

Glossary	
Antibiotic	Antibiotics are used to destroy or stop the growth of bacteria. Antibiotics should be only be used to treat infections caused by bacteria, rather than viruses (like the common cold). Using an antibiotic when it is not needed does not help the patient get better but increases cost for the patient, may lead to unnecessary side effects, and can cause public health problems, as some bacteria may become resistant to certain antibiotics over time.
Asthma Care	This measure looks at the percentage of children and adult patients with persistent asthma and who were appropriately prescribed medication during the measurement year. Asthma is a problem (inflammation) of the airways that makes it difficult to breathe. Asthma affects millions of children and adults. Different things in the air can easily irritate the airways of people with asthma causing coughing, wheezing, and chest tightness.
Attribution	Attribution refers to one of several accepted methods used to assign data about patient care to a doctor or other health professional for the purpose of measuring how often the patients received recommended care according to a specific measure. Attribution methods can vary by local measurement programs.
Bacteria	Bacteria are microscopic, single-celled organisms that live on every surface of our environment, and some even live inside our digestive, respiratory, and genitourinary tracts. Bacteria can be either beneficial or harmful. Bacteria can cause a wide range of illnesses, from mild skin disorders to life-threatening illnesses that require immediate attention. Dangerous bacteria that cause illness include streptococcus species, E. coli, and salmonella. Antibiotics are used to fight bacteria. (See Antibiotic .)
Beta-Blocker (PBH) Treatment After Heart Attack	This measure shows the percentage of adult patients with a diagnosis of heart attack who filled a prescription for beta blocker drugs for six months after being released from the hospital. Having a heart attack (acute myocardial infarction) places adults at a higher risk of having another heart attack or a stroke. Beta-blockers are medicines that help prevent a repeat heart attack or stroke by improving the heart's ability to pump.
Blood Sugar (Glucose) Testing	This measure shows the percentage of patients with diabetes whose blood sugar (glucose) was appropriately monitored using HbA1C testing. People with diabetes need to keep their blood sugar levels under control. The HbA1C test is used to measure blood sugar control over several months. Overall, the closer HbA1C is to normal, the lower the risk for complications such as eye disease, heart disease, kidney disease, nerve damage and stroke. (See Diabetes)

Glossary	
Breast Cancer Screening	This measure shows the percentage of women in the recommended age ranges that had a mammogram to screen for breast cancer during the measurement period. A screening mammogram is an x-ray exam of the breast performed when there are no cancer symptoms. Finding and treating small breast cancers early greatly improves the chance that the treatment will work.
Bronchitis (Acute) Treatment	This measure shows the percentage of adults in the recommended age ranges that were diagnosed with acute bronchitis and were not given an antibiotic. In most cases, acute bronchitis is caused by viruses, not bacteria, and will go away on its own. Non-prescription treatments can be used to treat the bronchitis symptoms. Antibiotics should be reserved for bacterial infections. Using antibiotics when they are not needed can be an additional cost to patients, lead to unnecessary side effects, and cause some bacteria to be resistant to antibiotics over time. (See Antibiotic)
Cervical Cancer Screening	This measure shows the percentage of women within the recommended age range who received one or more Pap tests to screen for cervical cancer. Cancer can begin in a woman's cervix, which is the lower, narrower part of the uterus. Cervical cancer usually develops slowly, which means that it may be prevented or detected early by regular Pap tests. If it is detected early, cervical cancer is one of the most successfully treated cancers.
Chlamydia Screening	This measure shows the percentage of women in the recommended age ranges who were identified as sexually active and who had at least one test for chlamydia during the measurement year. Chlamydia is caused by bacteria transmitted through mucous membranes in the anus, mouth, and genital areas, often during sexual activity. It often produces no symptoms in its early stages. Chlamydia can be treated and cured easily and inexpensively. If it is not detected, chlamydia can lead to pelvic infection, infertility and tubal pregnancies in women. Chlamydia infection can be transmitted between partners and from women to their and babies. Chlamydia can cause painful throat, anal or genital infections and increases the risk for HIV infection in both men and women.
Clinic or Medical Group Level Scores	While clinical performance measurement nearly always uses data from individual physicians and other health professionals, the scores reported publicly are combined for all practitioners in a single clinic or medical group location. This is called clinic or medical group level scores. This is done to ensure that the publicly reported scores are based on enough data to produce statistically significant results. (See Statistical Significance)
Colorectal Cancer Screening	This measure shows the percentage of adults over age 50 that had appropriate colorectal cancer screening using one of several screening options. The risk of colon cancer increases as we age. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of annual cancer deaths. Any growths in the colon should be removed and tested for cancer. With colon cancer, you have a much better chance of surviving if it is found early.

