Using Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Quality Oversight Activities for Quality Improvement

Quality Improvement Technical Assistance

The Division of Quality and Health Outcomes within the Center for Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Services (CMCS) provides technical assistance (TA) to support state Medicaid and CHIP programs with information, tools, and expert knowledge to improve care and outcomes for Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries.

This presentation is part of a TA series focused on quality improvement (QI) in Medicaid and CHIP managed care.
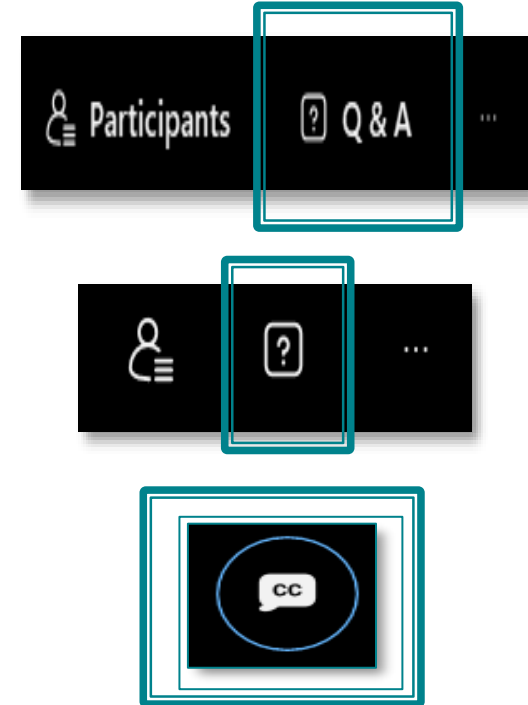
Purpose

Today's webinar describes several managed care quality (MCQ) oversight activities and how state Medicaid and CHIP programs can use them to inform and support QI projects. The goal is to help Medicaid and CHIP staff understand the connections between MCQ oversight activities.

This presentation can be used to:

- Onboard state Medicaid and CHIP managed care and QI staff.

- Refresh Medicaid and CHIP staff as they prepare to revise the managed care oversight materials (such as state quality strategy) or launch a QI project.

- Describe MCQ oversight activities to Medicaid and CHIP program QI partners.

- Identify opportunities to use MCQ oversight activities in continuous QI.

Housekeeping

- If you are experiencing technical issues during the webinar, please send a message through the Q&A function to All Panelists

- Ask questions!
  - Submit your questions using the Q&A function.
  - Please note that the chat function is disabled for this webinar.

- To enable closed captioning, click on the "CC" icon in the lower-left corner of the screen. You can also click "Ctrl, Shift A" on your keyboard.

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Responding to Polls

We will periodically pause throughout today's webinar to solicit feedback using polls. We will use your feedback to refine the content of the webinar, as well as future TA resources.

Polls will appear on the right side of your screen, underneath the participant's panel

Poll 1: Who's In Attendance

1. **What type of organization do you represent?**
   A. Medicaid and CHIP program
   B. Managed care plan
   C. External Quality Review Organization (EQRO)
   D. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
   E. Other

2. **What is the primary focus of your role?**
   A. Managed care contracting and oversight
   B. QI projects
   C. Both
   D. Other

3. **How long have you worked on/with Medicaid/CHIP programs?**
   A. < 5 years
   B. 5-10 years
   C. 10-20 years
   D. >20 years

