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1. Background

A. Measure Development

The Dental Quality Alliance (DQA) was formed in 2010 as a multi-stakeholder group to advance oral healthcare performance measurement (http://www.ada.org/en/science-research/dental-quality-alliance). The DQA develops aligned, standardized, and validated measures that can be applied in the public and private sectors. DQA Measures include oral healthcare access, process, and outcomes quality measures and related healthcare delivery measures (e.g., utilization and cost of care). Measures developed by the DQA undergo rigorous validation.\(^1\)

DQA Measures can be used to:

1. uniformly assess evidence-based quality of care across reporting entities;
2. inform performance improvement projects longitudinally and monitor improvements in care;
3. identify variations in care;
4. develop benchmarks for comparison; and
5. uniformly assess utilization of care.

DQA Measures include measures calculated using administrative claims data that are designed for use by public programs (e.g., Medicaid and CHIP), state marketplaces, dental benefits administrators (DBAs), and managed care organizations (MCOs). DQA Measures have been formally adopted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA), state Medicaid programs, and state Marketplaces.\(^2\)\(^4\) This User Guide was developed to assist in implementing the administrative claims-based DQA Pediatric Measures.
B. DQA Measures Summary

Table 1 summarizes all validated DQA administrative claims-based pediatric measures as of September 1st, 2017. Detailed specifications are available on the DQA website. Information on measures currently in development also is available on the DQA website. DQA measures are reviewed on an annual basis with new versions effective January 1st of each year. This User Guide is updated on the same schedule.

The DQA’s initial measure set (“Starter Set”), Dental Caries in Children: Prevention and Disease Management, was approved by the DQA and published in July 2013. These measures were developed for implementation with administrative enrollment and claims data for plan and program level reporting. Five measures from the Starter Set received NQF endorsement in September 2014 (Table 1).

Two measures of ambulatory care sensitive emergency department visits among children for reasons related to dental caries and subsequent follow-up with a dental provider also were developed for implementation with administrative enrollment and claims data for program level reporting. These were approved by the DQA and published in October 2014, and they received NQF endorsement in September 2015.

Two measure concepts from the Starter Set that were developed for implementation with electronic health records (EHRs) were approved by the DQA and published in the United States Health Information Knowledgebase in October 2014. For questions on eMeasures, contact the DQA at dqa@ada.org.
### Table 1. DQA Administrative Claims-Based Pediatric Measures Summary

#### Evaluating Utilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Abbreviation</th>
<th>Measure Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>NQF #</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Measure Domains</th>
<th>Level(s) of Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UTL-CH-A</td>
<td>Utilization of Services‡</td>
<td>Percentage of all enrolled children under age 21 who received at least one dental service within the reporting year.</td>
<td>2511</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Access/Process</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRV-CH-A</td>
<td>Preventive Services for Children at Elevated Caries Risk‡</td>
<td>Percentage of all enrolled children who are at “elevated” risk (i.e., “moderate” or “high”) who received a topical fluoride application and/or sealants within the reporting year.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Related Health Care Delivery: Use of Services</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRT-CH-A</td>
<td>Treatment Services</td>
<td>Percentage of all enrolled children who received a treatment service within the reporting year.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Related Health Care Delivery: Use of Services</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Evaluating Quality of Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Abbreviation</th>
<th>Measure Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>NQF #</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Measure Domains</th>
<th>Level of Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OEV-CH-A</td>
<td>Oral Evaluation</td>
<td>Percentage of enrolled children under age 21 who received a comprehensive or periodic oral evaluation within the reporting year.</td>
<td>2517</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFL-CH-A</td>
<td>Topical Fluoride for Children at Elevated Caries Risk‡</td>
<td>Percentage of enrolled children aged 1–21 years who are at “elevated” risk (i.e., “moderate” or “high”) who received at least 2 topical fluoride applications within the reporting year.</td>
<td>2528</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL1-CH-A</td>
<td>Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk‡</td>
<td>Percentage of enrolled children in the age category of 6–9 years at “elevated” risk (i.e., “moderate” or “high”) who received a sealant on a permanent first molar tooth within the reporting year.</td>
<td>2508</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SL2-CH-A  Sealants for 10–14 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk  Percentage of enrolled children in the age category of 10–14 years at “elevated” risk (i.e., “moderate” or “high”) who received a sealant on a permanent second molar tooth within the reporting year.  2509  Administrative enrollment and claims  Process  Program, Plan

CCN-CH-A  Care Continuity  Percentage of all children enrolled in two consecutive years who received a comprehensive or periodic oral evaluation in both years.  N/A  Administrative enrollment and claims  Process  Program, Plan

USS-CH-A  Usual Source of Services  Percentage of all children enrolled in two consecutive years who visited the same practice or clinical entity in both years.  N/A  Administrative enrollment and claims  Access/Process  Program, Plan

EDV-CH-A  Ambulatory Care Sensitive Emergency Department Visits for Dental Caries in Children  Number of emergency department visits for caries-related reasons per 100,000 member months for all enrolled children  2689  Administrative enrollment and claims  Outcome  Program

EDF-CH-A  Follow-Up after Emergency Department Visits for Dental Caries in Children  Percentage of ambulatory care sensitive Emergency Department (ED) visits for dental caries among children 0–20 years in the reporting period for which the member visited a dentist within (a) 7 days and (b) 30 days of the ED visit.  2695  Administrative enrollment and claims  Process  Program

### Evaluating Efficiency and Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Abbreviation</th>
<th>Measure Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>NQF #</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Measure Domain</th>
<th>Level of Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCS-CH-A</td>
<td>Per Member Per Month Cost of Clinical Services</td>
<td>Total amount that is paid on direct provision of care (reimbursed for clinical services) per member per month for all enrolled children during the reporting year.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Administrative enrollment and claims</td>
<td>Related Health Care Delivery: Efficiency and Cost</td>
<td>Program, Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


‡Selected measures have companion specifications for “oral health” services.
C. Implementation Considerations

Identifying Care Goals and Appropriate Measures

Programs and plans that are considering implementing oral healthcare performance measures should first identify their care goals and then select measures that promote achieving those goals. There is no single “magic” measure. Rather, a set of carefully chosen measures can be used to provide a more complete picture of care, establish baseline performance, identify improvement opportunities, and monitor progress toward achieving the ultimate care goals. A measure set ideally spans the spectrum of access to care, process of care, and outcomes of care measures.

