

# Rural Quality Advisory Council

January 14, 2023

*Please refer to the agenda and PowerPoint slides as additional resources. This summary is intended to capture the questions, input, and ideas received from Council members, not recap the entire meeting.*

## **Rapid-fire Intro question: Please share a word or phrase that best describes how they feel about 2023.**

Uncertain but excited, optimistic, travel, excited, embracing change, joyful anticipation, questioning, forward, content and grateful, one day at a time, determined, joyful anticipation, calm, energized, promising, connection, hopeful, ready to jump in, hopeful, swimming, new normal, grateful.

## **2023 Council Priorities and Goals**

Discussion questions:

1. Reflecting on the responses about how conversations regarding rural quality measurement and improvement have changed over the past year, what advice would you give to FORHP in supporting rural communities in delivering high-quality care?
2. What challenges or opportunities do you anticipate when you consider the top three priorities you identified for 2023?

## ***Council Discussion:***

- Still on a supply-side solution to workforce but need to think differently to get solutions (e.g., team-based care, non-traditional providers).
- How can we help rural providers and hospitals think differently about their staffing patterns? How can we maintain services and quality? Does a 15-minute visit always make sense? How we deliver services may need to be re-examined in many different aspects.
- Enterprise-level quality reporting.
- There is opportunity for rural in the ACO investment model.
- Focus on finding measures that actually reflect quality outcomes.
- Increase the focus on screening for and treating Sepsis.
- Addressing maternity care in rural areas – this is the year to focus on obstetrics quality in rural, make sure the new Rural Emergency Hospitals can take care of emergency OB needs, support hospitals that do not have OB services (Level 0).
- Sustainability of ACO funding model for rural hospitals is questionable – low performers may be protected but high performers are not rewarded.
- Alignment around HHS programs and measures is needed.
- Disconnect between organizations in rural communities, things are very siloed, and need to improve collaboration.
- Concerns about rural hospitals and clinics which are purchasing their EHR access through large health systems – they are losing control at the local level and seeing service disruption.

- Re-evaluate measures with small “n” that negatively impact small hospitals. Need education and resources that support health equity and social determinants.

### **From the Field:**

- Kerri Cornejo, FORHP shared updates, and framed the policy and regulatory environment and anticipated rulemaking calendar for 2023
- Jennifer Lundblad, RQITA, shared an NQF MAP Rural and Hospital Workgroup update, noting that the workgroups each met in December to consider and vote on measures for CMS reporting and payment programs
- Karla Weng, RQITA, announced the impending [MBQIP Measures Under Consideration feedback request](#), and encouraged Council members to respond regarding the list of potential future measures:
  - Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AUR) Surveillance
  - ST-Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) (OP-40)
  - Global Malnutrition Composite Score (GMCS)
  - Safe Use of Opioids – Concurrent Prescribing (Safe Use of Opioids)
  - Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis (VTE-1)
  - Hospital Commitment to Health Equity
  - Hybrid Hospital-Wide All Cause Readmissions (Hybrid HWR)
  - Screening for Social Drivers of Health
  - Screen Positive for Social Drivers of Health
  - Sepsis (SEP-1)
- Natalia Vargas, FORHP, updated the Council that the year-long Delphi Panel process define health equity in the rural context launched in December, bringing together 23 national rural, health equity, and research leaders.

### **RQITA Updates (Sarah Brinkman, Stratis Health RQITA Team)**

- Refreshed [HCAHPS Best Practices](#) resource in late 2022, currently updating QI Basics Course
- Hosting a CAH Quality Infrastructure Summit in early March in partnership with TASC and FMT
- Implementing a CAH Quality Assessment Pilot in collaboration with FMT in mid-2023
- Will be launching a QI Basics Peer Learning Network for the Quality Grantees in mid-2023

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