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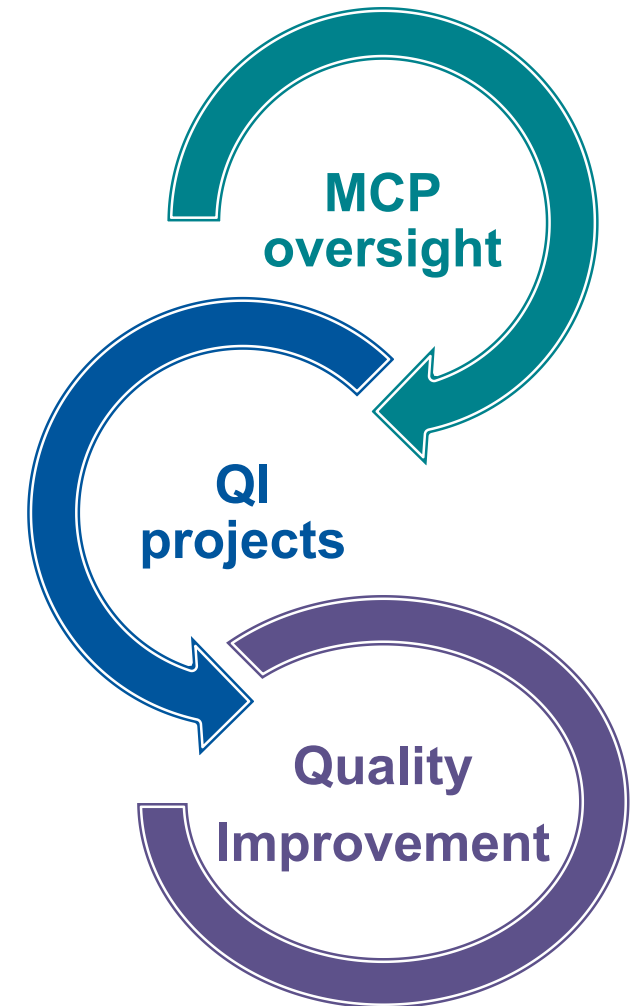Health Care Quality
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Agenda

- QI in Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care

- Managed Care Quality (MCQ) Oversight Activities

- QI Projects

- Using MCQ Oversight Activities to Support QI Projects

- Q&A

QI in Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care

Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care

- As the dominant delivery system for Medicaid and CHIP, managed care programs have enormous potential to achieve state priorities and improve access, health care quality, and outcomes.

- Medicaid and CHIP programs engage in QI through various activities, including **managed care oversight** and **QI projects**.

- By aligning, coordinating, and integrating these activities, Medicaid and CHIP programs can increase the impact of their overall QI efforts.

MCP oversight

QI projects

Quality Improvement

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The Role of Medicaid and CHIP Programs in Managed Care QI

In this presentation, "states" refers to Medicaid and CHIP programs and their staff.

States must conduct managed care QI activities, including:

- Developing a quality strategy (QS), giving direction to and outlining MCQ oversight.
- Requiring MCPs to establish an ongoing comprehensive Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement (QAPI) program, which includes several components aimed at QI.
- Implementing an annual External Quality Review (EQR).

States also support managed care QI efforts by:

- Incorporating MCPs into QI projects.
- Ensuring alignment of QI projects with the managed care program activities.
- Sharing data with MCPs to drive QI.
- Providing technical assistance and support to MCPs as they conduct QI.
- Disseminating best practices across MCPs.

Managed Care Quality Oversight Activities

MCQ Oversight and Reporting

Through **managed care quality oversight activities**, states hold MCPs accountable for the services they provide to enrollees and compliance with regulatory and contract requirements.

To support oversight and drive QI in managed care, CMS requires Medicaid and CHIP managed care states to use MCQ oversight activities, including:

QS

Quality strategies (QS)

QAPI

Quality assessment and performance improvement (QAPI) programs

EQR

External quality review (EQR)

Quality Strategy

QS

- The QS articulates a state's vision and priorities for managed care, describes its QI goals and objectives taking into account the enrolled population, and provides a roadmap for achieving and assessing improvement toward the state's goals.

- Per federal regulations at 42 C.F.R. 438.340(a) and 42 C.F.R. 457.1240(e), the state's QS must include the following:
  - Measurable goals and objectives for continuous QI.
  - Metrics and performance targets for measuring MCP performance.
  - A plan to identify, evaluate, and reduce health disparities.
  - A description of the performance improvement projects (PIPs) to be implemented by MCPs.

- QS must be updated as needed but no less than once every three years.

Learn More! To learn more about QS requirements and how to draft and update a QS, review the Quality Strategy Toolkit.

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Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement

QAPI

- QAPI activities, which are included in states' contracts with MCPs, aim to improve the quality of health care services and outcomes provided by MCPs.

- Per federal regulations at 42 C.F.R. 438.330 and 42 C.F.R. 457.1240(b), MCP QAPI programs must include the following:
  - Performance measures and targets the state will use to monitor MCP performance.
  - Clinical and non-clinical PIPs that MCPs must conduct to achieve sustained improvement in health outcomes, enrollee satisfaction, and hit performance targets.

- QAPI programs must also include mechanisms to detect under- and over-utilization and to assess the quality and appropriateness of care for enrollees with special health needs or who receive long-term services and supports (if the MCP provides LTSS).

