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Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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CMS NEWS

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Quality Data Added to Physician Compare Website Patients Get More Information to Help Find a Doctor

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that for the first time, quality measures have been added to Physician Compare, a website that helps consumers search for information about hundreds of thousands of physicians and other health care professionals. The site helps consumers make informed choices about their care.

“Patients and their families need facts to help them in making important decisions about health care, and choosing the right physician is one of the most important decisions they face,” said CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner.

In the first year, 66 group practices and 141 Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) now have quality data publicly reported on Physician Compare. The data are reported at the group practice and ACO level.

The quality measures being added today include:

- Controlling blood sugar levels in patients with diabetes.
- Controlling blood pressure in patients with diabetes.
- Prescribing aspirin to patients with diabetes and heart disease.
- Patients with diabetes who do not use tobacco.
- Prescribing medicine to improve the pumping action of the heart in patients who have both heart disease and certain other conditions.

The provider ratings are displayed using stars, which are a graphical representation of performance on a measure. The actual percentage score is also listed to the right of the star display. CMS chose this system to make the information more usable and easy to scan for consumers.

Physician Compare, created by the Affordable Care Act, already includes information about specialties offered by doctors and group practices; board certification; and affiliation with hospitals and other health care professionals.

“This is an important first step in publicly reporting quality measures on Physician Compare,” said Patrick Conway, M.D., CMS’s Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Administrator for Innovation and Quality. “Offering a strong set of meaningful quality measures on the site will ultimately help consumers make decisions and it will encourage quality improvement among the clinician community, who shares CMS's strong commitment to the best possible patient care.”

Physician Compare is available at <http://www.medicare.gov/physiciancompare>. It also can be accessed through www.medicare.gov and by clicking on “Find doctors & other health professionals.”

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