What is a value set?

Value sets are a critical part in eCQM specifications, because they define the data elements used in the measure.

Here's what I mean, at the bottom of any human readable is a section that references all the data elements used in the measure along with its corresponding value set.

For example, this measure is looking for a device applied and we use the value set of graduated compression stockings to define what type of Device to look for within the EHR.

You see value sets are comprised of codes that represent a clinical concept. These codes are drawn from standard vocabularies or code systems such as RX Norm, SNOMED CT, Loinc, or ICD-10. Ultimately, these are the eligible codes the logic looks for within the EHR.

Each value set has a unique identifier called the object identifier or OID for short. OIDs are used to easily search for a value set in the Value Set Authority Center, the VSAC. It's a source of truth and the central repository to house all eCQM value sets. Why go to the VSAC at all? Well, if you want to find out if a Code is included or excluded in value set or for more clarification about what value set is trying to capture then this is the place to go.

The VSAC is accessible through the ECQI Resource Center by clicking on the ECQI tools and resources. Click the VSAC under development tools and there you go.

If you're a first-time user you'll need a license but don't worry it's free, just follow the prompts and you're on your way.

To learn more on how to navigate the VSAC visit their support page.

Happy Hunting!