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External Quality Review

EQR

- EQR is the analysis and evaluation of aggregated information on quality, timeliness, and access to the health care services provided by MCPs. It provides insights into MCP approaches to QI, MCP strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations for both the state and MCPs.

- EQR is conducted by an External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) and must comply with federal requirements at 42 C.F.R. 438 Subpart E and 42 C.F.R. 457 Subpart L.

- The EQRO validates QAPI performance measures and PIPs and shares results in the EQR technical report, which the state must make publicly available.

- States may also conduct optional activities such as administration of quality-of-care surveys, implementation of non-QAPI PIPs, and focus studies of health care quality.

Learn More! To learn more about EQR requirements and how to conduct EQR activities, review the EQR Protocols.

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Key Aspects of MCQ Oversight Activities: Performance Measures and PIPs

Performance Measures

- States specify the standard performance measures the MCPs must include in their QAPI programs.

- States use performance measures to monitor the performance of individual MCPs and compare performance among MCPs.

- Performance measures inform the evaluation of QI activities and help direct attention to needed QI efforts.
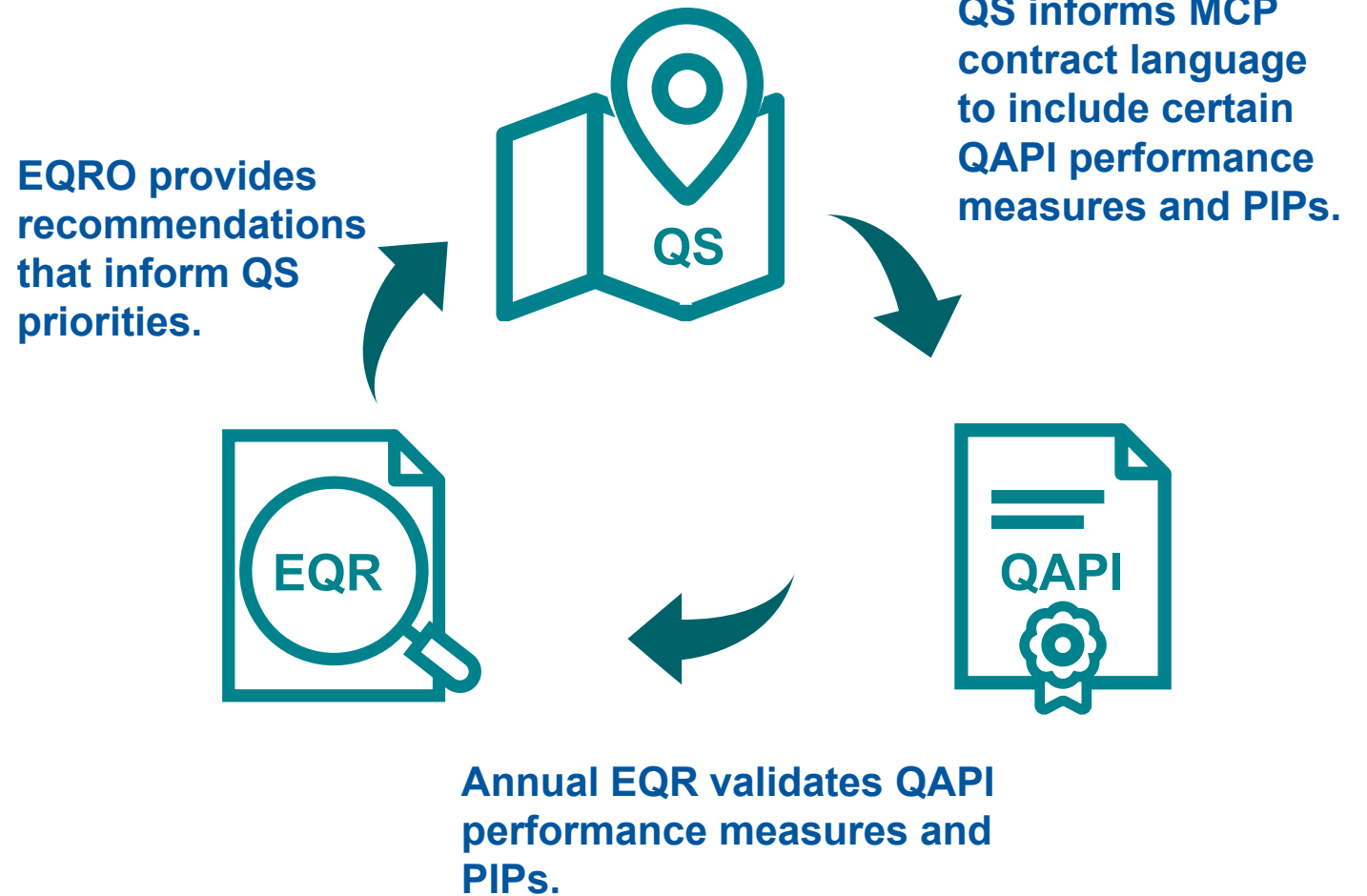
PIPs

