Overview of Proposed Updates in 2023 Accreditation Programs

Health Plan Accreditation

Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization Accreditation

Utilization Management-Credentialing-Provider Network Accreditation

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# Table of Contents

2023 Accreditation Programs: Overview of Proposed Updates ........................................................ 1  
   NCQA’s Mission: Improve the Quality of Health Care ................................................................. 1  
   The NCQA Advantage .............................................................................................................. 1  
   A Guide to the Updates .......................................................................................................... 1  
      HPA 2023 Proposed Standards Updates ........................................................................... 1  
      MBHO 2023 Proposed Standards Updates ..................................................................... 1  
      UM-CR-PN 2023 Proposed Standards Updates ............................................................... 1  
   Stakeholders Participating in Public Comment ................................................................. 2  
   Background ............................................................................................................................. 2  

HPA 2023: Proposed Standards Updates ...................................................................................... 3  
   Updates Applicable to HPA 2023 .......................................................................................... 3  
      Factor Language Updates ............................................................................................... 3  
      Element Retirements ....................................................................................................... 3  
      Scoring Updates ............................................................................................................. 4  
      Reorganizing Requirements ............................................................................................ 5  

MBHO 2023: Proposed Standards Updates ................................................................................... 6  
   Updates Applicable to MBHO Accreditation 2023 .............................................................. 6  
      Factor Language Updates ............................................................................................... 6  
      Element Retirements ....................................................................................................... 6  
      Scoring Updates ............................................................................................................. 6  
      Reorganizing Requirements ............................................................................................ 7  

UM-CR-PN 2023: Proposed Standards Updates ....................................................................... 8  
   Updates Applicable to UM-CR-PN Accreditation 2023 ....................................................... 8  
      Element Retirements ....................................................................................................... 8  
      Scoring Updates ............................................................................................................. 8  

Public Comment Instructions ..................................................................................................... 9  
   Public Comment Questions .................................................................................................. 9  
   Documents .......................................................................................................................... 9  
   How to Submit Comments ................................................................................................. 9  
   Next Steps .......................................................................................................................... 10
2023 Accreditation Programs:
Overview of Proposed Updates

NCQA's Mission: Improve the Quality of Health Care

NCQA is dedicated to improving health care quality.

For more than 30 years, NCQA has been driving improvement throughout the health care system, helping to advance the issue of health care quality to the top of the national agenda. NCQA’s programs and services reflect a straightforward formula for improvement: measurement, transparency, accountability.

This approach works, as evidenced by the dramatic improvements in clinical quality demonstrated by NCQA-Accredited health plans. Today, approximately 176 million Americans are enrolled in an NCQA-Accredited health plan.

The NCQA Advantage

Proposed updates to Health Plan Accreditation aim to align standards with the changing market landscape and stakeholder (states, employers, CMS, consumers) needs and regulatory requirements, and to assist organizations in their pursuit of quality care. The NCQA Accreditation seal is a sign that organizations deliver high-quality care and have strong member protections.

A Guide to the Updates

HPA 2023 Proposed Standards Updates

The corresponding section in the Overview details proposed updates, provides the background and rationale and asks targeted questions for consideration. Appendix 1: Proposed Standards Updates for HPA 2023 details the updated standard language.

NCQA will also update the following products to align with the HPA updates, as noted within this section:


MBHO 2023 Proposed Standards Updates

The corresponding section in the Overview details proposed updates for MBHO 2023, in alignment with updates to HPA 2023. Appendix 2: Proposed Standards Updates for MBHO 2023 details the updated standard language described in this section.

UM-CR-PN 2023 Proposed Standards Updates

The corresponding section in the Overview details proposed updates for UM-CR-PN 2023, in alignment with updates to HPA 2023. Appendix 3: Proposed Standards Updates for UM-CR-PN 2023 details the updated standard language described in this section.
Stakeholders Participating in Public Comment

NCQA shares these updates for public comment to generate thoughtful commentary and constructive suggestions from interested parties. Many comments lead to changes in our standards and policies, and the review process makes our standards stronger for all stakeholders.

NCQA asks respondents to consider whether the requirements are feasible as written and are clearly articulated, and to highlight areas that might need clarification.

Background

Proposed updates to the HPA 2023, MBHO 2023 and UM-CR-PN 2023 standards and guidelines were informed by feedback (e.g., via PCS) from health plan organizations, NCQA surveyors and stakeholders such as consumers, states and CMS. Updates include updates to the factor language and scoring thresholds, retirements and reorganization of existing requirements.
Overview of Proposed Standards Updates—HPA, MBHO & UMCRPN 2023

HPA 2023: Proposed Standards Updates

Updates Applicable to HPA 2023

Refer to Appendix 1: Proposed Standards Updates for HPA 2023 to review the updates outlined below.

