



PQA's Adherence to Antiretrovirals Quality Measure *Evaluation of HIV Treatment Adherence, an Indicator of Quality Care*

Approximately 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV today. About 15 percent of them (1 in 7) are unaware they are infected. People living with HIV are among the most medically complex individuals covered by state health programs. They incur costs up to five times greater than the average Medicaid beneficiary.

Early, comprehensive treatment can significantly improve health outcomes for people living with HIV and reduce their overall cost of care. States, through Medicaid and Ryan White HIV/AIDS programs, play a critical role in supporting access to care. Despite increasingly constrained state budgets, a 2018 [report](#) by the National Academy for State Health Policy confirms that many states are effectively providing affordable, effective and consistently-accessible prescription drugs for people living with HIV.

Measuring Adherence to HIV Treatment

HIV care and treatment involve taking antiretroviral (ARV) therapy and having regular check-ups with a healthcare provider.

The Pharmacy Quality Alliance (PQA) has developed and endorsed a ***Proportion of Days Covered: Antiretroviral Medications*** performance measure, which examines patients' prescription claims for ARV medications. The goal is for patients to have three or more ARV medications "on hand" at least 90% of the time.

Proportion of Days Covered: Antiretroviral Medications **A PQA Quality Measure**

Measure Description

Percentage of patients 18 years and older who met the proportion of days covered (PDC) threshold of 90% during the measurement period for three or more distinct antiretroviral drugs.

Adherence is critically important for HIV care. High levels of treatment adherence in HIV have been [shown](#) to predict better viral suppression outcomes, while poor treatment adherence is associated with less effective viral suppression, higher drug resistance and reduced survival.

About PQA

PQA is the nation's leading developer of consensus-based measures for medication safety, adherence and appropriate use. A non-profit organization with more than 250 diverse members across healthcare, PQA's quality initiatives support improvements in medication use and medication services. PQA was established in 2006 as a public-private partnership with CMS shortly after the implementation of the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit.

PQA measures help healthcare professionals assess the quality of health plans and the services they cover. They are used in the Medicaid Adult Core Set, Medicare and have been endorsed or implemented by numerous other healthcare organizations. PQA has developed a set of measures for high-cost specialty medications, including adherence to antiretroviral medications and completion of treatment for medications used to treat hepatitis C.

For information on PQA quality measures and implementation opportunities,
contact PQA at MeasureUse@PQAalliance.org.