- MCPs must implement PIPs designed to achieve significant improvement, sustained over time, in health outcomes and enrollee experience.

- MCPs must implement both clinical and non-clinical PIPs.

- Some states mandate one or more specific PIP priority areas (e.g., preventive dental visits) that MCPs must address, while other states identify broader areas of focus (e.g., oral health care), allowing MCPs to select the specific topic.

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MCQ oversight activities inform and reinforce each other.

States should update their MCQ oversight documents regularly, incorporating lessons learned from each one into the others.

QS informs MCP contract language to include certain QAPI performance measures and PIPs.

EQRO provides recommendations that inform QS priorities.

QS

QAPI

EQR

Annual EQR validates QAPI performance measures and PIPs.

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MCQ Cycle Example

State includes increasing breast cancer screening as one of its MCQ goals.

State includes breast cancer screening in MCP contracts. MCPs incorporate breast cancer screening metrics and PIPs in their QAPI programs.

EQRO compares MCP performance on the breast cancer screening metrics and validates MCP PIPs. EQRO finds that several plans have improved performance, but not all plans. EQRO highlights PIP activities that proved effective, such as reminder notices.

Plans revise their QAPI PIPs to include promising interventions, including reminder notices.

EQRO continues to monitor MCP performance on breast cancer screening. In the final remeasurement year, the EQRO shares that MCPs implementing robust processes to reach enrollees had the highest improvement in breast cancer screening rates.

State revises its QS to (1) increase the target for breast cancer screening rates and (2) include a new objective related to improving processes for reaching out to enrollees.

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Poll 2: Using MCQ Oversight Activities

- **Please select all that apply:**
  - I have reviewed some of my state's managed care QS.
  - I have reviewed some of my state's EQR technical reports.
  - I am aware of the performance measures and PIPs included in my state's MCP QAPI programs.
  - None of the above.
- **Does your state discuss EQR findings internally?**
- **Does your state review EQR findings with your MCPs?**
- **Please select all that apply:**
  - I would like to learn more about QS.
  - I would like to learn more about QAPI.
  - I would like to learn more about EQR.
  - I would like to learn more about MCQ Cycle.

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QI Projects

QI Projects

- A **QI project** is a set of focused activities to improve quality, timeliness, or access to healthcare services for Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries.

- States may have QI projects specific to their managed care program, fee-for-service program, or projects targeting both.

- States select QI project topics through a variety of means, including:
  - Reviewing performance on quality metrics.
  - Aligning with state or federal priorities.
  - Applying guidance from MCQ oversight activities, such as the state's quality strategy.

QI Project Components

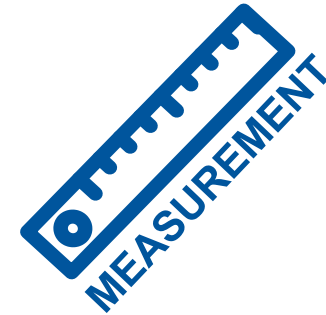QI projects have several key components, including:

Aim statement

A QI project's aim statement details what the project will achieve and who is in the target population.

Change ideas

Change ideas are evidence- or experience-based interventions that the QI project will test.

Measurement strategies

QI projects use measurement strategies to monitor progress and assess whether they are moving toward their aim.
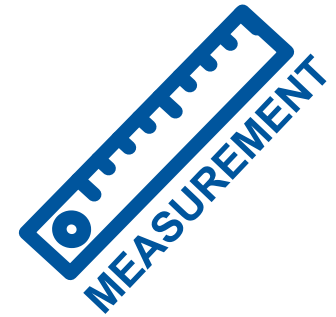
Example QI Project

AIM

Improve well-care visit attendance among teenagers ages 13–18 in the Junco area by 10 percentage points, from 65% to 75%, by December 31, 2024.