Figure 1 provides a basic illustration of measures that might be included in a measure set focused on the care goal of reducing caries incidence. Receipt of a comprehensive or periodic oral evaluation and continuity of care over time are indicators of access to care, or the receipt of timely and appropriate care. Receipt of professionally applied fluoride and sealants are examples of process of care measures – measures that “are supported by evidence that the clinical process” (e.g., fluoride application or sealant placement) “has led to improved outcomes” (e.g., reduction in caries). Measuring the incidence of new caries is an example of an outcome measure – “the health state of a patient resulting from health care.” Outcome measures most directly indicate whether the care goal is being achieved. Access and process of care measures are important indicators of whether patients are receiving evidence-based care that is positively associated with improved health outcomes. Interventions designed to improve outcomes (i.e., achieve the care goal) are frequently targeted towards improving access to and/or processes of care; therefore, it is important to measure access to and processes of care as well as outcomes.
A balanced measurement approach that evaluates multiple aspects of care is essential to promoting improved outcomes, understanding disparities, and planning for improved performance. Although it would be ideal to measure all aspects of care, resource constraints may require prioritization. Thus, organizations engaged in oral healthcare performance measurement must first define their care goals and then select an appropriate set of measures for implementation. In addition to selecting measures based on the care goals, measure selection should also take into account the population being measured and the available data sources for measurement.

Quality assessment and performance improvement are ongoing processes, and iterative measurement is essential for identifying, implementing, evaluating, monitoring, and sustaining quality improvement initiatives. Initial measurement can be used to establish baseline performance and to identify potential areas for improvement. Subsequent measurements further inform the identification of performance gaps and disparities in care and can be used to evaluate the effect of improvement efforts and monitor performance over time.
Measure Implementation

To implement standardized performance measurement that fosters quality improvement and improved health outcomes, clearly specified, feasible, reliable, and valid measures are required. When standardized measures are implemented across reporting entities, benchmarks can be established, comparisons can be made, and improvement opportunities can be identified.\(^9,10\) DQA Measures are standardized with detailed specifications and have been validated for feasibility, reliability, usability, and validity. DQA measure specifications are designed such that each measure can be used independently. However, as described above, use of a single measure is not likely to provide a sufficient depiction of care.

Equally important to valid measurement is appropriate implementation of the measures. Measure users should verify that they can feasibly, reliably and validly implement the measures within their own systems of care.\(^1\) This includes assessing the completeness and accuracy of the critical data elements used to calculate the measures, implementing the measures following the detailed measure specifications, and evaluating face validity of the resulting measure scores with individuals who have appropriate local expertise.

Implementing Measures for the Appropriate Reporting Units/Level of Care and Data Sources

Quality of care is assessed at multiple levels, such as practices, MCOs or medical/dental benefits administrators, public insurance programs, and public health programs. There often are different measurement considerations at different “levels” of care. The level for which a measure is specified may also be referred to as the “reporting unit.” In addition, different types of data sources (e.g., administrative claims, EHRs, or surveys) have different strengths and limitations. Measure development takes into account both the reporting unit and the data source.

Measures should be reported at the level (e.g., program, plan, or clinician) and using the data source (e.g., administrative claims or EHR) for which they were developed and validated. Implementation of measures at different levels or with different data sources than those for which the measure was intended may not be reliable.
Implementing Measures in Accountability Applications

Performance measures are increasingly being used for accountability applications, which include consumer report cards, pay for performance programs, certification, and accreditation.

Before using a measure for accountability purposes, it is strongly recommended that the accountability application be preceded by a period during which reporting entities gain experience with measure implementation, data are collected to establish baseline values and appropriate benchmarks for comparison and performance goals are identified.

The National Quality Forum advises:\(^{11}\)

> When performance measures are used for accountability applications such as public reporting and pay-for-performance, then purchasers, policymakers and other users of performance measures should assess the potential impact on disadvantaged patient populations and the providers/health plans serving them to identify unintended consequences and to ensure alignment with program and policy goals. Additional actions such as creating peer groups for comparison purposes could be applied. (p. 11)

Implementing measures initially in non-accountability quality improvement initiatives can inform the development of accountability applications. Only after there is experience with measure implementation, careful review and interpretation of the resulting measure rates, and an evaluation of the measure’s effectiveness in promoting identified quality improvement and care goals, should accountability applications be considered.

2. Data Collection, Preparation, and Reporting for Measures Implemented using Administrative Enrollment and Claims/Encounter Data

A. Defining Reporting Year: Calendar Year versus Federal Fiscal Year

If not otherwise specified, the definition of “reporting year” can be either calendar year (CY) (January 1, 20XX – December 31, 20XX) or federal fiscal year (FFY) (October 1, 20XX through September 30, 20YY). During testing of the DQA Starter Set, the results were similar between these two definitions. Agencies requesting measurement scores should specify the reporting year. The reporting year should be reported with the measurement score. Some measures
require data from time periods preceding the reporting year. The measure technical specifications indicate the data collection period required.

B. Level of Measurement/Reporting Unit

Measures using administrative data may be specified for reporting at the program (e.g., Medicaid or CHIP) or plan (e.g., MCO or DBA) level. The technical specifications for each measure specify for which reporting unit the measure was developed and validated. Reporting on the measure for a unit other than that for which the measure was developed may not be reliable.

C. Data Quality

Critical data elements are those without which the measure cannot be calculated (e.g., birth date, date of service, and procedure codes). Stratification data elements are those data elements used for stratification of the measure score (e.g., race, ethnicity, and geographic location). Particularly for critical data elements, reporting entities should identify error thresholds — the maximum percentage of missing or invalid values that will be accepted — prior to adopting a measure. Following guidance from CMS, it is recommended that data element error thresholds be set below 5%. Reporting entities should have detailed protocols in place for routinely assessing data completeness, accuracy, and quality.

Although reliability and validity of the DQA Measures has been established, ultimate reliability and validity of reported measure scores depend critically on the quality of the data that are used to calculate the measures. The completeness (percentage of missing or invalid values) and accuracy of all critical data elements should be investigated prior to measurement for the reporting unit and reporting year.