Glossary	
Common Cold (Treatment) - Avoidance of Antibiotics	This measure shows the percentage of children who were evaluated by the doctor for a common cold (upper respiratory infection - URI) and who were not prescribed an antibiotic for three days after the diagnosis. Rhinoviruses are the primary cause of colds in children. Antibiotics do not work against cold viruses. Taking antibiotics when they are not necessary may put children at risk for the medicine's side effects. In addition, if a child uses antibiotics too often, those drugs can be less effective for treating bacterial infections in the future. (See Antibiotic)
Community Alliance	Community alliances are collaboratives typically comprised of healthcare providers, health plans, government agencies, employers, labor unions, and consumers that work together to improve the quality of healthcare and promote wellness. Collaboratives typically combine data from multiple sources for performance measurement and report on physicians, clinics, medical groups, hospitals and healthcare providers.
Confidence Interval	A confidence interval is a statistical term that means the likelihood or <i>confidence</i> that a score falls within a specified range. Clinical performance scores are often calculated within a range, in addition to a set value. The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recommends that publicly-reported clinical performance scores have at least a 90 percent confidence level (.90CI).
Denominator	The denominator (d) shows the number of patients for whom data is attributed to the physician practice and who ought to receive treatment according to accepted guidelines. Physicians see different numbers of patients who vary by age, gender, and health condition. The denominator will vary by physician, clinic, or medical group based on the mix of patients and how the information is collected. (See Patient Mix)
Diabetes	Diabetes is a disease that keeps the body from making or using insulin, a hormone that helps cells absorb blood sugar (glucose), so it can be available for energy. When blood sugar is too high, it can lead to other problems such as heart disease, kidney disease, blindness and loss of limbs. People who have diabetes have at least two times greater risk of heart disease and stroke than those who do not. (See Blood Sugar (Glucose) Testing)
HbA1C Testing	(See Blood Sugar (Glucose) Testing)
HEDIS®	The Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) is an NCQA tool widely used by health plans to measure performance on important dimensions of care. (See National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA))
Individual Performance	A clinical measure of care that is typically provided by physicians, medical groups or in clinics, and is

Glossary	
Measure	endorsed by the National Quality Forum (NQF). Blue Cross Blue Shield has included a subset of NQF-endorsed measures in our national standard for clinical performance.
Kidney Disease (Nephropathy) Screening and Treatment	Regular screenings and medical attention for kidney disease (nephropathy) can catch and treat kidney damage early, improving the chances of preventing kidney failure. Diabetes can damage the kidneys and cause small amounts of protein to leak into the urine, which is not normal. People with diabetes should be administered a urine protein (microalbumin) test once during the measurement year. Over time, diabetes can damage the kidneys and cause them to stop working, which requires dialysis treatment using a machine that cleans waste from the blood. People with diabetes who have already been diagnosed with kidney disease should be treated with an appropriate class of medication, or have seen a kidney doctor (nephrologist).
LDL-C (Bad Cholesterol) Screening for Diabetics	A Low Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol (LDL-C or "bad" cholesterol) screening is typically administered to adults with diabetes (type 1 and type 2) at least once a year. High levels of "bad" cholesterol (LDL-C) can harm blood vessels and lead to blood vessel or heart disease and possibly a heart attack or stroke. Regular testing provides feedback on whether changes in diet, exercise and medication are needed to help control cholesterol are needed. Ideally, your LDL-C should be less than 100.
LDL-C (Bad Cholesterol) Screening for Heart Patients	This measure shows the percentage of adult patients who had at least one Low Density Lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C or "bad" cholesterol) screening test in the year after they were discharged from the hospital for the following heart procedures or conditions: heart attack (acute myocardial infarction), coronary artery bypass graft (CABG), percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (PTCA), or stroke or aneurysm (ischemic vascular disease). It is important to screen for high levels of "bad" cholesterol (LDL-C) which can further damage the heart and blood vessels and possibly lead to another heart attack or stroke.
Local Comparison Score	<p>The <i>Local Comparison Score</i> provides a point of reference to compare how often patients of a certain physician or clinic receive care recommended by national guidelines. The scope of comparison may be geographical (statewide, zip code etc.) and may also be specific to a specialty. Most local Plans collaborate with physician advisory groups to identify the appropriate local comparison for performance improvement within a community.</p> <p>The <i>Local Comparison Score</i> can vary widely among individual measures and across geographies for many reasons, including the type of measure, how long the measure has been recommended, and how the information is collected. Overtime as performance measurement expands to more regions, there will be enough information to provide national comparison scores.</p>