Change Ideas

Test the impact of having care coordinators reach out to teenagers with overdue well-care visits and offering their families transportation to their next visit.

MEASUREMENT

Monitor (1) number of teenagers receiving outreach, (2) number of teenagers using transportation benefit, and (3) well-child visits among children ages 13–18 in the Junco area.

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How Do PIPs Differ from QI Projects?

PIPs can be QI projects, but not all QI projects are PIPs. PIPs and QI projects often use the same QI techniques, such as Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) tests.

States can use PIPs to sustain and spread successful QI project interventions.

Differences between PIPs and QI Projects

	PIPs	QI Projects
Regulatory requirements	Required under Medicaid and CHIP regulations Must be designed, conducted, and reported in a methodologically sound manner that meets all state and federal requirements Must be validated by the state's EQRO during EQR in accordance with the EQR Protocols Must be included in the state's QAPI program and reflected in the MCP contract	None
Entity conducting work	MCPs	Any of the state's QI partners, including but not limited to MCPs
Delivery system	Managed care only	Managed care and/or fee-for-service

Poll 3: QI Projects

- **Have you worked on a managed care QI project outside of PIPs?**

- **Please select all that apply:**
  - Before starting a QI project, my team reviews our state QS.
  - Before starting a QI project, my team reviews out MCP QAPI programs.
  - Before starting a QI project, my team reviews past EQR technical reports.
  - None of the above.

Using MCQ Oversight Activities to Support QI Projects

How MCQ Oversight Activities Can Support QI Projects

If a QI project includes managed care populations, the QI project team can review the MCQ oversight activities to (1) understand the managed care QI efforts already underway and (2) ensure the QI project aligns with the state's managed care QI priorities.

State QI project teams can use the QS to…
- Identify focus areas for QI projects.
- Understand current QI efforts underway in the state's managed care program.

State QI project teams can use EQR technical reports to…
- Review MCP-level findings and identify MCPs to work with or populations to focus on.
- Identify promising QI project change ideas to test.

State QI project teams can use MCP QAPI programs to…
- Identify measures for QI project measurement strategies.
- Sustain and spread successful QI project ideas.

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Examples of Using MCQ Oversight Activities to Develop Aim Statements

If a QI project team wants to identify a focus area, they can review the state's **QS** goals and objectives section.

If a QI project team has a focus area, they can review **EQR technical reports** for ideas on targeting their QI efforts.

QS — State directs its managed care program to focus on improving breast cancer screening by including it as an objective in the **QS**.

AIM — QI project team uses QS objective to develop an **aim statement** around improving breast cancer screening rates.

EQR — The **EQRO** recommended that the state target two counties for QI interventions as they performed below the national median on a breast cancer screening measure.

AIM — QI project team uses these two counties as their target populations and names them in the **aim statement.**

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Examples of Using MCQ Oversight Activities To Identify Change Ideas

When looking for **change ideas**, states can review **EQR** technical reports for PIP best practices and interventions.

States can also review their **QS** to understand the QI work underway and how they can build on it.

EQR

From the **EQR technical report**, QI project team learns that a recent MCP PIP improved cervical cancer screening rates with outreach by care coordinators and by offering transportation.