D. Age Eligibility

The technical specifications identify the eligibility criteria for each measure. DQA Measures are developed for alignment and use across public and private sectors. When used for comparisons across Medicaid/CHIP programs, the DQA has defined “children” as individuals aged younger than 21 years (<21 years) to be consistent with Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) eligibility. However, if a particular Medicaid or CHIP program has more restrictive age eligibility criteria, the state should include only the ages...
eligible for program participation in the denominator and indicate the age range used when reporting measures.

When used for reporting within a Health Insurance Marketplace under the Affordable Care Act, plans should include individuals younger than aged 19 years (<19 years) for pediatric measures to be consistent with the age requirements for Essential Dental Benefit coverage.

Entities reporting for other programs or purposes should check with program officials regarding the appropriate age criterion. The age criterion used should be reported with the measurement score.

E. Dental Benefits Eligibility

Enrolled members who are not eligible for dental benefits should be excluded. The number of individuals excluded should be reported.

F. Enrollment Eligibility: Calculating Continuous Enrollment for Reporting at the Plan (“Same” Plan) and Program (“Any” Plan) Levels

Continuous enrollment for measures with 180-day (6-month) enrollment criteria requires that there be no gap in coverage. Continuous enrollment for measures with full-year enrollment criteria allows for a single one-month gap in coverage (or 31 days). At the state program level (e.g., Medicaid or CHIP) a criterion of “any” plan applies when assessing continuous enrollment, whereas at the plan level (e.g., MCO or DBA) a criterion of “same” plan applies. That is, at the program level, all enrollment months are counted regardless of whether the enrollee switched plans during the reporting period; at the plan level, only enrollment months in the particular plan are counted. The criterion of “any” plan versus “same” plan should be reported with the measure rate. While this prevents direct aggregation of results from plan to program, each entity is given due credit for the population it serves. Thus, programs with multiple MCOs and/or DBAs should not merely “add up” the plan level rates but should calculate the overall program rate (i.e., using the “any” plan criterion) from their databases to allow inclusion of individuals who were continuously enrolled but switched plans during the reporting year. Measure implementers also are encouraged to report the average enrollment duration of all members included in the denominator with the measure rate (total number of months enrolled/total unduplicated members).
G. Paid and Unpaid Claims

The technical specifications for each measure indicate whether only paid claims should be used or whether both paid and unpaid claims (including pending, suspended, and denied claims) should be used. The intent of measures that specify both paid and unpaid claims is to capture whether or not the enrollee received the service that is the focus of the measurement during the reporting period regardless of whether the claim for that service was paid. Paid claims include services covered under a per member per month (PMPM) payment. Only the most recent disposition of adjudicated claims should be used, and implementers should allow for at least three months of claims run-out from the end of the reporting period before calculating the measures. For example, if the reporting period is calendar year 2017, then the measures should not be run before April 1, 2018 to allow sufficient time for claims processing. Implementers should check with program administrators for any requirements related to claims run-out. In the absence of program requirements, implementers should verify that the run-out period is long enough to have sufficiently complete claims for reliable reporting. The claims run-out period should be reported with the measure rate.

H. Identifying Provider Type to Identify “Dental” Services

Note: Stand-alone commercial dental plans that reconcile claims only for dental providers can skip the steps required to check for “dental” services.

Delineating “Dental” vs. “Oral Health” Services

Selected DQA measures include the option to report separate rates for “dental” services and for “oral health” services for reporting entities seeking information on the proportion of services provided by dental and non-dental providers, respectively. The Code of Federal Regulations\textsuperscript{13} defines “dental” services as follows:

\begin{verbatim}
§ 440.100 Dental services.
(a) “Dental services” means diagnostic, preventive, or corrective procedures provided by or under the supervision of a dentist in the practice of his profession, including treatment of —
   (1) The teeth and associated structures of the oral cavity; and
   (2) Disease, injury, or impairment that may affect the oral or general health of the recipient.
(b) “Dentist” means an individual licensed to practice dentistry or dental surgery.
\end{verbatim}
Thus, “dental” services refer to oral health services provided by or under the supervision of a dentist, and “oral health” services refer to oral health services not provided by or under the supervision of a dentist.

The Health Care Provider Taxonomy code set maintained by the National Uniform Claim Committee (hereafter referred to as NUCC maintained provider taxonomy codes) can be used to delineate “dental” and “oral health” services. Oral health services rendered by a provider with one of the NUCC maintained provider taxonomy codes in Table 2 below should be categorized as “dental” services. Some states may use custom codes instead of NUCC maintained provider taxonomy codes. The custom codes should be mapped as closely as possible to the NUCC maintained provider taxonomy codes for assignment of “dental” and “oral health” providers.

Note that services provided by a dental hygienist would only be counted as a “dental” service if those services are provided under the supervision of a dentist. Services provided by independently practicing dental hygienists and other such providers would be classified as “oral health” services. In cases where the provider is listed as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) (NUCC Code: 261QF0400X), Rural Health Center (RHC) (NUCC Code: 261QR1300X) or County Health Department, the services would be classified as “dental” services. Qualifying services related to the oral cavity that are billed using CPT codes should be identified as “oral health” services when billed by non-dental providers.

“Billing” vs. “Rendering” Provider

For measures that require identification of provider type, provider type classification should be based on the rendering provider (not billing provider) unless otherwise indicated in the specifications. Rendering provider is more likely to capture the individual who actually performed the service. Typically the claims/encounter database includes both the provider ID (tax ID, NPI, or program assigned ID) as well as the provider type (e.g., using the NUCC maintained provider taxonomy codes). In cases where the provider taxonomy is not available in the claims/encounter database, users should link the provider ID in the claims database to the provider taxonomy in the provider database. When linking to the provider database is necessary to identify the provider taxonomy: if an individual provider ID maps to more than one

