

# NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

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CONTACT: Dorie Hightower, NQF  
202 783 1300 or [press@qualityforum.org](mailto:press@qualityforum.org)

## NQF Endorses Mental Health Outcome Measures

### *Measures assess results of care for depression*

The National Quality Forum (NQF) has endorsed outcome measures to assess the results and thereby improve the quality of care provided to people with mental illnesses. The 4 endorsed mental health measures focus on depression and patients' satisfaction during an inpatient psychiatric hospital stay. The endorsed measures provide important data on the outcomes, or results of care provided to those with mental illnesses, and are an important addition to the existing portfolio of performance measures to assess and improve care in these areas.

These measures are a part of NQF's ongoing work to endorse outcome measures in high-impact areas. Recently, NQF endorsed outcome measures for [cardiovascular and pulmonary conditions and care in the intensive care unit](#), as well as outcome measures for stroke, diabetes, acute myocardial infarction, chronic conditions, and pneumonia.

"Healthcare for all patients, at all levels of the system, should be the highest quality possible," said Janet M. Corrigan, PhD, MBA, NQF president and CEO. "Outcome measures reflect the reasons patients seek care and are an important assessment of the healthcare system as a whole. These measures in mental health are particularly important because they will provide a more complete picture of the quality and safety of patient care in areas where there have previously been few measures."

NQF endorsed four mental health measures that focus on depression and the use of consumer surveys. Specifically, endorsed measures provide data on the number of people with depression who experience remission in 6 months and 12 months, and patients' satisfaction during an inpatient psychiatric hospital stay. (A full list of endorsed mental health outcome measures follows.)

The Mental Health Outcomes Steering Committee was co-chaired by Tricia Leddy, BS, MS, senior policy advisor, Rhode Island Department of Health, and Jeffrey Susman, MD, professor and chair, Department of Family Medicine, University of Cincinnati.

"The endorsement of mental health outcomes measures by NQF signals the importance of behavioral and mental health to overall well-being," said Dr. Susman. "While only the beginning of a journey to effectively measure and improve mental health outcomes, this first step emphasizes the importance of integrating medical and mental healthcare and important gaps in our current measure portfolio."

NQF is a voluntary consensus standards-setting organization. Any party may request reconsideration of the endorsement recommendations, in whole or in part, by notifying NQF in

writing via our web-based form no later than February 24th. For an appeal to be considered, the notification must include information clearly demonstrating that the appellant has interests that are directly and materially affected by the NQF-endorsed recommendations and that the NQF decision has had (or will have) an adverse effect on those interests.

*Mental Health Outcome Measures*

- Depression remission at six months (Minnesota Community Measurement)
- Depression remission at 12 months (Minnesota Community Measurement)
- Depression utilization of the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) tool (Minnesota Community Measurement)
- Inpatient Consumer Survey (ICS) (National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute, Inc.)

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*The National Quality Forum (NQF) operates under a three-part mission to improve the quality of American healthcare by:*

- *Building consensus on national priorities and goals for performance improvement and working in partnership to achieve them;*
- *Endorsing national consensus standards for measuring and publicly reporting on performance; and*
- *Promoting the attainment of national goals through education and outreach programs.*

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