QS

From the **QS**, the QI project team learns that the state is working to improve preventive care by addressing transportation barriers.
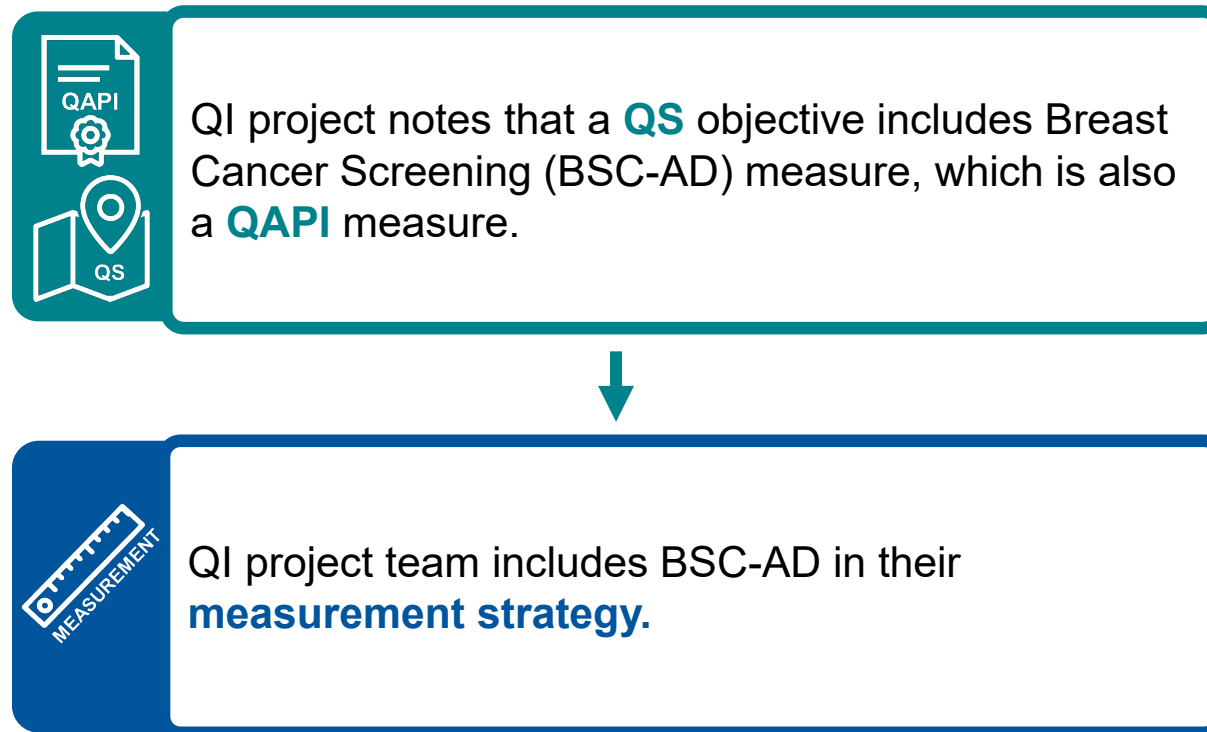
Change Ideas

QI project team decides to test whether this **change idea** (care coordinator outreach and offering transportation) will also improve breast cancer screening rates.

Change Ideas

QI project team works with an MCP care team to contact members to understand their transportation barriers. They learn that there were few public transit options and decide to test a gift card for ride-share apps.

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Examples of Using MCQ Oversight Activities to Create Measurement Strategies

When developing **measurement strategies**, states are encouraged to align with MCP **QAPI** programs and their **QS** goals and objectives.

QI project notes that a **QS** objective includes Breast Cancer Screening (BSC-AD) measure, which is also a **QAPI** measure.

QI project team includes BSC-AD in their **measurement strategy.**

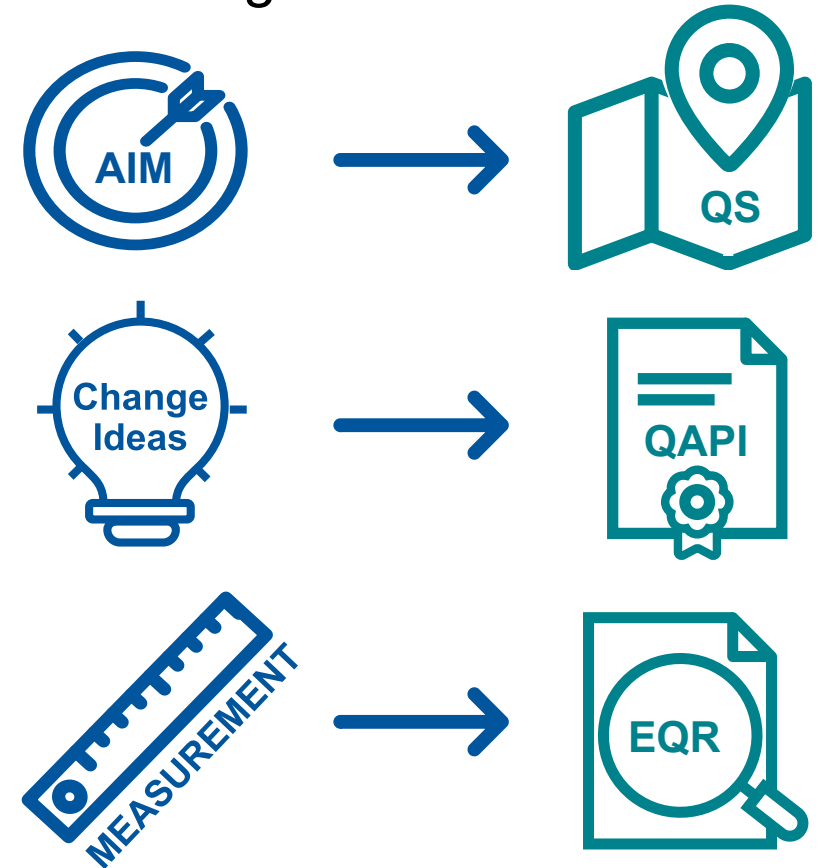# How QI Projects Can Inform Managed Care Quality Oversight