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1 Without taxonomy codes that distinguish allied dental professionals practicing independently versus under the supervision of a dentist, administrative claims data may not distinguish whether services are provided under the supervision of a dentist.
Effective January 1, 2018

taxonomy, the service should be counted as a dental service if any of the taxonomies that the provider maps to is within the list presented in Table 2 with the exception of dental hygienist if the dental hygienist is not under the supervision of a dentist. As a last resort, when “rendering” provider information is not available, the billing provider’s taxonomy may be used. If the billing provider is used, this should be noted in the performance report.
### Table 2: NUCC Maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>122300000X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td></td>
<td>A dentist is a person qualified by a doctorate in dental surgery (D.D.S.) or dental medicine (D.M.D.), licensed by the state to practice dentistry, and practicing within the scope of that license. There is no difference between the two degrees: dentists who have a DMD or DDS have the same education. Universities have the prerogative to determine what degree is awarded. Both degrees use the same curriculum requirements set by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation. Generally, three or more years of undergraduate education plus four years of dental school is required to graduate and become a general dentist. State licensing boards accept either degree as equivalent, and both degrees allow licensed individuals to practice the same scope of general dentistry. Additional post-graduate training is required to become a dental specialist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223D0001X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Dental Public Health</td>
<td>The science and art of preventing and controlling dental diseases and promoting dental health through organized community efforts. It is that form of dental practice that serves the community as a patient rather than the individual. It is concerned with the dental health education of the public, with applied dental research, and with the administration of group dental care programs as well as the prevention and control of dental diseases on a community basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223D0004X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Dentist Anesthesiologist</td>
<td>A dentist who has successfully completed an accredited postdoctoral anesthesiology residency training program for dentists of two or more years duration, in accord with Commission on Dental Accreditation’s Standards for Dental Anesthesiology Residency Programs, and/or meets the eligibility requirements for examination by the American Dental Board of Anesthesiology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223E0200X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Endodontics</td>
<td>The branch of dentistry that is concerned with the morphology, physiology and pathology of the human dental pulp and periapical tissues. Its study and practice encompass the basic and clinical sciences including biology of the normal pulp, the etiology, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases of the pulp and associated periapical conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223G0001X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>General Practice</td>
<td>A general dentist is the primary dental care provider for patients of all ages. The general dentist is responsible for the diagnosis, treatment, management and overall coordination of services related to patients' oral health needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223P0106X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology</td>
<td>The specialty of dentistry and discipline of pathology that deals with the nature, identification, and management of diseases affecting the oral and maxillofacial regions. It is a science that investigates the causes, processes, and effects of these diseases. The practice of oral and maxillofacial pathology includes research and diagnosis of diseases using clinical, radiographic, microscopic, biochemical, or other examinations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223P0221X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Pediatric Dentistry</td>
<td>An age-defined specialty that provides both primary and comprehensive preventive and therapeutic oral health care for infants and children through adolescence, including those with special health care needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223P0300X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Periodontics</td>
<td>That specialty of dentistry which encompasses the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the supporting and surrounding tissues of the teeth or their substitutes and the maintenance of the health, function and esthetics of these structures and tissues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223P0700X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Prosthodontics</td>
<td>That branch of dentistry pertaining to the restoration and maintenance of oral functions, comfort, appearance and health of the patient by the restoration of natural teeth and/or the replacement of missing teeth and contiguous oral and maxillofacial tissues with artificial substitutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223S0112X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery</td>
<td>The specialty of dentistry which includes the diagnosis, surgical and adjunctive treatment of diseases, injuries and defects involving both the functional and esthetic aspects of the hard and soft tissues of the oral and maxillofacial region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1223X0008X</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology</td>
<td>The specialty of dentistry and discipline of radiology concerned with the production and interpretation of images and data produced by all modalities of radiant energy that are used for the diagnosis and management of diseases, disorders and conditions of the oral and maxillofacial region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics

That area of dentistry concerned with the supervision, guidance and correction of the growing or mature dentofacial structures, including those conditions that require movement of teeth or correction of malrelationships and malformations of their related structures and the adjustment of relationships between and among teeth and facial bones by the application of forces and/or the stimulation and redirection of functional forces within the craniofacial complex. Major responsibilities of orthodontic practice include the diagnosis, prevention, interception and treatment of all forms of malocclusion of the teeth and associated alterations in their surrounding structures; the design, application and control of functional and corrective appliances; and the guidance of the dentition and its supporting structures to attain and maintain optimum occlusal relations in physiologic and esthetic harmony among facial and cranial structures.

Dental Hygienist

An individual who has completed an accredited dental hygiene education program, and an individual who has been licensed by a state board of dental examiners to provide preventive care services under the supervision of a dentist. Functions that may be legally delegated to the dental hygienist vary based on the needs of the dentist, the educational preparation of the dental hygienist and state dental practice acts and regulations, but always include, at a minimum, scaling and polishing the teeth. To avoid misleading the public, no occupational title other than dental hygienist should be used to describe this dental auxiliary.

Dental Therapist

A Dental Therapist is an individual who has completed an accredited or non-accredited dental therapy program and who has been authorized by the relevant state board or a tribal entity to provide services within the scope of their practice under the supervision of a dentist. Functions that may be delegated to the dental therapist vary based on the needs of the dentist, the educational preparation of the dental therapist and state dental practice acts and regulations.

Advanced Practice Dental Therapist

An Advanced Practice Dental Therapist is: (1) A dental therapist who has completed additional training beyond basic dental therapy education and provides dental services in accordance with state advanced practice dental therapist laws or statutes; or (2) A dental hygienist with a graduate degree in advanced dental therapy prepared for independent and interdependent decision making and direct accountability for clinical judgment across the dental health care continuum. The individual has been authorized by the relevant state board or a tribal entity to provide services under the remote supervision of a dentist. The functions of the advanced practice dental therapist vary based on the needs of the dentist, the educational preparation of the advanced practice dental therapist and state dental practice acts and regulations.

Oral Medicinist

A dentist with advanced training specializing in the recognition and treatment of oral conditions resulting from the interrelationship between oral disease and systemic health. The Oral Medicinist manages clinical and non-surgical treatment of non-dental pathologies affecting the oral and maxillofacial region, such as cancer, organ transplants, and acute and chronic pain. Activities include provision of interdisciplinary patient care in collaboration with medical specialists and other dentists in hospitals and outpatient medical clinics in the management of patients with complex medical conditions requiring multidisciplinary healthcare intervention.

Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) provide services to individuals and families with low income who live in rural or underserved urban areas.

Rural Health

Rural Health programs and initiatives are designed to improve access to health care services in rural areas.
I. Bundled Services Reported Using a Single Code on Dental Procedures and Nomenclature (CDT) Code

Some state programs may reimburse a single amount for a bundled set of services—e.g., oral evaluation, topical fluoride, and prophylaxis. In such instances, providers should be encouraged to record all the services rendered on the claim form using the appropriate CDT codes.

