCO Quality Partners and the NQF Framework and Preferred Practices for quality palliative and hospice care
- ▶ inform strategic and tactical decision-making for all hospices
- ▶ be accessible *now* for most hospices,
- ▶ utilize existing standard data definitions, where possible.

OCS continuously monitors the major quality initiatives to identify opportunities to improve the measure set. Carefully selected measures may be added annually, based on new industry developments and participant input.

Will we be required to do benchmarking?

There is no explicit requirement in the QAPI CoP to do benchmarking. However, it does require you to be improving important areas with the greatest opportunities. Without a quantitative comparison to performance and practices outside your organization, you can not be confident that you are working on the truly important projects. JCAHO accreditation does demand benchmarking as part of the performance improvement requirements.

How does this fit with NHPCO's Quality Partners initiative?

QAPI Snapshot was designed to support the Quality Partners initiative. The set of measures was selected with input from NHPCO explicitly to address all ten NHPCO-defined components of quality. The Quality Partners online self-assessment tools, due to be available to members in March, will enable you to assess your practices in managing each component of quality. You will be able to see how your practices address specific aspects of the NHPCO standards. The self-assessments will be valuable to your ongoing improvement as a quality organization. QAPI snapshot's comparative review of your *performance* complements the self-assessment of your *practices*.

I already do the NHPCO National Data Set and FEHC ... Why add QAPI Snapshot?

Both NHPCO programs are valuable, and hospices are encouraged to participate in them. The National Data Set (NDS) is captured annually and reported as aggregated statistics. It does not provide quarterly comparisons or report your individual performance – it is not a benchmarking tool. The Family Evaluation of Hospice Care (FEHC) is a quarterly benchmarking service that provides detailed comparisons of family satisfaction and selected outcomes (again, based solely on family surveys.) QAPI (like excellent strategic agency management) requires ongoing assessment of your quality, outcomes, and operations. QAPI Snapshot provides

- ▶ Quarterly assessments, with national and regional benchmarks, for all areas required by QAPI
- ▶ Key patient volume and mix and staffing measures, using definitions consistent with the NDS
- ▶ Selected family satisfaction measures, based on FEHC questions
- ▶ Clinical quality measures, using NHPCO End Result Outcome Measure (EROM) protocols
- ▶ A measure of patient safety, not covered by other tools, and a critical focus of national healthcare quality
- ▶ A unique comparison of important agency practices, tied to NHPCO Standards
- ▶ A summary of your effectiveness across all ten components of the NHPCO Quality Partners initiative

How does the new NQF framework affect what we measure?

The NQF framework and preferred practices have a clinical focus and will direct the development and selection of measures considered by CMS for public reporting. NQF will call for, evaluate, and recommend measures. The framework influences the NHPCO Quality Partners initiative and complements the ten quality components. All QAPI Snapshot clinical outcome and practice measures address one or more of the NQF preferred practices. In a prior round of NQF evaluation, several QAPI Snapshot measures were recommended for end of life cancer care.

QAPI Snapshot looks great, but we do so much benchmarking – why do one more program?

It is challenging to consider adding another effort to very busy management teams. QAPI Snapshot is designed to provide focus. While there is a small investment of time and money, the resulting output should increase your management effectiveness *and enhance the value of other data efforts*. By providing an automated, graphic report that integrates key data from multiple sources, QAPI Snapshot gives you a rapid review of your top strengths and opportunities. It helps you prioritize issues to address and enables you to “drill-down” into other databases with a clear focus. It is right for executives who don’t have time for extensive detail, as well as for staff, who benefit from seeing how their performance fits into the whole picture.

Plus, your participation in QAPI Snapshot helps ensure accurate benchmarks, raising the bar in hospice care; and it creates a richer database to support your legislative agenda and the promotion of hospice across the continuum.

We have not used data effectively in the past and are overwhelmed! How do we get started?

OCS is committed to customer support, and will help you implement QAPI Snapshot in the way that works best for you. You do not have to do every measure from the beginning. If you have not had good benchmarks before, you will find that even a subset of the QAPI Snapshot report will be enlightening to your organization, and it will stimulate your commitment to do more! If you have specific concerns about data, system or staff limitations, contact OCS to discuss ways to work through your challenges.

Why not wait until the CoPs are in place or CMS tells us what to measure?

Now is the time to move forward in benchmarking, and QAPI Snapshot is the right direction.

- ▶ First, once the new CoPs are in place, you will have only 60 days to comply. That is not enough time to put together an effective agency-wide quality assessment and performance improvement program. QAPI Snapshot directs you in putting the key components in place, so you will be prepared.
- ▶ Second, once you have data management systems and processes in place, adding or refining measures is a much easier task. QAPI Snapshot gives you the opportunity to strengthen your systems, so when new and valuable measures are introduced, you will be able to quickly incorporate them.
- ▶ Third, QAPI Snapshot is being offered at a special introductory price for a limited time. You are saving money by starting now.
- ▶ Finally, even without the CoPs, focused, agency-wide benchmarking makes sense. It gives strategic direction, improves decision-making, helps staff understand the whole organization, and supports a culture of quality. Why wait?

If you have further questions, please contact the OCS QAPI Help Desk

**QAPI@ocsys.com
603.795.4802**