Revise the MCQ oversight activities to reflect QI project learning.

States can refine their **QS** goals and objectives to reflect **aims** from successful QI projects or large upcoming QI initiatives.

States can test QI project **change ideas** or spread successful change ideas by suggesting them as **QAPI** interventions to their MCP contracts.

As an optional EQR activity under 438.358(c), states can ask their **EQROs** to calculate measures included in a QI project **measurement strategy** to help assess the QI project's impact at the MCP level or managed care program level.

Note: Appendix B includes additional suggestions for integrating QI projects into the MCQ cycle.

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Integrating QI into Daily Managed Care Work

The MCQ oversight activities' success and ability to support QI projects rely on close connections between states and their QI partners.

To support these connections, Medicaid and CHIP managed care staff can:

Include QS goals and objectives and associated QAPI program initiatives as **regular topics in meetings with MCPs** to ensure they are prioritized by MCP leadership. Periodically invite QI project staff to MCP meetings or share QI project updates with MCP leaders.

Consider forming a **designated QI workgroup** that is a collaboration with MCPs to share best practices among MCPs related to the priorities within the QS and QAPI program. Invite QI project staff to share lessons that could inform MCP activities and for the MCP staff to inform QI projects.

Work with quality measurement and data analytics teams, MCP staff, and EQROs to **monitor monthly or quarterly progress** on QAPI quality metrics and PIPs. If metrics or PIPs are not on track, Medicaid and CHIP staff can engage additional QI partners to identify potential QI project interventions or provide additional support to MCPs.

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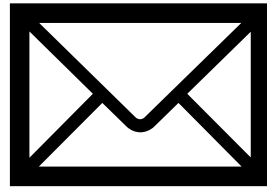Health Care Quality
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Questions

Please submit your questions through the Q&A function in the webinar platform. We will answer as many questions as we can during the webinar.

TA Resources

- CMS Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Quality webpage: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/medicaid-managed-care/index.html

- CMS Quality Strategy webpage: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/medicaid-managed-care-quality/state-quality-strategies/index.html

- Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Quality Strategy Toolkit: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/downloads/managed-care-quality-strategy-toolkit.pdf

- CMS's revised EQR protocols: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/medicaid-managed-care/external-quality-review/index.html

Stay tuned for additional TA products on Medicaid and CHIP managed care quality improvement!

TA Mailbox

Please contact the CMS MCQ TA mailbox with any questions related to Medicaid and CHIP managed care quality

ManagedCareQualityTA@cms.hhs.gov

Poll 4: Using MCQ Oversight Activities for QI

- **What staff or teams at your state's Medicaid and CHIP program participate in developing the QS and reviewing QAPI programs and EQR technical reports?**

- **What are your state's *successes* using QS, EQR, and/or QAPI for QI?**

- **What are your state's *challenges* using QS, EQR, and/or QAPI for QI?**

- **Does your state integrate QS, EQR, and/or QAPI to drive QI (e.g., do you review EQRO recommendations when developing your QS)? If so, how?**

- **What are your state's managed care TA needs?**

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Thank you for joining today's webinar!

