

WHAT IS THE HEDIS® FOLLOW-UP AFTER HOSPITALIZATION (FUH) MEASURE?

HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data Information Set) is a widely used set of performance measures in the managed care industry, developed and maintained by NCQA. HEDIS measures results and drives improvement efforts surrounding best practices. When an individual (six years and older) is hospitalized for a mental health diagnosis and then discharged to the community, an outpatient appointment with a mental health practitioner is scheduled with a goal for the individual to be seen within seven days of discharge, but no later than 30 days from the discharge date.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE FUH MEASURE

Evidence suggests that individuals who receive follow-up care after a psychiatric hospitalization show a decline in re-admittance to an inpatient facility^{1,2}. Additionally, the ability to provide consistent continuity of care can result in better mental health outcomes and supports a patient's return to baseline functioning in a less-restrictive level of care.

WHAT CAN PROVIDERS DO TO IMPROVE FUH ENGAGEMENT RATES?

Inpatient Providers:

- Discharge planning should begin as soon as the individual is admitted and should be ongoing.
- Schedule the patient's aftercare appointment **prior** to discharge.
- Attempt to alleviate barriers to attending appointments prior to discharge (i.e., obtaining accurate, current contact information, coordinating with Beacon).
- Ensure the member's discharge paperwork is sent to the outpatient provider and to Beacon within 24 hours.
- Invite care coordinators to meet members so that aftercare planning can occur.

Outpatient Providers:

- Ensure flexibility when scheduling appointments for patients who are being discharged from acute care; the appointment should be scheduled within seven days of discharge.
- Review medications with patients to ensure they understand the purpose, appropriate frequency, and method of administration.
- Submit claims in a timely manner.

WHAT AFTERCARE SERVICES QUALIFY?

- Medication Management with a Psychiatrist/ARNP
- Individual Therapy in the home or office in accordance with program specifications
- Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) or Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)
- Mental Health and/or Substance Use Assessments, Screenings, Treatment Planning
- Residential Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Community-Based Wrap-Around and/or Day Treatment Services

Please note: Outpatient visit conducted on the same day of discharge from an inpatient hospitalization unit are no longer reportable as part of the quality measure. Scheduling follow up appointments between the first and seventh day *after* hospital discharge ensures meaningful, effective engagement.

BEACON CAN HELP!

Beacon's website (www.beaconhealthoptions.com) offers a number of member- and provider-level tools to assist in finding and scheduling needed services for members who are in need of follow-up care after an inpatient hospitalization.

HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

¹ Smith et al. (2017). Psychiatric Inpatient Discharge Planning Practices and Attendance at Aftercare Appointments. *Psychiatric Services*, 68(1), 92-95. (doi:10.1176/appi.ps.201500552)

² Hengartner, Michael P., et al. (2015). Introduction of a psychosocial post-discharge intervention program aimed at reducing psychiatric re-hospitalization rates and at improving mental health and functioning. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 53(1): 10-15. (doi:10.1111/ppc.12131)