Cardiac Rehabilitation Performance Measures Toolkit

American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation

Promoting Health & Preventing Disease
The Cardiac Rehabilitation Performance Measures toolkit is designed for members to gain knowledge and provide resources for use to encourage enrollment of appropriate patients into cardiac and peripheral vascular rehabilitation programs.

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The National Quality Forum is a nonprofit organization that aims to improve the quality of healthcare for all Americans through fulfillment of its three-part mission:

- Setting national priorities and goals for performance improvement
- Endorsing national consensus standards for measuring and public reporting on performance
- Promoting the attainment of national goals through education and outreach programs.

AACVPR in conjunction with AHA and ACC submitted two sets of Performance Measures on Cardiac Rehabilitation to NQF in 2010.

**NQF website:** www.qualityforum.org

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**What are performance measures?**

- Performance measures (PMs) are used to identify and correct gaps in care.
- PMs are often utilized by external agencies and third party payers.
- One such group is the National Quality Forum (NQF), which reviews and endorses performance measures that are considered for use by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).
- Performance measures refer to processes or structures of care that have been rigorously tested and have been defined as such for public reporting and benchmarking.

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**Why cardiac rehabilitation performance measures?**

- There is clear evidence that cardiac rehabilitation (CR) services are associated with significant benefits to patients who have had a recent cardiac event.
- Unfortunately, only a small percentage of patients receive those services.
- The CR Performance Measures are aimed at improving the utilization and benefits of CR for eligible patients.
- Some PMs that are endorsed by the NQF and utilized by CMS are reported publicly (i.e., public report cards on service outcomes) and some are also used as part of the assessment for “pay for performance” initiatives from third party payers.

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**“The gap in referral of patients to cardiac rehabilitation represents the largest gap in care for patients following a cardiac event”**

To increase the appropriate and timely referral of patients to outpatient cardiac rehabilitation programs the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR), the American College of Cardiology Foundation and the American Heart Association issued updated performance measures. These measures are intended to help hospitals, doctors and other health care providers more easily track referral rates, adopt tools to improve enrollment (e.g., automatic ordering sets, education materials to promote enrollment), and assess and improve the quality of care provided.

**Measure One – Referral from an Inpatient Setting**

All patients hospitalized with a primary diagnosis of an acute myocardial infarction (MI) or chronic stable angina (CSA), or who during hospitalization have undergone coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, a percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), cardiac valve surgery, or cardiac transplantation are to be referred to an early outpatient cardiac rehabilitation/secondary prevention program. (*See full measure to learn about exceptions and other details)*

http://content.onlinejacc.org/cgi/content/full/j.jacc.2010.06.006

**Measure Two – Referral from an Outpatient Setting**

Patients evaluated in an outpatient setting have experienced an acute myocardial infarction, coronary artery bypass graft surgery, a percutaneous coronary intervention, cardiac valve surgery, or cardiac transplantation, or who have chronic stable angina and have not already participated in an early outpatient cardiac rehabilitation/secondary prevention program for the qualifying event/diagnosis are to be referred to such a program. (*See full measure to learn about exceptions and other details.*)
How do you implement performance measures into your practice?

- **PLAN:**
  - Meet with those who oversee quality improvement efforts in your hospital or clinic and explain the rationale behind the CR Performance Measures.
  - Explain that the CR Performance Measures have been endorsed by NQF and are being considered by CMS for use in hospital systems performance tracking.
  - Explain that hospitals and physician clinics will be responsible for reporting performance in referring eligible patients to CR following a qualifying cardiac event.

- **DO:**
  - Offer to help design and implement a quality improvement (QI) project in your hospital or clinics.
  - Develop consensus by discussing project with all pertinent “shareholders”—administrators, department managers, referring providers, inpatient discharge coordinators, etc.
  - Consider ways to improve referral rates. Effective methods include automatic referral orders sets for all eligible patients, post-discharge telephone follow-up, etc.
  - Emphasize the importance of face-to-face discussions between health care providers and patients of CR benefits and referrals.
  - Provide materials to assist patients in understanding the importance of CR and specific steps needed for them to participate, keeping health-literacy issues in mind.
  - Exchange referral data between the CR program and the referring hospital(s) or clinics.

- **STUDY:**
  - Devise measurement system to assess current referral rates to CR.
  - Continue to reassess performance and new methods to improve referral rates.

- **ACT:**
  - Help keep hospitals and clinics notified on new developments regarding the CR Performance Measures, such as CMS reviews and updates, etc.

What is the latest status of the CR performance measures?

