



This is the first edition of a monthly newsletter you will receive from Stratis Health. Quality Connect is designed to support your critical access hospital, providing updates and resources related to quality reporting and improvement efforts. To share your feedback or request to have another team member added to the list, please contact Jodi Winters – [jwinters@stratishealth.org](mailto:jwinters@stratishealth.org).

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## Happy National Rural Health Day!

To celebrate National Rural Health Day, Stratis Health President and CEO **Jennifer Lundblad** hosts a [conversation in our latest podcast](#) about how rural hospitals, especially rural emergency departments, can improve care for their older adult patients while contributing to building a fair, just, and equitable health care system.

Jennifer is joined by two expert colleagues, **Kevin Biese**, associate professor of emergency and internal medicine at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Medicine and co-principal investigator at the Geriatrics Emergency Department Collaborative (GEDC), and **Kristie Foster**, the emergency department nurse manager at Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital (APD) in Lebanon, New Hampshire. APD was the nation's first rural critical access hospital to achieve geriatric emergency department accreditation.

Thank you for all you do every day to improve health and wellness in Minnesota's rural communities!

## Reporting Reminders/Updates

- EDTC Q4 2024 due January 31, 2025 (MHA Portal)
- OP-18 Q3 2024 due February 1, 2025 (Hospital Quality Reporting)  
**NEW CART for DATA ABSTRACTION AVAILABLE**
- Population and Sampling is **optional**.

### **NEW CART for DATA ABSTRACTION AVAILABLE**

The **CMS Abstraction and Reporting Tool (CART)-Outpatient 1.25.0** has been released. The CART 1.25.0 download, installation instructions, edits, and online help are on the CMS [QualityNet](#) website.

- Select the **Hospitals – Outpatient** card on the home page of [QualityNet](#).
- On the Hospitals-Outpatient page, select **Data Management** and then select [CMS Abstraction & Reporting Tool \(CART\)](#) under **Data Collection**.

To install this new version, you must “uninstall” any previous versions of Outpatient CART from your server or desktop client. To install a new CART, you will need to select “initial installation”.

NOTE: Edits and Online Help Guide are located at the bottom of the Download Cart page under Resources.

This release contains updates to CART Outpatient 1.25.0 to support the Sex Data Element changes as listed in [Specifications Manual 17.0a](#). This CART version must be used for encounter dates 07-01-24 through 09-30-24.

Details of the new Sex Data Elements are listed below:

- Sex Assigned at Birth – Required
- Sexual Orientation – Voluntary
- Gender Identity – Voluntary

**NOTE: Use this newly released CART 1.25.0 version for Q3 2024 encounters only. CMS is expected to announce a new submission process in January 2025 for encounters starting with Q4 2024 and beyond.**

The CCSQ Service Center at [QNetSupport@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:QNetSupport@cms.hhs.gov) or phone toll-free at 866.288.8912 (TTY: 877.715.6222) weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET. is a CMS resource for any installation issues.

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## Resources

We are pleased to announce the [Social Drivers of Health \(SDOH\)/Health-Related Social Needs \(HRSN\) Toolkit for Rural Health Care/Critical Access Hospitals](#). This toolkit is specifically designed for CAHs and their community partners working to address community SDOH and individual or family HRSN in Minnesota’s rural communities. The resource overviews the core components of SDOH/HRSN strategy for CAHs, including setting up governance, screening patients, and engaging community partners in CAH’s strategy. The toolkit can be accessed through the link above and will soon be available on the [Stratis Health Critical Access Hospital MBQIP Reporting and Improvement Assistance](#) webpage.

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## Upcoming Events

**Minnesota MBQIP Open Call** | January 15, 2025, 1-2 p.m. CT

[Register](#)

Stratis Health hosts open discussion calls for Minnesota CAHs to support CAHs in submitting data for core MBQIP measures, sharing promising practices with other CAHs, and having a chance to ask questions of Stratis Health staff and each other. CAHs are encouraged to review their MBQIP reports ahead of the calls and come with questions.

Additional 2025 calls and registration [can be found on our website](#).

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## Contact

For support with your quality reporting and improvement needs, please contact Jodi Winters at [jwinters@stratishealth.org](mailto:jwinters@stratishealth.org).

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### About Stratis Health

Stratis Health is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to collaborate and innovate to improve health. Stratis Health delivers data-driven insights, evidence-based interventions, and leading-edge improvement methodologies that inspire organizations and communities to achieve solutions to their most complex health improvement challenges. Visit the Stratis Health website at [www.stratishealth.org](http://www.stratishealth.org) for more information.