Factor Language Updates

QI 4, Element A: Data Collection. NCQA recommends revising the language and scope of factor 6 by:

- Replacing “severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI),” an outdated term, with “serious mental illness (SMI)” in the factor language.
- Adding “serious emotional disturbance (SED)” in the factor language and removing an exception for organizations that do not have adult membership to emphasize the importance of including children and adolescents in the activities described by this element.

Targeted Questions

• Do you support replacing “severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI)” with “serious mental illness (SMI)” in QI 4, Element A, factor 6?
• Do you support adding “serious emotional disturbance (SED)” and removing the exception for organizations that do not have adult membership in QI 4, Element A, factor 6?

These updates will also apply to CC 1, Element B: Opportunities for Coordination in MBHO Accreditation 2023.

Element Retirements

UM 5, Element D: UM Timeliness Report. NCQA does not assess or draw conclusions about timeliness or otherwise score timeliness performance in this element. NCQA recommends retiring this element because defining an appropriate threshold for overall timeliness is not currently possible, given the variety of reports that organizations have submitted historically. NCQA will continue to seek more automated methods to assess overall timeliness in future standards.

Targeted Questions

• Do you support retiring UM 5, Element D: UM Timeliness Report?

Scoring Updates

NCQA recommends raising the bar for scoring the following long-standing elements:

**UM 1, Element A: Written Program Description.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets 45-6 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 3-4 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 0-2 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These updates are related to updates for UM 1, Element A: Written Program Description in UM-CR-PN Accreditation 2023.*

**CR 1, Element A: Practitioner Credentialing Guidelines.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets 89-11 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 5-8 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 0-4 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These updates are related to updates for CR 1, Element A: Practitioner Credentialing Guidelines in MBHO Accreditation 2023.*

**ME 7, Element A: Policies and Procedures for Complaints.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets 34-5 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 23 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 0-2 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These updates are related to updates for RR 2, Element A: Policies and Procedures for Complaints in MBHO Accreditation 2023.*

**ME 7, Element B: Policies and Procedures for Appeals.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets 34-5 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 23 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 0-2 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These updates are related to updates for RR 2, Element B: Policies and Procedures for Appeals in MBHO Accreditation 2023.*

NCQA generally raises the scoring bar for elements that have a documented process as the data source, have more than five factors, and have been long-standing requirements. Most organizations usually score “Met” on these elements and would not be adversely affected by the updates described above.

**Targeted Questions**

- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for UM 1, Element A: Written Program Description?
- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for CR 1, Element A: Practitioner Credentialing Guidelines?
- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for ME 7, Element A: Policies and Procedures for Complaints?
- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for ME 7, Element B: Policies and Procedures for Appeals?
Reorganizing Requirements

**ME 2, Element A: Subscriber Information.** NCQA recommends splitting the requirements of this existing element into two separate elements: ME 2, Element A (Subscriber Information) and Element B (Distribution of Subscriber Information) to better clarify and score requirements for the specific information that should be distributed to subscribers information and the frequency by which specific groups of subscribers should receive the information.

### Targeted Questions

- Do you support splitting ME 2, Element A into two elements: ME 2, Element A (Subscriber Information) and Element B (Distribution of Subscriber Information)?

*This update is related to RR 3, Element A: Subscriber Information in MBHO Accreditation 2023.*
MBHO 2023: Proposed Standards Updates

Updates Applicable to MBHO Accreditation 2023

Refer to Appendix 2: Proposed Standards Updates for MBHO 2023 to review the updates for MBHO Accreditation 2023, as outlined below and aligned with updates for HPA 2023.

Factor Language Updates

CC 1, Element B: Opportunities for Coordination. NCQA recommends revising the language and scope of factor 4 by:

- Replacing “severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI),” an outdated term, with “serious mental illness (SMI)” in the factor language.
- Adding “serious emotional disturbance (SED)” in the factor language to emphasize the importance of including children and adolescents in the activities described by this element.

Targeted Questions

- Do you support replacing “severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI)” with “serious mental illness (SMI)” in CC 1, Element B, factor 4?
- Do you support adding “serious emotional disturbance (SED)” in CC 1, Element B, factor 4?

These updates will also apply to QI 4, Element A: Data Collection in HPA 2023.

Element Retirements

UM 5, Element B: UM Timeliness Report. NCQA does not assess or draw conclusions about timeliness or otherwise score timeliness performance in this element. NCQA recommends retiring this element because defining an appropriate threshold for overall timeliness is not currently possible, given the variety of reports that organizations have submitted historically. NCQA will continue to seek more automated methods to assess overall timeliness in future standards.

Targeted Questions

- Do you support retiring UM 5, Element B: UM Timeliness Report?


Scoring Updates

NCQA recommends raising the bar for scoring the following long-standing elements:

CR 1, Element A: Practitioner Credentialing Guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets all 11 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 8-10 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 5-8-7 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 3-4 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 0-2 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These updates are related to updates for CR 1, Element A: Practitioner Credentialing Guidelines in HPA 2023.