- Set A was endorsed by NQF in May 2010 for time-limited (2 year) endorsement, at which time the measures will once again reviewed for endorsement
- Set B of performance measures are currently under review by NQF for endorsement
- Published originally in 2007 in the journals of AACVPR, ACC, and AHA, and endorsed by 9 other national and international organizations
- Updated and published in September 2010
- Included in the ACC/AHA STEMI/NSTEMI performance measures published in 2010
- CMS is considering the use of the CR referral performance measures for their quality reporting initiatives
- The use and impact of the performance measures will be tested over the next 2 years in order to see if they reduce the treatment gap that currently exists for CR utilization and improve subsequent patient outcomes

Paying for Performance: The CR referral performance measure is included in the ACC PINNACLE data registry available for outpatient cardiology practices, and as a result practices that report such data are getting reimbursed at a slightly higher rate by CMS for the patient services they are providing (part of the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative, or PRQI).
Top Ten Things To Know
AACVPR/ACCF/AHA 2010 Update: Performance Measures on Cardiac Rehabilitation for Referral to Cardiac Rehabilitation/Secondary Prevention Services

1. Cardiac rehabilitation is associated with a 20-30% reduction in all-cause mortality rates.

2. Cardiac rehabilitation promotes other significant health benefits after a cardiac event, including myocardial infarction, coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, percutaneous coronary intervention, heart valve surgery, and heart transplantation surgery.

3. Cardiac rehabilitation is underused in the United States, with only about 20% of eligible patients receiving therapy.

4. There is a large gap between actual care and care that should be provided, stimulating the development of measures of quality of care for quality improvement and accountability.

5. System-based approaches including automatic ordering sets for referring eligible patients improve referral and enrollment rates in cardiac rehabilitation programs.

6. The cardiac rehabilitation performance measure set includes a first a set of measures for the referral of patients from the inpatient and outpatient settings.

7. Healthcare providers and healthcare systems report the percentage of eligible patients they refer to cardiac rehabilitation programs.

8. The second set of measures is for the delivery of cardiac rehabilitation services; cardiac rehabilitation programs will report on these measures.

9. The cardiac rehabilitation referral measures are endorsed by the National Quality Forum and are being considered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

10. The cardiac rehabilitation performance measures include an online data supplement for easy access to details.


http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/reprint/CIR.0b013e3181f5185b
Example of application Performance Measures in Cardiac Rehabilitation:
The Really Good Cardiac Rehabilitation Program.

Jane Doe, director of the Really Good Cardiac Rehabilitation, is committed to implement the new Cardiac Rehabilitation Performance Measures in her local hospital and in her program. She plans a strategy to do so, using the following steps.

1. Jane sits down with her operations team to give a background on the cardiac rehabilitation performance measures and to ask for their support in implementing the measures locally. She receives and implements her team’s suggestions and helps them work toward a consensus on how they will implement the performance measures.

2. Assessment: Before Jane and her team can implement the performance measures, they first make an assessment of what is currently happening in their hospital and in their program.

In-patient:

- How are in-patients being referred to cardiac rehabilitation now?
- What percentages are being referred?
- Who are the key people to work with in the hospital to implement a strategy to improve referrals and to track referrals with the performance measures?
- Is there a quality of care committee that could help?
- What are the potential barriers to implementing the measures in the in-patient setting?

Out-patient cardiology practices:

- Are the cardiology out-patient practices currently collecting performance measure information?
- Do they know about performance measures?
- Are they part of the ACC Registry network (NCDR-PINNACLE)?
- Do they know how many of their eligible patients have participated in cardiac rehabilitation?

Out-patient cardiac rehabilitation program:

- What is the flow of process steps that occur for each patient who is enrolled in the program, starting with the referral and ending with their completion of Phase 2 cardiac rehabilitation sessions?
- Is the program staff currently collecting data that are included in the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program Performance Measures?
- What percentages of patients are receiving care that meets the standards that are included in the performance measures?
- What are potential barriers to full implementation of the measures in the out-patient program?
3. Plan: Once Jane and her team have an understanding of the current status of the in-patient and out-patient practices, and of their own program, they start making a plan to implement the performance measures, in coordination with the people they have identified as potential collaborators in the hospital and out-patient practices. These plans might include:

   A. Awareness campaign:

   Letters, notices, articles, and other messaging options could be circulated to leaders and staff members so that they understand the purpose and importance of performance measures.

   B. Implementation steps:

   Identify who will be collecting performance measure data, how it will take place, and how it will be reported. Get approval by appropriate committees and leaders. Start collecting data, and provide regular feedback of results to appropriate committees and leaders. Use results to help identify ongoing barriers to quality of care, and ways to overcome those barriers.

4. Re-assess: As implementation takes place, new and better ways of carrying out data collection will be identified and implemented. This might include the use of quality assurance steps to make sure the data being collected is being collected in an accurate and reproducible way.

