



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. To help achieve this mission, beginning in 2011, SAMHSA developed the National Behavioral Health Quality Framework (NBHQF) in an effort to harmonize and prioritize behavioral health measures. The NBHQF, published in 2013, directly aligns to the National Quality Strategy (NQS) and provides a framework by which to examine quality prevention, treatment, and recovery elements at the payer/system/plan, provider/practitioner, and patient/population levels. The NBHQF is aligned with the NQS as it supports the three broad aims of better care, healthy people/healthy communities, and affordable care. Over the years, the framework was broadened to include the *dissemination* of proven interventions and *accessible* care—a concept that captures affordable care along with other elements of care accessibility, including the impact of health disparities. SAMHSA offers the NBHQF 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.

As a result of several phases of review and input, involving the nomination and selection of key quality measures that were endorsed by a panel of stakeholders internal to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and a second panel of external stakeholders composed of researchers, consumers, clinicians, and State agency personnel, the NBHQF has continued to evolve based on stakeholder feedback. The NBHQF is designed to be used by behavioral health payers, providers, and at the community level, with broad dissemination of the Framework among stakeholders.

Additionally, SAMHSA worked with the National Quality Forum (NQF) and oversaw the development of a set of behavioral health quality measures that includes 11 measures that received NQF endorsement in 2014. Several of these measures have been adopted for use in the CMS Adult Core Medicaid Core Set as well as HEDIS. SAMHSA also participated in range of Federal workgroups to ensure measure alignment and supported work in e-specification and participation on technical expert panels related to behavioral health quality measures.

In 2016, SAMHSA is working to disseminate core behavioral health measures through peer reviewed literature in the areas of depression, alcohol, and tobacco. The agency is also working with States to develop a core set of measures that, in time, will standardize data collection. Lastly, SAMHSA is working to incorporate these behavioral health measures into Federal RFAs/FOAs, regulations, guidelines, standards, data systems, discretionary, and block grant programming. Measure alignment and harmonization are important for driving the National Quality Strategy forward.