For calculating a measure, procedure codes should be interpreted according to the descriptions in the CDT manual. For example, if professionally applied topical fluoride is included as part of a bundled service under a procedure code other than CDT codes D1206 or D1208 and there is no record of D1206 or D1208 on the claim submitted for the bundled service, then it would not be included in the numerator for the Topical Fluoride measure.

J. FQHC Encounter Billing

Some FQHCs may be reimbursed based on an encounter—i.e., they are reimbursed based on each visit and not on the individual services provided during that visit. In such instances, that encounter may be captured in the claims system as a designated procedure/encounter code. Information on the specific services provided during that encounter is not captured. In such cases, that encounter would be captured only in the Utilization of Services measure. Performance reports from programs and plans should note such reimbursement policies and acknowledge the policy’s limitation for accurately capturing service provision.

K. Non-DDS Reimbursement

Providers who are reimbursed using payment methods other than fee-for-service (e.g., capitation, salary, and hybrid payment methodologies) should be required to submit information on all rendered services on the encounter form to enable appropriate quality measurement. Programs and plans that reimburse FQHCs on an encounter payment basis may similarly want to consider approaches for capturing information on all rendered services to promote accurate quality measurement.
L. Identifying Individuals at “Elevated” Risk

Evidence-based guidelines suggest a risk-based approach to prevention.\textsuperscript{15,16} Consequently, some DQA pediatric measures are limited to children identified as being at “elevated risk” for caries using the following approach:\textsuperscript{17}

a. If subject meets \textbf{any of the following} then include in denominators restricted to individuals with elevated risk:
   i. the subject has a CDT Code among those in Table 3 in the reporting year,
      OR
   ii. the subject has a CDT Code among those in Table 3 below in any of the three years prior to the reporting year, \textbf{(NOTE: The subject does not need to be enrolled in any of the prior three years in order to meet the denominator enrollment criteria for these measures; this is a “look back” for enrollees who do have claims experience in any of the prior three years.)} OR
   iii. the subject has a visit with a CDT code indicating elevated risk (D0602 or D0603) in the reporting year.

b. If the subject does not meet \textbf{any of the above} criteria for elevated risk, then these enrollees will not be included in the elevated risk measure denominators.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
D1354 & D2393 & D2620 & D2712 & D2790 & D2950 \\
\hline
D2140 & D2394 & D2630 & D2720 & D2791 & D3110 \\
\hline
D2150 & D2410 & D2642 & D2721 & D2792 & D3120 \\
\hline
D2160 & D2420 & D2643 & D2722 & D2794 & D3220 \\
\hline
D2161 & D2430 & D2644 & D2740 & D2799 & D3221 \\
\hline
D2330 & D2510 & D2650 & D2750 & D2930 & D3222 \\
\hline
D2331 & D2520 & D2651 & D2751 & D2931 & D3230 \\
\hline
D2332 & D2530 & D2652 & D2752 & D2932 & D3240 \\
\hline
D2335 & D2542 & D2662 & D2780 & D2933 & D3310 \\
\hline
D2390 & D2543 & D2663 & D2781 & D2934 & D3320 \\
\hline
D2391 & D2544 & D2664 & D2782 & D2940 & D3330 \\
\hline
D2392 & D2610 & D2710 & D2783 & D2941 & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{CDT Codes to identify “elevated risk”}
\end{table}

The measure specifications include identification of elevated risk through specific codes indicative of caries treatment in the reporting year and for up to three prior years. Children do not have to be enrolled in the prior years. The past history is only a look-back period for available claims. \textbf{The reporting year remains a single year and is the only year for which minimum enrollment length must be verified.} Some children who meet enrollment criteria in the reporting year may not have the claims history with the same plan for all three prior years. The denominator requires inclusion of children who can be confirmed as being at elevated risk with
M. Stratification by Child and Program Characteristics

The DQA encourages the measure results to be stratified by age, race, ethnicity, geographic location, socioeconomic status, payer type, and program/plan type. Such stratifications will enable implementers to identify variations in care by child and program characteristics, which can be used to inform quality improvement initiatives. To stratify the measure results, the denominator population is divided into different subsets based on the characteristic of interest (e.g., age, race, ethnicity, or geographic location) and the rates are reported for each sub-population.

3. Measure Specification Updates

The DQA has an annual measure review and maintenance process that includes a 30-day public comment period. The annual measure review reports are available on the DQA website. During the 2018 annual measure review, no changes to the measure specifications were made. Measure specification updates are summarized in Appendix 1.

4. Measure Score Interpretation Relative to Overall Utilization

Although each DQA measure can stand alone, no single measure is intended to be a stand-alone indicator of overall program quality. As indicated above, measure implementers should identify a set of measures that will allow them to obtain a more complete picture of care, establish baseline performance, identify improvement opportunities, and monitor progress toward achieving the ultimate care goals. In addition, implementers may want to evaluate variations in performance among sub-groups of enrollees included in the denominator in order to guide their quality improvement efforts. This section addresses one of the “deeper dives” into the data that programs and plans may find useful in furthering their quality improvement efforts.

The pediatric Starter Set measures do not require receipt of “any dental service” as a requirement to be included in the denominator – that is, the denominator includes all enrollees, both users and non-users of the dental care system, during the reporting period. However,
programs and plans may find it useful to evaluate performance in the context of overall dental utilization, which serves as a broad indicator of access to dental care. The measure “Utilization of Services” indicates the number and percentage of members enrolled for at least 180 days who received at least one dental service of any type. Monitoring trends in performance on the other measures over time relative to trends in the measure score for Utilization of Services can provide insight into how overall access to dental care affects performance on the other indicators. Programs and plans may also be interested in examining the measure score specifically among enrollees who have used the dental care system. Table 4 summarizes how to implement this for the Starter Set measures.
Effective January 1, 2018

