

Quality Performance Measures in Medical Toxicology

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Background: The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has overseen the development of hundreds of quality measures by national medical societies directed at areas with perceived practice performance gaps. Given the absence of quality measures in medical toxicology (MT), beginning in 2016 the American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT) developed a program specific for MT patients.

Methods: In 2016, ACMT convened a task force to develop quality measures for medical toxicology. In December 2017, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved six quality measures that could be used to evaluate the care of a MT patient on the following topics: opioid misuse screening, pregnancy testing, timely ECG assessment in drug ingestions, appropriate treatment of acetaminophen ingestions, assessment of suspected toxic alcohol exposures, and repeat assessment of salicylate concentrations in overdose patients. Beginning January 1, 2018, data on these performance measures was collected as part of the CMS-approved ToxIC Qualified Clinical Data Registry (QCDR), a new component of the ACMT ToxIC Registry.

Results: In 2018, 14 medical toxicology sites that cared for patients at the bedside participated in the ToxIC QCDR. Depending on the metric, data was collected on 21 to 1273 cases during this first year. Performance rates varied from a low of 21.2% for the acetaminophen measure to a high of 76.4% for the pregnancy measure.

Conclusion: Medical Toxicologists are now able to report on quality measures to evaluate the treatment of MT patients. Initial data collection will allow for valuable benchmarking of current practice. Valuable lessons were learned from this first year of data collection.