5. Re-vise: Continue with the ongoing cycle of continuous improvement.

Jane and her team stayed flexible, yet committed as they went through these steps. Barriers and unexpected twists and turns occurred during the process of implementing the performance measures. Through their persistence, they gained added respect and appreciation from their colleagues in the hospital and cardiology practice settings. Cardiac rehabilitation referrals increased gradually, and the quality of their rehabilitation services also increased. Finally, they are able to now document the improvements that have occurred and that will occur, using the data collection steps they have implemented.

Life is good at the Really Good Cardiac Rehabilitation Program!

**Plan Do Study Act**
Dear Colleague,

Since 2001 the evidence has been clear that comprehensive exercise-based cardiac rehabilitation services are associated with a reduction in cardiac mortality for patients with cardiovascular disease.\textsuperscript{1-3} The 2001 data have since been supplemented by papers and reviews in 2004 (ACC/AHA 2004 & 2007). The overwhelming evidence qualifies the provision of a comprehensive cardiac rehabilitation program as best practice for these patients.

In 2007 the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, in collaboration with the ACC/AHA, proposed a performance measure that tracks the percentage of eligible patients hospitalized with a primary diagnosis who are referred to an outpatient cardiac rehab/secondary prevention program prior to discharge or have a documented patient-centered reason why such a referral was not made. In 2008 & 2010 the ACC/AHA jointly proposed a performance measure that tracks the percentage of eligible patients hospitalized with a qualifying event (MI, CSA, PCI, CABG, cardiac valve surgery or cardiac transplantation) who are referred to an outpatient cardiac rehab/secondary prevention program prior to discharge.\textsuperscript{4}

(Name of Hospital) Hospital goal is to ensure patients eligible for cardiac rehabilitation services are set up for this therapy frequently and regularly, to ensure we provide a clear “best practice” status. In order to help physicians caring for eligible patients ensure that the patient receives cardiac rehabilitation services, if appropriate, we are establishing a new process that will be patient and physician friendly. It will consist of the following steps:

1. Eligible patients will be identified during their hospital stays and provided educational information about the benefits and availability of cardiac rehabilitation.
2. Immediately following discharge, a “fax-back” referral will be sent to your office if you have not already referred the patient for rehab. With a few simple check-offs you will be able to (a) refer the patient, or (b) document the reason the patient is not appropriate for referral.
3. We will track all potential referrals and report your statistics to you individually; we will report overall organizational performance as part of hospital-wide QA initiative to ensure that ___________ (name of hospital) patients are being referred for cardiac rehabilitation services in an appropriate manner.

Thank you, in advance, for your help with this important Quality Improvement initiative. We are confident that, with your help, we can quickly and accurately identify eligible patients and get them enrolled in a comprehensive cardiac rehabilitation program.

If you have questions about this initiative, please contact ___________ MD (questions related to standards of care and patient eligibility), ___________ MD (questions related to the operation of this initiative, forms or outcomes data).

Collegially,  
Chief Quality Officer  

Head, Division of Cardiology,  
Department of Medicine
References:


Sample spread sheet to collect enrollment rates of a CR program.

## January - June 2010 Cardiac Rehab Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total Referrals</th>
<th>Enrolled</th>
<th>Percent Enrolled</th>
<th>Not interested, declined</th>
<th>Not appropriate</th>
<th>Referred to Off-site Location</th>
<th>Phase III</th>
<th>Can't Afford</th>
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<td>January</td>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Orients. Completed</th>
<th>Percent Orients. Complete</th>
<th>Avg. Event Date</th>
<th>Avg. First Call Date</th>
<th># of Days between Event and First Call</th>
<th>Avg. Orient. Date</th>
<th># of Days between Event and Orient. Date</th>
<th># of Days between First call and Orient.</th>
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The link below is to a 10 minute video developed by the American College of Cardiology in conjunction with Duke University to promote enrollment in cardiac rehabilitation. It describes the core components of cardiac rehabilitation – exercise, education and counseling about modifiable cardiovascular risk factors, and including psychosocial support. Although it depicts a high volume university program, it is an excellent overview of cardiac rehabilitation, with convincing arguments about why it is important for patients to enroll. Consider using this video as one of your strategies to promote enrollment in your program, perhaps on your hospital patient education TV network or in physician waiting rooms.

CARDIAC REHABILITATION: YOUR JOURNEY BACK TO HEART HEALTH

For people diagnosed with heart disease or a heart condition, finding a way back to health can be the biggest challenge they’ve ever faced.

This video player requires you to upgrade or install Adobe Flash Player

http://www.cardiosmart.org/cardiacrehab.aspx

- To access this location select *Resources*
- Under Resources select *Member Discussion Forum*
- Scroll topics for *Utilizing Performance Measures*.

Below is the link to the forum. Members are encouraged to post “frequently asked questions” here and can find information regarding access to materials relating to performance measures.


