

Joint Commission vendor Listserv Posted 4/03/08
Abstraction Clarification - Data Element Beta Blocker Current Medication

Based on recent feedback from the SCIP listserv and Quest, an abstraction clarification is being issued by the SCIP Clinical Measures group for the data element Beta Blocker Current Medication. Abstractors are to consider beta-blockers as current medications only if the patient was on a beta-blocker prior to admission.

During 4th Qtr. 2007 and 1st Qtr. 2008, guidance was provided through QUEST questions that may be in conflict with this clarification. Cases that have already been abstracted do not need to be re-abstracted. In the event a case is selected for validation and a mismatch occurs for Beta Blocker Current Medication, special consideration will be given.

We understand the confusion surrounding this issue and effective immediately, the performance measure will be limited to those cases that list a beta-blocker as a medication taken prior to admission only. Future Quest questions will be answered accordingly.

Although the phrase "prior to admission" is used in the data element Beta-Blocker Current Medication, the first Note for Abstraction states "If there is documentation that the beta-blocker was a "home" or "current" medication, select "Yes." The primary intent of the SCIP-Card-2 measure and the accompanying data elements is to identify those patients who routinely take beta-blockers and to determine whether the medication was continued during the perioperative period, unless a contraindication is documented. After consideration, beta-blocker therapy started after admission and prior to surgery will not be considered current beta-blocker therapy.

The SCIP Clinical Measures group is aware of your comments and concerns regarding the beta-blocker issue. Please be aware that we take them seriously and are taking steps to clarify the challenge that these data elements represent. When the data elements are formulated, they are done so to provide as many opportunities to pass and include language that will take into account as many scenarios as possible. The input you provide is insightful and essential for us to maintain the elements and to achieve the intent of the measures. Please continue to submit questions to Quest and we will continue to provide clarity in response to your questions.

If you have additional questions, please submit them to Quest (www.qnetquest.org) or the Joint Commission Oryxcore box (<http://manual.jointcommission.org>).