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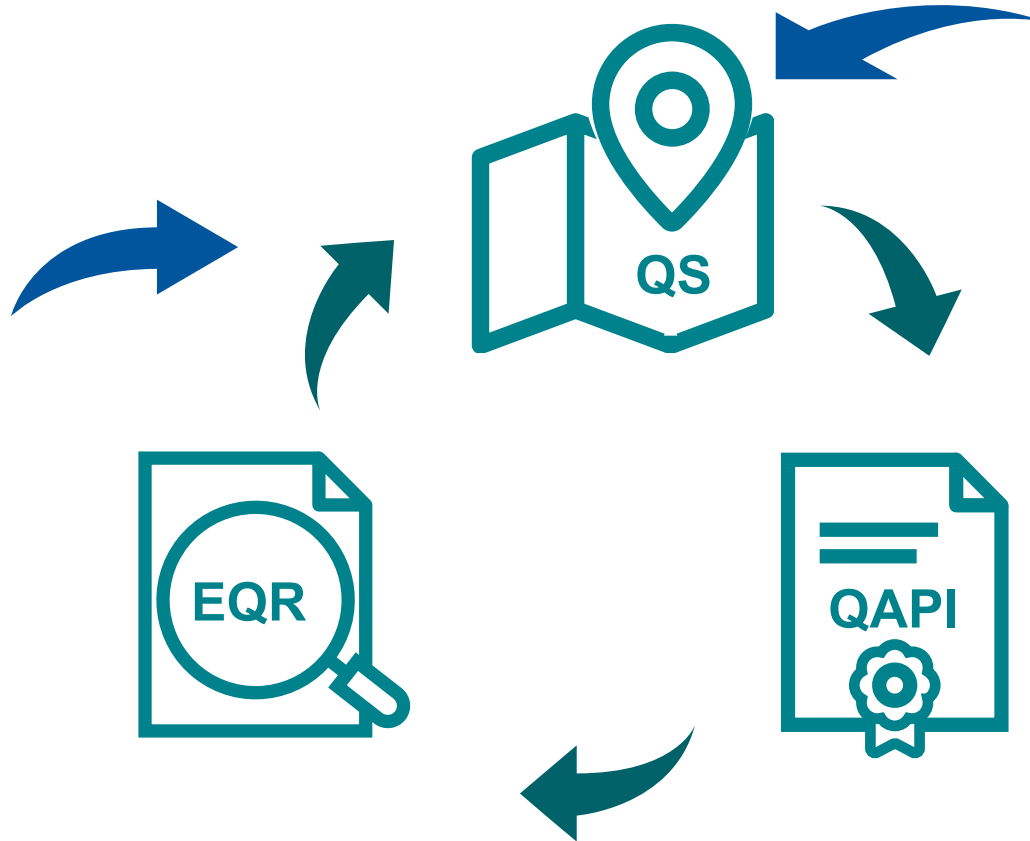# Appendix A. Selected Acronyms and Definitions

Key MCQ Terms

Definition	Description
External Quality Review (EQR)	The analysis and evaluation by an EQRO of aggregated information on quality, timeliness, and access to the health care services provided by MCP
External Quality Review Organization (EQRO)	An independent organization that conducts the EQR and reports findings in an annual report
Managed care plan (MCP)	Entities that provide health care coverage to Medicaid, CHIP, or dual eligible beneficiaries through a delivery system organized to manage cost, utilization, and quality
Performance Improvement Project (PIP)	A concentrated effort on a particular area to strategize ways to improve care
Performance Measure (PM)	Measure the degree to which a health care service is rendered, and evidence-based guidelines were followed by providers or MCPs
Quality assessment and performance improvement (QAPI)	An ongoing comprehensive quality program that states must require through their contracts with each MCP
Quality strategy (QS)	A three-year plan for assessing and improving the quality of care provided by MCPs that states must draft and implement

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Appendix B. Integrating QI Projects and Partners into the MCQ Cycle

Bringing QI Projects and Partners into the MCQ Cycle

As states begin to revise their QS, they can engage MCPs, QI partners, and EQROs to identify key priorities for the managed care program, potential PIP topics and interventions, and performance measures. Before finalizing its QS updates, states must also gather input through required public comment.

Each annual EQR report must assess the degree to which each plan has effectively address the recommendations for QI during the previous year. States can review EQR findings with MCPs, QI partners, and EQROs to determine whether adjustments to the QAPI or other managed care program priorities are needed.

QS

EQR

QAPI

States must require plans to implement an ongoing comprehensive QAPI program. States can facilitate best practice sharing among MCPs and other QI partners on QAPI performance measures and PIPs to support QI.

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