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**Recent News Articles and Links:**

- Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement®
  - American College of Cardiology Foundation (ACCF)
  - American Heart Association (AHA)

  **Chronic Stable Coronary Artery Disease**
  - Performance Measurement Set
  - Measure #9: Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral From an Outpatient Setting (NQF-Endorsed™)

  [http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/pcpi/cadminisetjune06.pdf](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/pcpi/cadminisetjune06.pdf)
AACVPR's Past President, Dr. Randal Thomas, Blog on Increasing Referrals

http://blog.cardiosource.org/post/How-We-Can-Increase-Cardiac-Rehab-Referrals.aspx

http://www.medpagetoday.com/Cardiology/MyocardialInfarction/21966
ACC/AHA Issue First Set of Performance Measures to Improve Diagnosis and Treatment of Adults with PAD

http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/reprint/CIR.0b013e3182031a3cv1

Cardiosource articles related to Performance Measures


Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention


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Writing Committee Members; ACCF/AHA Task Force on Performance Measures

Preamble

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing awareness that the quality of medical care delivered in the United States is variable. In its seminal document dedicated to characterizing deficiencies in delivering effective, timely, safe, equitable, efficient, and patient-centered medical care, the Institute of Medicine described a quality "chasm". Recognition of the magnitude of the gap between the care that is delivered and the care that ought to be provided has stimulated interest in the development of measures of quality of care and the use of such measures for the purposes of quality improvement and accountability.

Consistent with this national focus on healthcare quality, the American College of Cardiology Foundation (ACCF) and the American Heart Association (AHA) have taken a leadership role in developing measures of the quality of care for cardiovascular disease (CVD) in several clinical areas (Table 1). The ACCF/AHA Task Force on Performance Measures was formed in February 2000 and was charged with identifying the clinical topics appropriate for the development of performance measures and assembling writing committees composed of clinical and methodological experts. When appropriate, these committees include representatives from other organizations with an interest in the clinical topic under consideration. The committees are informed about the methodology of performance measure development and are instructed to construct measures for use both prospectively and retrospectively, rely upon easily documented clinical criteria, and where appropriate, incorporate administrative data. The data elements required for the performance measures are linked to existing ACCF/AHA clinical data standards to encourage uniform measurements of cardiovascular care. The writing committees are also instructed to evaluate the extent to which existing nationally recognized performance measures conform to the attributes of performance measures described by the ACCF/AHA and to strive to create measures aligned with acceptable existing measures when this is feasible.

Table 1. ACCF/AHA Performance Measure Sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Original Publication Date</th>
<th>Partnering Organizations</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic heart failure (2)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>ACC/AHA—Inpatient measures ACC/AHA/PCPI—Outpatient measures</td>
<td>Currently undergoing update Currently undergoing update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronic stable coronary artery disease (3)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>ACC/AHA/PCPI</td>
<td>Currently undergoing update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension (4)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>ACC/AHA/PCPI</td>
<td>Currently undergoing update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Organization(s)</td>
<td>Updates/Status</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST-elevation and non–ST-elevation myocardial infarction (5)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>ACC/AHA</td>
<td>Updated 2008 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac rehabilitation (7)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>AACVPR/ACC/AHA</td>
<td>Updated 2010 (referral measures only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atrial fibrillation (8)</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>ACC/AHA/PCPI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (9)</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>ACCF/AHA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral artery disease</td>
<td>2010*</td>
<td>ACCF/AHA/ACR/SCAI/SIR/SVM/SVN/SVS</td>
<td>Under development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percutaneous coronary intervention</td>
<td>2011*</td>
<td>ACCF/AHA/SCAI/PCPI/NCQA</td>
<td>Under development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Planned publication date.

AACVPR indicates American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation; ACR, American College of Radiology; NCQA, National Committee for Quality Assurance; PCPI indicates American Medical Association—Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement; SCAI, Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions; SIR, Society for Interventional Radiology; SVM, Society for Vascular Medicine; SVN, Society for Vascular Nursing; and SVS, Society for Vascular Surgery.

The initial measure sets published by the ACCF/AHA focused primarily on processes of medical care or actions taken by healthcare providers, such as the prescription of a medication for a condition. These process measures are founded on the strongest recommendations contained in the ACCF/AHA clinical practice guidelines, delineating actions taken by clinicians in the care of patients, such as the prescription of a particular drug for a specific condition. Specifically, the writing committees consider as candidates for measures those processes of care that are recommended by the guidelines either as Class I, which identifies procedures/treatments that should be administered, or Class III, which identifies procedures/treatments that should not be administered (Table 2). Class II recommendations are not considered as candidates for performance measures. The methodology guiding the translation of guideline recommendations into process measures has been explicitly delineated by the ACCF/AHA, providing guidance to the writing committees.