Glossary	
Low Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol (LDL-C) Screening	(See LDL-C (Bad Cholesterol) Screening for Diabetics or LDL-C (Bad Cholesterol) Screening for Heart Patients)
Mean	The mean is the average of the scores in the population. Numerically, it equals the sum of the scores divided by the number of scores. The mean is one of several points that can be used to show central tendency in statistics. (See Median)
Measurement Category	Clinical measures can be grouped to show performance for individual measures within a particular category of medical care. Grouping measurements into categories provides patients with a more useful way to view results.
Measurement Period	The measurement period describes the start and end dates used during the performance measurement cycle. Often, the measurement period is one year. In some cases, the measurement period is longer to reflect the medically-accepted standard for when the appropriate care ought to be provided (e.g., people with diabetes should have a dilated eye exam at least once every two years).
Median	The median of a population is the point that divides the distribution of scores in half. Generally, half of the scores in a population are values higher than the median and half are values lower than the median. The median is one of several values that can be used to show central tendency in statistics. (See Mean)
Medication Monitoring (Adults)	This measure shows the percentage of adult patients who were monitored at least once during the measurement year after receiving a 180-day supply of any of the following medications: angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB), digoxin, diuretics, or anticonvulsants (phenytoin, Phenobarbital, valproic acid, carbamazepine). Therapeutic dosage of a medicine can vary from person to person. It can also vary for an individual person over a period of time. It is important that patients taking medications for extended periods are checked to make sure the dosage of medicine is adjusted correctly.
Medication Use – Adults	A measurement category that may include performance results for acute bronchitis treatment in adults and adult medication monitoring. Results may not be available for all measures. Not all measures apply to all specialties. In some cases, there is either not enough information to report or the local health Plan does not use the measure at this time. The combination score reflects the mix of patients for the physician. (See Patient Mix)

Glossary	
Medication Use – Pediatrics	A measurement category that may include performance results for testing children with sore throats for strep bacterial infection and the appropriate treatment of children with cold viruses. Results may not be available for all individual measures. Not all measures apply to all specialties. In some cases, there is either not enough information to report or the local health Plan does not use the measure at this time. The combination score reflects the mix of patients for the physician. (See Patient Mix)
National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)	The National Committee for Quality Assurance is a private, 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization with a stated mission to improve health care quality. The NCQA seal is a widely recognized symbol of quality accreditation and certification. Organizations incorporating the seal into advertising and marketing materials must first pass a review and annually report on their performance.
National Quality Forum (NQF)	The National Quality Forum (NQF) is a not-for-profit membership organization created to develop and implement a national strategy for health care quality measurement and reporting. Established as a public-private partnership, the NQF has broad participation from the health care system, including national, state, regional, and local groups representing consumers, public and private purchasers, employers, health care professionals, provider organizations, health plans, accrediting bodies, labor unions, supporting industries, and organizations involved in health care research or quality improvement. NQF-endorsed quality measures are considered widely accepted by providers and health plans.
Nephropathy Screening and Treatment	(See Kidney Disease (Nephropathy) Screening and Treatment)
Numerator	The numerator (n) shows the number of times patients of a particular doctor, health care professional or clinic received the care being measured (See Attribution and Denominator). There are various reasons why a patient might not have received the specific care being measured. One hundred percent performance is not expected for most measures. (See Patient Mix)
Patient Charter	The Patient Charter for Physician Performance Measurement, Reporting and Tiering Programs (Patient Charter) is a list of standards intended to advance physician performance measurement and public reporting programs. The standards are designed to meet the needs of consumers and promote the fair reporting of clinical performance. The agreement was spearheaded by the Consumer-Purchaser Disclosure Project, a group of leading consumer, labor and employer organizations that works to ensure that all Americans have access to publicly-reported health care performance information.
Patient Mix	Physicians and other health care professionals see different numbers of patients who vary by age, gender, and health condition. This is referred to as the patient mix. Performance measurement results