Table 4. Examining Measures for Enrollees Who Received “Any Dental Service”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single-Year Non-Cost Measures</th>
<th>How to Implement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Evaluation (OEV-CH-A)</td>
<td>After “You now have the denominator (DEN) count” in the measure specifications, check whether the enrollee received “any dental service” during the reporting year:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment Services (TRT-CH-A)</td>
<td>a. If [SERVICE-CODE] = D0100 – D9999; AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive Services (PRV-CH-A)</td>
<td>b. If [RENDERING PROVIDER TAXONOMY] code = any of the NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes indicated in the measure specifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealants for 6-9 Year Olds (SL1-CH-A)</td>
<td>The subset of enrollees who meet the criteria in both a and b represent those who received “any dental service.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealants for 10-14 year Olds (SL2-CH-A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical Fluoride (TFL-CH-A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Two-Year Measures                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Care Continuity (CCN-CH-A)                                                                   | After “You now have the denominator (DEN) count” in the measure specifications, check whether the enrollee received “any dental service” in the reporting year AND in the prior year: |
| Usual Source of Services (USS-CH-A)                                                          | a. If [SERVICE CODE] = D0100 – D9999 in the reporting year AND in the prior year; AND                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                  | b. If [RENDERING PROVIDER TAXONOMY] code = any of the NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes indicated in the measure specifications. |
|                                                                                                                                                  | The subset of enrollees who meet the criteria in both a and b represent those who received “any dental service.”                                                  |

| Cost Measure                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Per Member Per Month Cost (CCS-CH-A)                                                         | After “You now have the denominator (DEN) count” in the measure specifications, check whether the enrollee received “any dental service” in the reporting year: |
|                                                                                                                                                  | a. If [SERVICE CODE] = D0100 – D9999; AND                                                                                                                        |
|                                                                                                                                                  | b. If [RENDERING PROVIDER TAXONOMY] code = any of the NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes indicated in the measure specifications. |
|                                                                                                                                                  | c. If both a AND b are met, then calculate total number of member months by summing the number of months enrolled in dental coverage for all members enrolled at least one month in dental coverage who accessed a dental service during the reporting year to identify the subset of member months associated with members who received “any dental service.” |

**Note:** Calculations of the measure rates for the subset of enrollees who received “any dental service” should be noted as such and not represented as the overall measure score. Any measure rates for the subset of enrollees who received “any dental service” that are calculated for NQF-endorsed measures would not be considered to be NQF endorsed. The NQF endorsement applies only to the endorsed measure as specified in the detailed technical measure specifications.
5. Frequently Asked Questions

A. Why isn’t there a 90-day enrollment denominator for the Starter Set measures to allow for comparisons to CMS EPSDT Reporting?

**Applicable Measures:**
- Utilization of Services
- Oral Evaluation
- Treatment Services

During measure testing, the following enrollment intervals were evaluated: a) >30 days; b) >90 days; c) >180 days; and d) 365 days, allowing a single 1-month gap. The figure below illustrates the impact of different denominator requirements on the percentage of enrolled children eligible for measure inclusion. Through evaluation of the data on the measure denominators and overall measure scores, and using a face validity consensus process, the DQA elected to use the 180-day continuous enrollment requirement in order to balance sufficient enrollment duration to allow children adequate time to access care with the number of children who are excluded from the denominator due to stricter enrollment requirements.

**Percentage of Children Enrolled “Any Time” Who Meet Different Enrollment Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment Period</th>
<th>Medicaid/CHIP Program 1</th>
<th>Medicaid/CHIP Program 2</th>
<th>Medicaid/CHIP Program 3</th>
<th>Medicaid/CHIP Program 4</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled 90 days continuously</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled 6 months continuously</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled 12 months, allowing for 1-month gap</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final measure specifications originally included an additional 90-day continuous enrollment denominator for three measures (Utilization of Services, Oral Evaluation, and Treatment Services) to allow for historical comparisons to the CMS EPSDT data. The 90-Day enrollment denominator option was eliminated from the NQF-endorsed Utilization of Services and Oral Evaluation measures because the NQF does not permit multiple denominators within a single measure in order to ensure standardization and consistency in quality measure reporting. In keeping with
this approach, the 90-day enrollment denominator option also was eliminated from the Treatment Services measure. CMS and other stakeholders (e.g., state Medicaid programs and state Marketplaces) have adopted NQF-endorsed DQA measures. The 180-day enrollment interval has not been cited as a barrier to implementation although it has been recognized as a distinction from the CMS EPSDT data reporting requirements. The DQA has and will continue to work with the oral healthcare stakeholder community to promote the development and adoption of validated quality measures and alignment in oral healthcare performance measurement across stakeholder groups. Plans and programs interested in continuing to make comparisons to CMS EPSDT data or that are interested in further evaluating the impact of enrollment requirements can conduct their own sensitivity analyses using different enrollment lengths. However, these alternative enrollment lengths should not be reported as the official DQA measure scores.

B. Classifying Children at Elevated Caries Risk

Applicable Measures:

- Preventive Services for Children at Elevated Caries Risk
- Topical Fluoride for Children at Elevated Caries Risk
- Sealants for 6–9 Year-Olds at Elevated Caries Risk
- Sealants for 10–14 Year-Olds at Elevated Caries Risk

B1. Why did the DQA not consider all Medicaid-enrolled children as being at “elevated risk”?

According to the definition of healthcare quality promulgated by the Institute of Medicine and reiterated by the definitions of quality domains from the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse to be indicative of “quality,” a performance measure should be based on current best evidence. Accordingly, measures of quality, especially those that will be used to

\[\text{\footnotesize ii The Institute of Medicine defines healthcare quality as "the degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes and are consistent with current professional knowledge." Institute of Medicine (U.S.), Committee on Quality of Health Care in America. Crossing the quality chasm: a new health system for the 21st century. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press; 2001.}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize ii Process (Clinical Quality Measure): “A process of care is a health care-related activity performed for, on behalf of, or by a patient. Process measures are supported by evidence that the clinical process—that is the focus of the measure—has led to improved outcomes.” National Quality Measures Clearinghouse Varieties of Measures in NQMC: Measures of Quality and Measures Related to Quality. 2014. Available at: http://www.qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/tutorial/varieties.aspx.}\]
assess performance and provision of appropriate services, are generally grounded in evidence-based guidelines. The evidence-based guidelines regarding topical fluoride and sealants developed by the American Dental Association\textsuperscript{18} recommend that these services be provided for children “at-risk” for dental caries. The DQA has focused on children at elevated risk for the prevention measures to focus measurement on priority populations where evidence of effectiveness is greatest and there is the least uncertainty about the appropriateness of the intervention. Testing data found that significant performance gaps existed within the elevated risk populations.\textsuperscript{17}

Within the care delivery system, evidence-based guidelines also recommend that patient-level risk assessment should drive treatment planning and care delivery. Accordingly, the DQA’s approach to performance measurement within the care delivery system is based on these patient-centered decisions instead of using broad population level indicators such as socio-economic status to measure performance. Not every child enrolled in Medicaid is at elevated caries risk. While social determinants play a significant role in influencing outcomes, their impact on each patient needs to be carefully assessed. Encouraging individualized risk-based care, in itself, is a quality improvement activity.