Table 2. Applying Classification of Recommendations and Level of Evidence
*Data available from clinical trials or registries about the usefulness/efficacy in different subpopulations, such as gender, age, history of diabetes, history of prior myocardial infarction, history of heart failure, and prior aspirin use. A recommendation with Level of Evidence B or C does not imply that the recommendation is weak. Many important clinical questions addressed in the guidelines do not lend themselves to clinical trials. Even though randomized trials are not available, there may be a very clear clinical consensus that a particular test or therapy is useful or effective. †For comparative effectiveness recommendations (Class I and IIa; Level of Evidence A and B only), studies that support the use of comparator verbs should involve direct comparisons of the treatments or strategies being evaluated.

Although they possess several strengths, processes of care are limited as the sole measures of quality. Thus, current ACCF/AHA performance measures writing committees are instructed to consider measures of structures of care, outcomes, and efficiency as complements to process measures. In developing such measures, the committees are guided by methodology established by the ACCF/AHA. Although implementation of measures of outcomes and efficiency is currently not as well established as that of process measures, it is expected that such measures will become more pervasive over time.

Although the focus of the performance measures writing committees is on measures intended for quality improvement efforts, other organizations may use these measures for external review or public reporting of provider performance. Therefore, it is within the scope of the writing committee’s task to comment, when appropriate, on the strengths and limitations of such external reporting for a particular CVD state or patient population. Thus, the metrics contained within this document are categorized as either performance measures or test measures. Performance measures are those metrics that the committee designates as appropriate for use for both quality improvement and external
reporting. In contrast, test measures are those appropriate for the purposes of quality improvement but not for external reporting until further validation and testing are performed.

All measures have limitations and pose challenges to implementation that could result in unintended consequences when used for accountability. The implementation of measures for purposes other than quality improvement requires field testing to address issues related but not limited to sample size, frequency of use of an intervention, comparability, and audit requirements. The manner in which these issues are addressed is dependent on several factors, including the method of data collection, performance attribution, baseline performance rates, incentives, and public reporting methods. The ACCF/AHA encourages those interested in implementing these measures for purposes beyond quality improvement to work with the ACCF/AHA to consider these complex issues in pilot implementation projects, to assess limitations and confounding factors, and to guide refinements of the measures to enhance their utility for these additional purposes.

By facilitating measurements of cardiovascular healthcare quality, ACCF/AHA performance measurement sets may serve as vehicles to accelerate appropriate translation of scientific evidence into clinical practice. These documents are intended to provide practitioners and institutions that deliver care with tools to measure the quality of their care and identify opportunities for improvement. It is our hope that application of these performance measures will provide a mechanism through which the quality of medical care can be measured and improved.

Frederick A. Masoudi, MD, MSPH, FACC, FAHA
Chair, ACCF/AHA Task Force on Performance Measures

1. Update of Performance Measures for Referral to Cardiac Rehabilitation

1.1 Background

The AACVPR/ACC/AHA 2007 Performance Measures on Cardiac Rehabilitation for Referral to and Delivery of Cardiac Rehabilitation/Secondary Prevention Services were published in October 2007. This document updates the 2 measures that articulate the opportunities to improve referrals to outpatient Cardiac Rehabilitation that were embodied in Measure Set A from that 2007 paper (Appendix A in[7]). Measure A-1 (Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral From an Inpatient Setting) and measure A-2 (Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral From an Outpatient Setting) have been revised to clarify several aspects of the measures and to facilitate their implementation. The updated measures (Appendix B) have been revised as described in the following text. The measures in Measure Set B from the 2007 paper related to the structure and processes of care for cardiac rehabilitation programs remain unchanged and are not included in this update.

1.2 Measure A-1. Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral from an Inpatient Setting

Numerator Exclusion Criteria:

- "Patient-oriented barriers" was revised to "patient-oriented factors," and the example provided was changed. Patient refusal, which was listed as an example in the 2007 paper, should not be considered a reason not to provide a referral. Whether the patient chooses to act upon the referral or not is beyond the provider's control. The example provided in this update clarifies that patients discharged to a nursing care facility for long-term care can be excluded.
- "Provider-oriented barriers" was revised to "medical factors," and the examples provided were changed. The 2007 measures listed "patient deemed to have a high-risk condition or a contraindication to exercise" as an example. This was revised to specify "medically unstable, life-threatening condition" as an example of an appropriate medical exclusion. The rationale reflects the capacity of cardiac rehabilitation programs to modify their program to the medical needs of individual patients and that, other than life-threatening conditions, there are no a priori reasons to presume that a patient might not be able to participate in a rehabilitation and secondary prevention program.
- "Health care system barriers" was revised to "healthcare system factors," and the examples provided were changed. "Financial barriers" was deleted and "lack of CR programs near a patient's home" was clarified to specify no cardiac rehabilitation program available within 60 minutes of travel time from the patient's home.

