



2015

Clinical quality corner

One in a series of tip sheets focusing on key Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set measures

Medication management for people with asthma

This measure looks at the percentage of members ages 5 to 64 during the current year who were identified as having persistent asthma and who were dispensed appropriate medications that they remained on during the treatment period. Two rates are reported:

1. The percentage of members who remained on an asthma controller medication for at least 50 percent of their treatment period (or 50 percent proportion of days covered).
2. The percentage of members who remained on an asthma controller medication for at least 75 percent of their treatment period.

Improving HEDIS® scores*

- **Code properly.** This measure is calculated solely through pharmaceutical claims data; therefore, it's important that proper diagnosis and procedure codes are used and submitted in a timely manner. (ICD-9 codes for asthma range from 493.0x-493.9x.)
- **Partner.** Long-term adherence is essential for successful medication management. Encourage a sense of partnership and self-empowerment through open communication.

Did you know?

- Adherence to asthma medication is reported to be as low as 30 to 70 percent.
- Up to three-quarters of the total cost associated with asthma may be due to poor asthma control.
- Factors associated with non-adherence to medications include difficulties with inhaler devices, complex regimens, side effects, cost of medication and location of pharmacies.
- Michigan school children are allowed by law to carry and self-administer prescribed asthma medication on school grounds and during school-sponsored activities and programs.

*HEDIS, which stands for Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set, is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

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- **Educate:**

- Patient education is a continual and personalized process. Changes in clinical research, as well as a patient’s life status, require frequent assessment and additional education.
- Explain the nature of long-term medication; e.g., the need for it to be taken every day even if symptoms are not being experienced at the time. Emphasize the difference between long-term medication (used as a preventive measure) and short-term medication (used for a “quick fix”).

Tip: Avoid giving free medication samples when possible as this could interfere with pharmacy claims and produce false non-adherence results.

Asthma controller medications

Description	Prescriptions		
Antiasthmatic combinations	• Dyphylline-guaifenesin	• Guaifenesin-theophylline	
Antibody inhibitor	• Omalizumab		
Inhaled steroid combinations	• Budesonide-formoterol	• Fluticasone-salmeterol	• Mometasone-formoterol
Inhaled corticosteroids	• Beclomethasone • Budesonide • Ciclesonide	• Flunisolide • Fluticasone CFC free	• Mometasone
Leukotriene modifiers	• Montelukast	• Zafirlukast	• Zileuton
Mast cell stabilizers	• Cromolyn		
Methylxanthines	• Aminophylline • Dyphylline	• Theophylline	



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