Glossary	
	can include calculations that account for differences in patient mix.
Persistence of Beta-Blocker Treatment	(See Beta-Blocker (PBH) Treatment After Heart Attack)
Physician Clinical Performance Measurement Program	The Blue Cross Blue Shield Physician Clinical Performance Measurement Program consists of a display of clinical performance information in an online consumer tool to support member healthcare decision-making and encourage physicians, patients, health plans and employers to work together to improve the quality of care. The program incorporates a subset of the National Quality Forum-endorsed, HEDIS Physician Quality of Care measures. (See the National Quality Forum , HEDIS , and the National Committee for Quality Assurance) Performance scores are the result of measurement administered by the local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans or community alliances according a set of national program standards.
Physician Level Scores	In some cases, there will be enough data to calculate and publicly share statistically significant performance scores for individual doctors and other health care professionals. (See Statistical Significance)
Prevention and Screening Measures	Prevention and screening measures are used to evaluate how often patients receive services to prevent, detect, or slow the development of disease and promote health. Examples of these measures are mammography for breast cancer screening or cholesterol screening for cardiovascular health. Guidelines for prevention and screening are typically based on clinical research findings and recommend the most appropriate patient populations for the services
Primary Care Physician	A primary care physician is a doctor who has completed postgraduate training in primary medical care programs, such as <i>family practice</i> , <i>general practice</i> , <i>pediatrics</i> or <i>internal medicine</i> . Primary care physicians provide the patient with a broad spectrum of care, both preventive and curative, and often refer patients for more specialized care while coordinating all of the care the patient receives. In addition, <i>nurse practitioners</i> and <i>physician assistants</i> often provide or supplement primary care services.
Retinal Eye Exam	This performance measure shows the percentage of adults with diabetes (type 1 and type 2) who were administered a retinal eye exam (dilated) once a year unless the prior year's exam was negative. High blood sugar in people with diabetes can cause bleeding in the blood vessels in the eyes and lead to blindness. People with diabetes should have regular eye exams to watch for any signs of damage to the blood vessels in the eyes. Early detection and treatment of problems in eye blood vessels may preserve vision.
Screening	(See Prevention and Screening)

Glossary	
Score (Performance)	The first step to calculating a score is to assign data about patient care to a doctor or other health professional. The score is then calculated as the number of patients in the physician practice who received the recommended treatment (<i>numerator</i> or <i>n</i>) divided by the number of patients in the practice who should have received the treatment (<i>denominator</i> or <i>d</i>) and converted to a percentage ($n/d \times 100$). This tells you the percentage of patients who received care according to a specific measure. (See Attribution , Numerator , Denominator , Confidence Interval , and Patient Mix)
Specialist Physician	A specialist is a licensed physician who focuses on a particular area of medicine, surgery, or patient care and may concentrate on certain body systems, specific age groups or complex scientific techniques to diagnose or treat particular medical conditions. Specialties are based on additional physician training completed after medical school.
Statistical Significance	Statistical significance is determined by a numerical calculation. A measurement score is described as statistically significant when it is unlikely that the score was not the result of chance. It is desirable to have statistically significant results to have a reasonable measurement of performance. (See Threshold)
Strep Test For A Sore Throat - Avoidance of Antibiotics	This measure shows the percentage of children who were treated by a doctor for a sore throat (pharyngitis) who received a throat culture for strep (group A streptococcus bacterium) before being prescribed an antibiotic. A throat culture is a test that tells the doctor whether or not your child has a strep infection and needs antibiotics. Without the test, your child may be given an antibiotic when it is not needed. Taking antibiotics when they are not necessary may also put children at unnecessary risk for the medicine's side effects. In addition, overuse of antibiotics may result in some bacteria becoming resistant to the antibiotic.
Substantial Difference	A performance measurement level is described as substantially different when the threshold used to assign physicians to performance categories shows meaningful differences in the level of performance. (See Threshold)
Threshold	Thresholds are the two measurement points that classify physician performance into three levels as compared to a local norm. Performance results above the upper threshold are classified as <i>Above The Average</i> . Results that fall below the lower threshold are considered <i>Below Average</i> . All other results are classified as <i>Average</i> .
Virus	A virus is a microscopic infectious agent that cannot grow or reproduce without a living host cell. Viruses are smaller than bacteria (See Bacteria). Viruses are inert until they come in contact with a

Glossary	
	suitable host (people, animals, plants). They take over cell functions and may cause sickness and disease, such as influenza (flu). Antibiotics do not cure a viral infection. Antibiotics should be taken for bacterial infections. Using antibiotics when they are not needed does not help the patient get better, but increases costs for the patient, may lead to unnecessary side effects, and can cause public health problems, as some bacteria may become resistant to certain antibiotics over time. (See Antibiotic)