

AAN Developing National Epilepsy Quality Measures

The AAN is leading an effort to develop national quality measures for epilepsy.

The AAN received approval from the Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement (PCPI) of the American Medical Association, which includes representatives from more than 100 national medical specialty and state medical societies; the Council of Medical Specialty Societies; American Board of Medical Specialties and its member-boards; experts in methodology and data collection; the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, to develop the epilepsy measures independent of PCPI but using the PCPI framework for measure development.

“This is an opportunity for the AAN and its members to take the lead in defining quality in the care of people with epilepsy,” said Christopher Bever, Jr., MD, MBA, FAAN, chair of the Quality Measurement and Reporting Subcommittee.

“The AAN was the first organization to apply for independent development of measures using the PCPI framework,” said Nathan Fountain, MD, who is leading the process along with Paul Van Ness, MD. “PCPI has been complimentary of AAN efforts on other measures, such as stroke, and we are working in conjunction with them, but the AAN is directing and funding this effort.”

The measures will be evidence-based and focused on improving patient care. The measures will be developed for quality improvement and accountability initiatives for pay-for-reporting that may later shift to pay-for-performance efforts.

Fountain and Van Ness are leading the epilepsy measure development expert panel, which includes representatives from epilepsy organizations, other professional associations with an interest in epilepsy such as the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American College of Radiology, and insurance companies. Several members of the AAN Epilepsy Section also serve on the panel.

“We had an overwhelming number of volunteers for the panel from the AAN Epilepsy Section,” Van Ness said. “It was great to see so much interest and commitment to these quality improvement efforts.”

The panel is currently developing the measures and the technical specifications for the measures. A public comment period will begin after the measures are finalized, which is anticipated near the end of this year. The AAN plans to seek endorsement of the measures by the AQA Alliance and the National Quality Forum. The measures will then be available for public use and implementation in programs such as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services pay-for-reporting program, the Physician



Christopher Bever, Jr., MD,
MBA, FAAN



Nathan Fountain, MD

Quality Reporting Initiative, for 2010. The AAN will work with the PCPI to assign Category II codes for physicians to record and submit the epilepsy measure data.

“Participating in the development of epilepsy measures has emphasized to me the tremendous commitment of the quality improvement community to improving clinical care,” Fountain said. “It has also pointed out how important it is for practicing clinicians to be involved in developing these measures. Clinicians bring consideration of practical aspects of care to the administrative goals of the measures. Quality care measures may be viewed as extra administrative work if they are cumbersome or do not measure anything meaningful. We have made it a priority to develop measures that have practical importance so they will improve the lives of people with epilepsy by promoting good clinical practices.”

For more information, contact Rebecca Swain-Eng, MS, at rswaineng@aan.com or (651) 695-2808.

GET INVOLVED WITH QUALITY EFFORTS

Did you participate in the PQRI pay-for-reporting program? The AAN would like to hear from you. Share your feedback about the program and your results by contacting Gina Gjorvad at ggjorvad@aan.com or (651) 695-2715.

You can also get involved in quality improvement efforts:

- **Join the P4P listserv. Email p4p@aan.com.**
- **Help develop quality measures. Contact Rebecca Swain-Eng at rswaineng@aan.com.**
- **Provide comment on proposed measures. Visit www.aan.com/go/practice/quality.**

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