**RR 2, Element A: Policies and Procedures for Complaints.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets all 5 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 3-4 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 2-3 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 1-2 factor</td>
<td>The organization meets 0 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These updates are related to updates for ME 7, Element A: Policies and Procedures for Complaints in HPA 2023.

**RR 2, Element B: Policies and Procedures for Appeals.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets all 5 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 3-4 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 2-3 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 1-2 factor</td>
<td>The organization meets 0 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These updates are related to updates for ME 7, Element B: Policies and Procedures for Appeals in HPA 2023.

NCQA generally raises the scoring bar for elements that have a documented process as the data source, have more than five factors, and have been long-standing requirements. Most organizations usually score “Met” on these elements and would not be adversely affected by the updates described above.

### Targeted Questions

- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for CR 1, Element A: Practitioner Credentialing Guidelines?
- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds RR 2, Element A: Policies and Procedures for Complaints?
- Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for RR 2, Element B: Policies and Procedures for Appeals?

### Reorganizing Requirements

**RR 3, Element A: Subscriber Information.** NCQA recommends splitting the requirements of this existing element into two separate elements: RR 3, Element A (Subscriber Information) and Element B (Distribution of Subscriber Information) to better clarify and score requirements for the specific information that should be distributed to subscribers information and the frequency by which specific groups of subscribers should receive the information.

### Targeted Questions

- Do you support splitting RR 3, Element A into two elements: RR 3, Element A (Subscriber Information) and Element B (Distribution of Subscriber Information)?

This update is related to ME 2, Element A: Subscriber Information in HPA 2023.
UM-CR-PN 2023: Proposed Standards Updates

Updates Applicable to UM-CR-PN Accreditation 2023

Review Appendix 3: Proposed Standards Updates for UM-CR-PN 2023 to review the updates for UM-CR-PN Accreditation 2023, as outlined below and aligned with updates for HPA 2023.

Element Retirements

UM 5, Element D: UM Timeliness Report. NCQA does not assess or draw conclusions about timeliness or otherwise score timeliness performance in this element. NCQA recommends retiring this element because defining an appropriate threshold for overall timeliness is not currently possible, given the variety of reports that organizations have submitted historically. NCQA will continue to seek more automated methods to assess overall timeliness in future standards.

Targeted Questions
• Do you support retiring UM 5, Element D: UM Timeliness Report?

These updates will also apply to UM 5, Element D: UM Timeliness Report in HPA 2023 and UM 5, Element B: UM Timeliness Report in MBHO Accreditation 2023.

Scoring Updates

NCQA recommends raising the bar for scoring in UM 1, Element A: Written Program Description, a long-standing element, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization meets all 6 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 4-5 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 3-4 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 1-2 factors</td>
<td>The organization meets 0 factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NCQA generally raises the scoring bar for elements that have a documented process as the data source, have more than five factors, and have been long-standing requirements. Most organizations usually score “Met” on this element and would not be adversely affected by the updates described above.

Targeted Questions
• Do you support the updated scoring thresholds for UM 1, Element A: Written Program Description?

These updates are related to updates for UM 1, Element A: Written Program Description in HPA 2023.
Public Comment Instructions

Public Comment Questions

Public comment is integral to the development of all NCQA standards and measures. NCQA considers all suggestions. NCQA encourages reviewers to provide insights on global issues related to the proposed updates including:

1. Will the proposed updates assist your organization in meeting its objectives? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. Are there key expectations not addressed in the proposed requirements?

Documents

Draft standards and explanations for updates can be found in:
- Appendix 1: Proposed Standards Updates for HPA 2023.

How to Submit Comments

Respond to topic and element-specific questions for each product on NCQA’s public comment website. NCQA does not accept comments by mail, email or fax.

1. Go to http://my.ncqa.org and enter your email address and password.
2. Once logged in, scroll down and click Public Comments.
3. Click Add Comment to open the comment box.
4. Select one or more of the following from the drop-down box:
5. Click to select the Topic and Element (question) on which you would like to comment.
6. Click to select your support option (Support, Do not support, Support with modifications).
   a. If you choose Do not support, include your rationale in the text box.
   b. If you choose Support with modifications, enter the suggested modification in the text box.
7. Enter your comments in the Comments box.
   Note: There is a 2,500-character limit for each comment. We suggest you develop your comments in Word to check your character limit; use the “cut and paste” function to copy your comment into the Comments box.
8. Use the Submit button to submit more than one comment. Use the Close button to finish leaving comments; you can view all submitted comments in the Public Comments module.

All comments must be entered by Monday, January 10 at 11:59 p.m. ET

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Next Steps

The final Standards and Guidelines for HPA 2023, MBHO 2023 and MBHO 2023 will be released in 2022, following approval by the NCQA Standards Committee and the Board of Directors.

Requirements for HPA 2023, MBHO 2023 and MBHO 2023 take effect July 1, 2023.