Denominator: A note was added to clarify that patients with a qualifying event who are to be discharged for a short-term stay in an inpatient medical rehabilitation facility are still expected to be referred to an outpatient cardiac rehabilitation program by the inpatient team during the index hospitalization. This referral should be reinforced by the care team at the medical rehabilitation facility.
**Corresponding Guidelines and Clinical Recommendations:** The recommendations in this section were updated to reflect the most recent iterations of the guidelines cited.

1.3 Measure A-2. Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral from an Outpatient Setting

**Numerator:**

- The note describing what constitutes a referral has been expanded to clarify that standards of practice for cardiac rehabilitation programs require care coordination communications to be sent to the referring provider, including any issues regarding treatment changes, adverse treatment responses, or new nonemergency condition (new symptoms, patient care questions, etc.) that need attention by the referring provider. These communications also include a progress report once the patient has completed the program.
- Exclusion criteria: The same revisions made to the patient, medical, and health system factors described for Measure A-1 in Section 1.2 were made to this measure.

**Denominator:** The denominator statement was clarified to specify that only patients who have had a qualifying event/diagnosis during the previous 12 months and have not participated in an outpatient cardiac rehabilitation program since the qualifying event/diagnosis should be included.

**Attribution/Aggregation:** This section was added to clarify that 1) the measure should be reported by the clinician who provides the primary cardiovascular-related care for the patient (in general, this would be the patient’s cardiologist, but in some cases it might be a family physician, internist, nurse practitioner, or other healthcare provider); and 2) the level of aggregation (clinician versus practice) will depend upon the availability of adequate sample sizes to provide stable estimates of performance.

1.4 Administrative Codes to Identify Denominator-eligible Populations

To facilitate implementation of these measures in a variety of systems, we have included administrative codes that may be useful in identifying the population of patients who are eligible for inclusion in the denominator for each of the updated measures. See the online data supplement for details.

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**Appendix A. Author Relationships with Industry and Other Entities—AACVPR/ACCF/AHA 2010 Update: Performance Measures on Cardiac Rehabilitation for Referral to Cardiac Rehabilitation/Secondary Prevention Services**

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<th>Name</th>
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This table represents the relationships of committee members with industry and other entities that were reported by authors to be relevant to this document. These relationships were reviewed and updated in conjunction with all meetings and/or conference calls of the writing committee during the document development process. The table does not necessarily reflect relationships with industry at the time of publication. A person is deemed to have a significant interest in a business if the interest represents ownership of 5% or more of the voting stock or share of the business entity, or ownership of $10,000 or more of the fair market value of the business entity; or if funds received by the person from the business entity exceed 5% of the person’s gross income for the previous year. A relationship is considered to be modest if it is less than significant under the preceding definition. Relationships in this table are modest unless otherwise noted. * Significant (greater than $10,000) relationship.

Appendix B. AACVPR/ACCF/AHA 2010 Update: Performance Measures on Cardiac Rehabilitation for Referral to Cardiac Rehabilitation/Secondary Prevention Services

Performance Measure A-1

A-1. Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral From an Inpatient

All patients hospitalized with a primary diagnosis of an acute myocardial infarction (MI) or chronic stable angina (CSA), or who during hospitalization have undergone coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, a percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), cardiac valve surgery, or cardiac transplantation are to be referred to an early outpatient cardiac rehabilitation/secondary prevention (CR) program.

Numerator

Number of eligible patients with a qualifying event/diagnosis who have been referred to an outpatient CR program prior to hospital discharge or have a documented medical or patient-centered reason why such a referral was not made.

(Note: The program may include a traditional CR program based on face-to-face interactions and training sessions or may include other options such as home-based approaches. If alternative CR approaches are used, they should be designed to meet appropriate safety standards.)

A referral is defined as an official communication between the healthcare provider and the patient to recommend and carry out a referral order to an early outpatient CR program. This includes the provision of all necessary information to the patient that will allow the patient to enroll in an early outpatient CR program. This also includes a written or electronic communication between the healthcare provider or healthcare system and the cardiac rehabilitation program that includes the patient’s enrollment information for the program. A hospital discharge
summary or office note may potentially be formatted to include the necessary patient information to communicate to the CR program (e.g., the patient’s cardiovascular history, testing, and treatments). All communications must maintain appropriate confidentiality as outlined by the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

