

Health Plan Accreditation FACT SHEET



Until 1990 there was no comprehensive way to evaluate a health plan's quality, no standards of quality to evaluate plans against. The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) was established to develop the first set of standards for health plan quality. NCQA developed its **Health Plan Accreditation program** based on a set of evidenced-based requirements that measure plan performance and provide employers with a way to evaluate current and prospective health plans.

Although NCQA now evaluates, certifies, recognizes and accredits a variety of health care organizations and providers, its **Health Plan Accreditation program** is the gold standard for evaluation programs in the industry.

➔ What Is Health Plan Accreditation?

NCQA's Health Plan Accreditation program builds on almost three decades of experience measuring the quality of health plans. An organization that earns Accreditation meets standards covering more than 100 measured elements.

THE STANDARDS

Quality Management & Improvement

Population Health Management

Network Management

Utilization Management

Credentialing

Member Experience

KEY FEATURES

Focuses not only on how health plans comply with medical standards but, also behavioral healthcare standards.

Extensively evaluates plans' population health management efforts, including how they identify member needs and enroll members in appropriate programs.

Mandates that health plans comply with rigorous utilization management standards so members are receiving treatment decisions that are timely and evidence-based.

Measures the availability and accessibility of primary care physicians, specialists and behavioral health care practitioners.

➔ What Does Health Plan Accreditation Mean for Employers?

The rigor of the requirements, combined with onsite reviews of patient files, means that earning NCQA Accreditation is more than a “check the box” process. For employers—whether they are self-insured or fully insured—NCQA Accreditation means that an independent, nationally recognized organization has validated a plan’s performance. Without NCQA Accreditation, there is no assurance for the employer that the health plan is truly committed to meeting quality standards.

➔ What Should Employers Do?

Employers should ask their current or prospective health plans if they are NCQA Accredited. They can also find information about Accredited plans on NCQA’s [Report Cards](#)—for example, how a plan scored in different categories such as keeping members healthy and helping them get better. In addition, employers should include requirements in their RFP that health plans are accredited through NCQA.



Knowing that a health plan meets NCQA standards assures employers that they have a partner in improving and maintaining the health of their workforce.

For more information and resources for employers, visit www.ncqa.org/employers



The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit that uses measurement, transparency and accountability to improve health care. NCQA creates standards, measures performance and highlights organizations that do well. All this helps drive improvement, save lives, keep people healthy and save money.

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