Creation of a “performance” measure should not be construed as a policy statement or as a basis for altering benefit design. For example, a performance measure focusing on preventive services for individuals at elevated risk does not imply that only individuals at elevated risk should receive the services; the measure is simply a means of assessing to what degree preventive services are being provided to a particular group of individuals for whom guidelines have established good evidence for recommending the services.

**B2. Why use methodologies that require prior years’ data to identify elevated risk, which may impact feasibility?**

Based on the best current evidence, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) suggests that “clinical judgment of the dentist and his or her ability to combine risk factors, based on their knowledge of the patient and clinical and socio-demographic information is as good as, or better than, any other method of predicting caries risk.”\textsuperscript{19} Therefore, the DQA risk-based measures specifications include the new caries-risk assessment CDT codes introduced in 2014. However, the frequency with which these CDT codes are being reported is yet to be determined. Therefore, additional methodology to identify children at elevated risk was included that is based on prior caries experience, which is an established risk factor that can be
identified using caries-related treatment codes in administrative claims data.

Evidence from a systematic review indicates that previous caries experience is an important predictor of future disease.\textsuperscript{20} Thus, past caries history, identifiable through claims data using caries-related treatment codes, is the strongest evidence-based approach to identify children who are most susceptible to new carious lesions using historical administrative data. The DQA “look-back method” uses a tested methodology to identify children whose individual claims history is indicative of caries risk.\textsuperscript{17}

It is important to note that this methodology is not intended as a “risk assessment tool” to be used at the level of individual patients either to assess risk or to define dental benefits or qualification for services for specific groups of children. It is only a model for the purpose of identifying children who can be confirmed to be at “elevated risk” for caries using claims data for the purpose of measuring program performance. This method is not intended to identify every child who may be at elevated risk.

**B3. Should children be enrolled in each of the three years to apply the ‘look-back method’?**

Children do not have to be enrolled in each of the prior three years. The past history is a look-back period for available claims. The reporting year remains a single year and is the only year during which minimum enrollment length must be verified.

**B4. What should I do if I do not have 3 years of claims history prior to the reporting year for some children meeting the enrollment criteria in the reporting year?**

The measure specifications require looking for specified caries-indicative codes in the reporting year and three prior years. Some children who meet enrollment criteria in the reporting year may not have the claims history with the same plan for prior years. The intent is to identify those children who can be confirmed as being at elevated risk; the intent is not to identify all children at elevated risk. The measure includes the subset of children who can be identified as being at elevated risk.

**B5. If I am a new plan in Medicaid or am entering a new market and do not have any claims from prior years, what can I do?**

If the prior three years claims history is not available, this should be noted within the final reports with an indication of how many years (if any) of data were used. When fewer years of historical data are used, the number of children who qualify for the denominator will decrease and the
measure rates may be impacted. Comparison between plans may not be valid unless all plans use the same look-back period.

C. Interpreting Measure Rates for Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk and Sealants for 10–14 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk

C1. How should the measure scores be interpreted given the limitations of administrative data in identifying previously sealed and non-sealable permanent molars?

These measures cannot be used to determine the absolute percentage of children who have sealants on their permanent molars. Rather this measure is designed to allow programs and plans to assess the relative percentage of children who receive sealants when compared to other reporting entities and to trends over time. It is important to note that a benchmark of 100% for this measure is not realistic due to the limitations of administrative data in identifying teeth that are not candidates for sealants (e.g., those already sealed, not yet erupted, or with active decay). Opportunities for improvement are identified through comparisons across reporting entities and within-unit comparisons using stratified rates for sub-populations (e.g., stratifications based on race, ethnicity, and geographic location).

C2. Why not restrict the measures to just the lower ends of the age ranges? If plans and programs are successful in sealing permanent molars when teeth first erupt, won't the measure score be adversely affected in subsequent years?

Not all molars erupt at the same time and at the same age for all children. During measure testing, the rates of sealant placement were analyzed by age and the placement rates were not concentrated in the lower ages of each age range. However, a more detailed review of the measure score by age may be helpful to plan and program administrators to assist with measure score interpretation within the context of their own systems of care and for the purposes of evaluating and defining potential accountability applications. Effective January 1, 2016, the measure specifications include additional Reporting Guidance that defines the approach for examining sealant placement by age for each of the two measures using the tables below.
### Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)*</th>
<th>Enrolled at elevated risk (DEN)</th>
<th>Enrolled at elevated risk receiving sealants in permanent first molar (NUM)</th>
<th>Rate (NUM/DEN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 (&gt;=6 and &lt;7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (&gt;=7 and &lt;8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (&gt;=8 and &lt;9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (&gt;=9 and &lt;10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Age should be calculated as of the last day of the reporting year.

### Sealants for 10–14 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)*</th>
<th>Enrolled at elevated risk (DEN)</th>
<th>Enrolled at elevated risk receiving sealants in permanent second molar (NUM)</th>
<th>Rate (NUM/DEN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (&gt;=10 and &lt;11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (&gt;=11 and &lt;12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (&gt;=12 and &lt;13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (&gt;=13 and &lt;14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (&gt;=14 and &lt;15)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Age should be calculated as of the last day of the reporting year.

**D. For the measure Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk, what is the difference between the measure adopted by CMS for the Child Core Set reporting by Medicaid and CHIP programs and the measure adopted by HRSA for UDS reporting by Health Centers?**

The Dental Quality Alliance (DQA) developed two distinct measures of Sealants for 6-9 Year Old Children. Both measures report on the percentage of children at elevated caries risk who received a sealant on a permanent first molar in the reporting year, but they were designed for different reporting levels and data sources:

1. **program- and plan-level reporting using administrative enrollment and claims data** – this is the measure adopted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for Child Core Set reporting by Medicaid and CHIP programs; and

2. **practice- and clinic-level reporting using electronic patient record data** – this is the measure adopted by the Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA) for Uniform Data System (UDS) reporting by health centers.

