



The National Behavioral Health Quality Framework was developed in an effort to harmonize and prioritize health behavior measures that reflect the core principles of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration as well as to support the National Quality Strategy. The National Behavioral Health Quality Framework provides a guide by which to examine quality prevention, treatment, and recovery elements at the payer/system/plan, provider/practitioner, and patient/population levels. The National Behavioral Health Quality Framework is aligned with the National Quality Strategy in that it supports the three broad aims of better care, healthy people/healthy communities, and affordable care. However, the Framework was broadened to include the *dissemination* of proven interventions and *accessible* care for diverse populations—the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration offers the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework as a guiding document for the identification and implementation of key behavioral health quality measures for use in Agency or system funding decisions, monitoring behavioral health of the Nation, and the delivery of behavioral health care.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration addresses behavioral health issues, which refer to a state of mental/emotional being and/or choices and actions that affect wellness. Behavioral health problems include substance abuse or misuse, alcohol and drug addiction, serious psychological distress, suicide, and mental and substance-use disorders. These health behaviors may be associated with a range of problems from unhealthful stress to diagnosable and treatable diseases like serious mental illnesses and substance-use disorders, which are often chronic in nature but that people can and do recover from. Behavioral health is also used to describe the service systems encompassing the promotion of emotional health; the prevention of mental and substance use disorders, substance use, and related problems; treatments and services for mental and substance use disorders; and recovery support.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration intends to use the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework core measures in a variety of settings, rules, and programs, as well as in evaluation and quality assurance efforts to indicate a consistent level of attention to quality. These measures are not intended to be the complete set of measures any particular payer, system, practitioner, or program may want to use to monitor the quality of the system or of the care or activities provided. However, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration will encourage entities to utilize these basic measures, when appropriate, as a consistent set of indicators of quality in behavioral health prevention, promotion, treatment and recovery support efforts across the Nation. Likewise, as measurement capacity and quality measures evolve, the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework will evolve, making it a living document playing a critical role in discussion and implementation of

behavioral health quality assurance and monitoring efforts nationwide. To the extent possible, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration will incorporate these measures and this framework into its own quality assurance tools such as program evaluations, technical assistance, training, product development, etc., with the end goal of continued alignment to the National Quality Strategy. The National Behavioral Health Quality Framework and its use will evolve as the field of behavioral health quality assurance changes and matures over time.

In addition, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is working toward integration of core measures as espoused by both the National Quality Strategy and the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework into grant and contract activities.

In late 2012 (fiscal year [FY] 2013), the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework underwent two phases of review and input, involving the nomination and selection of key quality measures as endorsed by a panel of stakeholders internal to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and a second panel of external stakeholders composed of researchers, consumers, clinicians, and State agency personnel. In addition, the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework was released for public comment in September 2013. The information gathered from the stakeholder involvement and public comments was used to publish the first version of the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework in fall 2013. A third round of public comment was held in late 2013, and the next version of the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework is under way.

A Rapid Measures Review Workgroup was convened to identify core and supplemental behavioral health measures to be used in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration programming. In addition, initial steps have been taken with States and territories to begin to collect client-level data.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration expects to sustain and expand quality measure adoption efforts during FY 2015 and 2016.

- Develop and implement quality and performance metrics within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Leading Change 2.0 document
- Continue work with collaborating Agencies to broaden the range of National Quality Forum-endorsed behavioral health measures, which will further enhance the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework
- Expand collaboration with the Veterans Administration, the Department of Defense, and the National Institutes of Health in the development of common metrics for behavioral health conditions
- Revise and submit a streamlined package of Government Performance and Results Act measures consistent with overall quality goals
- Develop internal and contract skills in providing technical assistance in the use of quality measures to assess impact and inform decisions at the State, local, and community grantee level