**Exclusion criteria:**

- Patient factors (e.g., patient to be discharged to a nursing care facility for long-term care).
- Medical factors (e.g., patient deemed by provider to have a medically unstable, life-threatening condition).
- Health care system factors (e.g., no cardiac rehabilitation program available within 60 minutes of travel time from the patient’s home).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denominator</th>
<th>Number of hospitalized patients in the reporting period hospitalized with a qualifying event/diagnosis who do not meet any of the exclusion criteria mentioned in the Numerator section. (Note: Patients with a qualifying event who are to be discharged for a short-term stay in an inpatient medical rehabilitation facility are still expected to be referred to an outpatient cardiac rehabilitation program by the inpatient team during the index hospitalization. This referral should be reinforced by the care team at the medical rehabilitation facility.)</th>
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<td>Period of Assessment</td>
<td>Inpatient hospitalization.</td>
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<td>Method of Reporting</td>
<td>Proportion of healthcare system's patients with a qualifying event/diagnosis who had documentation of their referral to an outpatient CR program.</td>
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<td>Sources of Data</td>
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**Rationale**

A key component to outpatient CR program utilization is the appropriate and timely referral of patients. Generally, the most important time for this referral to take place is while the patient is hospitalized for a qualifying event/diagnosis (MI, CSA, CABG, PCI, cardiac valve surgery, or cardiac transplantation).

This performance measure has been developed to help healthcare systems implement effective steps in their systems of care that will optimize the appropriate referral of a patient to an outpatient CR program. This measure is designed to serve as a stand-alone measure or, preferably, to be included within other performance measurement sets that involve disease states or other conditions for which CR services have been found to be appropriate and beneficial (e.g., following MI, CABG surgery). This performance measure is provided in a format that is meant to allow easy and flexible inclusion into such performance measurement sets.

Effective referral of appropriate inpatients to an outpatient CR program is the responsibility of the healthcare team within a healthcare system that is primarily responsible for providing cardiovascular care to the patient during the hospitalization.

**Corresponding Guidelines and Clinical Recommendations**

- ACC/AHA 2004 Guideline Update for Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery.\(^{12}\)
  - **Class I**
  - Cardiac rehabilitation should be offered to all eligible patients after CABG (Level of Evidence: B).

- ACC/AHA 2007 Update of the Guidelines for the Management of Patients With ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction.\(^{13}\)
  - **Class I**
  - Advising medically supervised programs (cardiac rehabilitation) for high-risk patients (e.g., recent acute coronary syndrome or revascularization, heart failure) is recommended (Level of Evidence: B).

- ACC/AHA 2007 Guidelines for the Management of Patients With Unstable Angina and Non–ST-Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction.\(^{14}\)
Class I
Cardiac rehabilitation/secondary prevention programs are recommended for patients with unstable angina/non–ST-segment elevation MI, particularly those with multiple modifiable risk factors and/or those moderate- to high-risk patients in whom supervised exercise training is particularly warranted (Level of Evidence: B).
Cardiac rehabilitation/secondary prevention programs, when available, are recommended for patients with unstable angina/non–ST-segment elevation MI, particularly those with multiple modifiable risk factors and those moderate- to high-risk patients in whom supervised or monitored exercise training is warranted (Level of Evidence: B).

ACC/AHA 2007 Chronic Angina Focused Update of the Guidelines for the Management of Patients With Chronic Stable Angina.¹⁵

Class I
Medically supervised programs (cardiac rehabilitation) are recommended for at-risk patients (e.g., recent acute coronary syndrome or revascularization, heart failure) (Level of Evidence: B).

ACC/AHA Guidelines for the Evaluation and Management of Chronic Heart Failure in the Adult.¹⁶

Class I
Exercise training is beneficial as an adjunctive approach to improve clinical status in ambulatory patients with current or prior symptoms of heart failure and reduced left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF) (Level of Evidence: B).

AHA Evidence-Based Guidelines for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Women: 2007 Update.¹⁷

Class I
A comprehensive risk-reduction regimen, such as cardiovascular or stroke rehabilitation or a physician-guided home- or community-based exercise training program, should be recommended to women with a recent acute coronary syndrome or coronary intervention, new-onset or chronic angina, recent cerebrovascular event, peripheral arterial disease (Level of Evidence: A), or current/prior symptoms of heart failure and an LVEF <40% (Level of Evidence: B).

ACC/AHA/SCAI 2007 Focused Update of the Guidelines for Percutaneous Coronary Intervention.¹⁸

Class I
Advising medically supervised programs (cardiac rehabilitation) for high-risk patients (e.g., recent acute coronary syndrome or revascularization, heart failure) is recommended (Level of Evidence: B).

Challenges to Implementation

Identification of all eligible patients in an inpatient setting will require that a timely, accurate, and effective system be in place. Communication of referral information by the inpatient hospital service team to the outpatient CR program represents a potential challenge to the implementation of this performance measure. However, this task is generally performed by an inpatient cardiovascular care team member, such as an inpatient CR team member or a hospital discharge planning team member.