It is critical that measure implementers use and carefully review the measure specifications and guidance for the appropriate measure.
D1. Why are there two different measures?

The specifications for each measure take into account both the reporting level (e.g., program or practice) and the data source (e.g., administrative claims or electronic patient records).

D2. What are the differences in the “reporting levels” and data sources?

Quality of care is assessed at multiple “levels,” such as practices/clinics, health or dental plans, and programs (e.g., Medicaid and CHIP). The measure adopted by CMS is designed for reporting at the program (or plan) level using administrative enrollment and claims data. The measure adopted by HRSA is designed for reporting at the practice/clinic/health center level using electronic patient record data.

D3. How do differences in reporting level and data sources affect the measure specifications?

Different considerations apply for different levels of reporting and different data sources. For example, patients included in the denominator for the program-level measure must meet program enrollment criteria whereas patients for health center-level reporting must be identified as a “patient of record” at that health center. There are other significant differences as well. Please consult the detailed specifications.

D4. Why didn’t the DQA simply retool the claims-based measure and adopt that for practice level reporting?

Both measures report on the percentage of children at elevated caries risk who received a sealant on a permanent first molar in the reporting year. There are differences in the strengths and limitations associated with each data source that need to be considered. For example, one of the limitations of administrative claims data is that these data do not delineate children whose teeth have not erupted, those who have already received sealants in prior years, and those with decayed/filled teeth not candidates for sealants. However, children for whom none of the four permanent first molars are candidates for sealants can be identified in the more detailed electronic patient record data and excluded from the denominator. Further, as noted above, there are different measurement considerations for identifying the “population” included at each reporting level. Due to differences in reporting levels, data sources, and specifications, the scores for the claims-based measure and eMeasure are not comparable, nor should one set of specifications be “retooled” and applied to a different data source or reporting level.
E. For the measure *Topical Fluoride for Children at Elevated Caries Risk*, why were 2 fluoride applications selected to qualify for the numerator?

Evidence suggests that professionally applied topical fluoride, starting as early as six months of age and applied at least every 3 – 6 months in children at increased caries risk, is beneficial in preventing dental caries. Thus, the minimum recommended frequency of 6 months would be equivalent to two fluoride applications per year for children at increased caries risk. Even at this minimum requirement, significant performance gaps were observed in the testing data for all programs, with only 18%-37% (range across the programs included in the testing) of children at elevated risk for dental caries receiving at least two topical fluoride applications. Programs and plans that wish to further explore receipt of topical fluoride among their enrollees to inform quality improvement efforts may find it useful to evaluate the number and percentage of children at increased caries risk who received 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 or more topical fluoride applications.

F. For the “oral health” version of the measure *Topical Fluoride for Children at Elevated Caries Risk*, can CPT code 99188 (application of topical fluoride varnish by a physician or other qualified health care professional) be counted in the numerator?

Yes, the measure specifications indicate that “some states may use codes other than CDT codes to reimburse for fluoride from non-dental providers. These codes should be included in the [SERVICE CODE] codes in addition to D1206 and D1208.”

G. For the measure *Follow-Up after Emergency Department Visits for Dental Caries in Children*, are the 7-day and 30-day follow up periods for visits with a dentist after a caries-related emergency department visit mutually exclusive?

No, visits that are captured in the 7-day follow-up visit also will be captured in the 30-day follow-up visit.
H. Where can I get more information about implementing DQA eMeasures?

Guidance for implementing eMeasures is contained within the measure metadata in the human readable specifications located on the United States Health Information Knowledgebase website at: http://ushik.org/QualityMeasuresListing?draft=true&system=dcm&sortField=570&sortDirection=ascending&enableAsynchronousLoading=true. Questions also can be directed to DQA staff at dqa@ada.org.

Please contact DQA staff at dqa@ada.org with additional implementation questions.
## Appendix 1: Measure Specification Updates

### 2018 Updates: Effective January 1, 2018

There were no updates to the measure specifications.

### 2017 Updates: Effective January 1, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topical Fluoride for Children at Elevated Caries Risk (TFL-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D1354 (interim caries arresting medicament application) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2016 CDT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk (SL1-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D1354 (interim caries arresting medicament application) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2016 CDT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealants for 10–14 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk (SL2-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D1354 (interim caries arresting medicament application) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2016 CDT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive Services for Children at Elevated Caries Risk (PRV-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D1354 (interim caries arresting medicament application) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2016 CDT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-Up after Emergency Department Visit by Children for Dental Caries (EDF-CH-A)</td>
<td>Change the full name of the measure from Follow-Up after Emergency Department Visit by Children for Dental Caries to Follow-Up after Emergency Department Visits for Dental Caries in Children for naming consistency with EDV-CH-A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2016 Updates: Effective January 1, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilization of Services (UTL-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 1 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Evaluation (OEV-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 1 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical Fluoride for Children at Elevated Caries Risk (TFL-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D2941 (interim therapeutic restoration - primary dentition) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2014 CDT. Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 2 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk (SL1-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D2941 (interim therapeutic restoration - primary dentition) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2014 CDT. Add Reporting Guidance Table with stratification of measure rates by age (6, 7, 8, and 9 years). Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 2 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sealants for 10–14 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk (SL2-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D2941 (interim therapeutic restoration - primary dentition) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2014 CDT. Add Reporting Guidance Table with stratification of measure rates by age (10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 years). Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 2 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive Services for Children at Elevated Caries Risk (PRV-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add CDT code D2941 (interim therapeutic restoration - primary dentition) to the set of codes in Table 1 of the specifications to identify children at “elevated risk.” This code was introduced in the 2014 CDT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment Services (TRT-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 1 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Continuity (CCN-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 1 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usual Source of Services (USS-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 1 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Member Per Month Cost of Clinical Services (CCS-CH-A)</td>
<td>Add NUCC code 125Q00000X (added to NUCC code set on 1/1/2015), to the provider taxonomy codes in Table 1 to identify “dental” services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
End Notes


