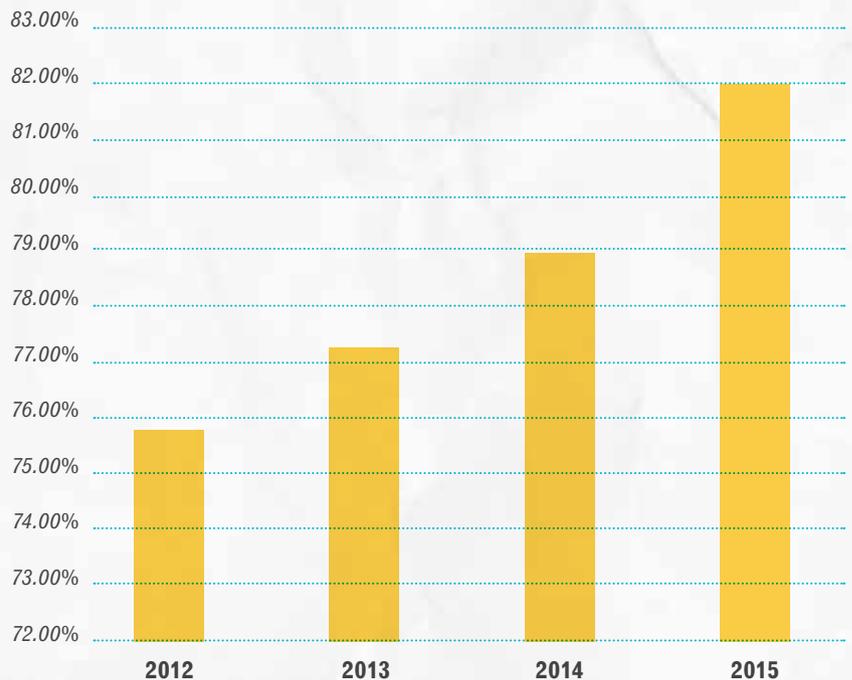


# Star Power: A review of the pharmacy quality measures

by Lisa Schwartz, PharmD

What started out as a 12-piece, year-long series of articles on pharmacy quality measurement has come to a close nearly two years later. The specific quality measures and the number of measures, not to mention the cut points for each star level in the Medicare Part D Star Ratings Program, have changed and reflect the industry's efforts to improve. The Health Insurance Marketplace Quality Rating System (applies to what is sometimes referred to as "Obamacare") was released from beta-testing so consumers could use a plan's quality rating to make value decisions when shopping for 2016 health insurance coverage.

## Medication Adherence for Diabetes Medications: PDP



■ Percent of Beneficiaries with Medication Possession Ratio Greater than 80%

\*\*Source: "Trends in Part C & D Star Rating Measure Cut Points." Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Accessed online 1/21/2016.

Pharmacy Quality Measure Column Title	Month Published
Proportion of Days Covered – Hypertension, Oral Diabetes, Statins	June 2014
Introduction of Quality Series; High Risk Medications	June 2014
Practitioners Q&A on Quality Measurement	August 2014
Diabetes Treatment (ACE/ARB when indicated; measure retired in 2015)	September 2014
PDC Non-warfarin Anticoagulant	October 2014
Diabetes Dosing	November 2014
CMR Completion Rate	December 2014
Benzodiazepine Hypnotics in the Elderly	January 2015
Antipsychotics in Dementia	February 2015
Statins in Diabetes	March 2015
Proportion of Days Covered – Beta Blockers	May 2015
CMR Completion Rate – added to SRP	June 2015
Drug-Drug Interactions	July 2015
Statin in Coronary Heart Disease	August 2015
Asthma and Beta Agonists	September 2015
PDC DPP-IV Inhibitors	October 2015
PDC Sulfonylureas	November 2015
PDC Calcium Channel Blockers	December 2015
Opioid Trio	January 2016
Health Insurance Marketplace QRS	February 2016

Companies That Offer Pharmacy Quality Reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ateb</li> <li>• PQS</li> <li>• FDS Healthcare Solutions</li> <li>• Pharmacy Quality Solutions</li> <li>• PioneerRx</li> <li>• PrescribeWellness</li> </ul>

dashboard products (see box above) will report performance based on data provided by participating Medicare Part D PDP and MAPD plan sponsors or measures selected by commercial insurance plans, but may not report on other measures that have been published by the Pharmacy Quality Alliance ([www.pqaalliance.org](http://www.pqaalliance.org)).

NCPA members interested in improving adherence measures should consider becoming a Simplify My Meds® pharmacy. These pharmacies offer appointment-based medication synchronization, a practice found in a study published in 2015 to improve patient adherence. More information is available at [www.ncpanet.org/smm](http://www.ncpanet.org/smm).

In the spring of 2014, *America's Pharmacist* began publishing pharmacy quality measure articles on a variety of health issues, with FAQs on how the measures fit into the Medicare Part D Star Rating program. Each of the 20 PQM articles (see listing at left) are archived on the *America's Pharmacist* online site ([www.americaspharmacist.net](http://www.americaspharmacist.net)) and are accessible to NCPA members. ■

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It's worth reminding pharmacy owners and pharmacists that the ratings in these two federal government programs are earned by a health plan and not a pharmacy. But make no mistake, the pharmacy performance against these drug safety measures (such as medication adherence and use of high risk medications) does make a difference in the plan ratings. Pharmacy performance may affect close to 50 percent for stand-alone prescription drug plans (PDP) and slightly less for Medicare Advantage (MAPD) plans. Health plans and pharmacy benefits managers

are using these measures to track pharmacy performance, and in some cases use the information to determine performance incentive payments based on quality improvement goals of the health plan or pharmacy network. A quick look at the steady climb of the 4-star cut point for one measure ("Medication Adherence for Diabetes Medications"), reflects industry-wide improvement seen in most measurement trends.

Community pharmacists have options for monitoring and improving their performance. A few commercial