Performance Measure A-2

A-2. Cardiac Rehabilitation Patient Referral From an Outpatient Setting

All patients evaluated in an outpatient setting who within the past 12 months have experienced an acute myocardial infarction (MI), coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, a percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), cardiac valve surgery, or cardiac transplantation, or who have chronic stable angina (CSA) and have not already participated in an early outpatient cardiac rehabilitation/secondary prevention (CR) program for the qualifying event/diagnosis are to be referred to such a program.

Numerator

Number of patients in an outpatient clinical practice who have had a qualifying event/diagnosis during the previous 12 months, who have been referred to an outpatient CR program. (Note: The program may include a traditional CR program based on face-to-face interactions and training sessions or other options that include home-based approaches. If alternative CR approaches are used, they should be designed to meet appropriate safety standards.)
A referral is defined as an official communication between the healthcare provider and the patient to recommend and carry out a referral order to an outpatient CR program. This includes the provision of all necessary information to the patient that will allow the patient to enroll in an outpatient CR program. This also includes a written or electronic communication between the healthcare provider or healthcare system and the cardiac rehabilitation program that includes the patient’s enrollment information for the program. A
hospital discharge summary or office note may potentially be formatted to include the necessary patient information to communicate to the CR program (e.g., the patient's cardiovascular history, testing, and treatments). According to standards of practice for cardiac rehabilitation programs, care coordination communications are sent to the referring provider, including any issues regarding treatment changes, adverse treatment responses, or new nonemergency condition (new symptoms, patient care questions, etc.) that need attention by the referring provider. These communications also include a progress report once the patient has completed the program. All communications must maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality as outlined by the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

**Exclusion criteria:**

- Patient factors (e.g., patient resides in a long-term nursing care facility).
- Medical factors (e.g., patient deemed by provider to have a medically unstable, life-threatening condition).
- Health care system factors (e.g., no cardiac rehabilitation program available within 60 min of travel time from the patient's home).

### Denominator

Number of patients in an outpatient clinical practice who have had a qualifying event/diagnosis during the previous 12 months and who do not meet any of the exclusion criteria mentioned in the Numerator section, and who have not participated in an outpatient cardiac rehabilitation program since the qualifying event/diagnosis.

### Period of Assessment

Twelve months following a qualifying event/diagnosis.

### Method of Reporting

Proportion of patients in an outpatient practice who have had a qualifying event/diagnosis during the past 12 months and have been referred to a CR program.

### Sources of Data

Administrative data and/or medical records.

### Attribution/Aggregation

This measure should be reported by the clinician who provides the primary cardiovascular-related care for the patient. In general, this would be the patient's cardiologist, but in some cases it might be a family physician, internist, nurse practitioner, or other health-care provider. The level of "aggregation" (clinician versus practice) will depend upon the availability of adequate sample sizes to provide stable estimates of performance.

### Rationale

Cardiac rehabilitation services have been shown to help reduce morbidity and mortality in persons who have experienced a recent coronary artery disease event, but these services are used in less than 30% of eligible patients. A key component to CR utilization is the appropriate and timely referral of patients to an outpatient CR program. While referral takes place generally while the patient is hospitalized for a qualifying event (MI, CSA, CABG, PCI, cardiac valve surgery, or heart transplantation), there are many instances in which a patient can and should be referred from an outpatient clinical practice setting (e.g., when a patient does not receive such a referral while in the hospital, or when the patient fails to follow through with the referral for whatever reason).

This performance measure has been developed to help healthcare systems implement effective steps in their systems of care that will optimize the appropriate referral of a patient to an outpatient CR program.

This measure is designed to serve as a stand-alone measure or, preferably, to be included within other performance measurement sets that involve disease states or other conditions for which CR services have been found to be appropriate and beneficial (e.g., following MI, CABG surgery). This performance measure is provided in a format that is meant to allow easy and flexible inclusion into such performance measurement sets.

Referral of appropriate outpatients to a CR program is the responsibility of the healthcare provider within a healthcare system that is providing the primary cardiovascular care to the patient in the outpatient setting.
## Corresponding Guidelines and Clinical Recommendations

See Clinical Recommendations section from Performance Measure A-1.

## Challenges to Implementation

Identification all eligible patients in an outpatient clinical practice will require that a timely, accurate, and effective system be in place. Communication of referral information by the outpatient clinical practice team to the outpatient CR program represents a potential challenge to the implementation of this performance measure.

## References


This document was approved by the American College of Cardiology Foundation Executive Committee in April 2010, by the American Heart Association Science Advisory and Coordinating Committee in April 2010, and by the AACVPR Document Oversight Committee and Board of Directors in June 2010.


This article is copublished in Circulation and the Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention.

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