

ANNOUNCEMENT

Retirement of the Area-Level Patient Safety Indicators (PSIs) in Future Versions of the AHRQ QI Software

The AHRQ Patient Safety Indicators (PSIs) currently contain two types of indicators, including those measured at the area (or geographic) level and those measured at the provider (or hospital) level. This announcement pertains only to those measured at the area level.

Area-level PSIs Scheduled for Retirement

- **PSI 21: Retained Surgical Item or Unretrieved Device Fragment Rate**
- **PSI 22: Iatrogenic Pneumothorax Rate**
- **PSI 23: Central Venous Catheter-Related Blood Stream Infection Rate**
- **PSI 24: Postoperative Wound Dehiscence Rate**
- **PSI 25: Accidental Puncture or Laceration Rate**
- **PSI 26: Transfusion Reaction Rate**
- **PSI 27: Postoperative Hemorrhage or Hematoma Rate**

This announcement is to inform users of AHRQ Quality Indicators (QIs) that all future versions of the QI software, including v7.0 ICD-10-CM/PCS, will not include any area-level PSIs. Specifically, PSIs 21-27 will be retired. Version 6.0 ICD-9-CM and v6.0 ICD-10-CM/PCS of the QI software will be the last release that includes area-level PSIs.

The decision to retire the area-level PSIs was informed primarily by the low use of the indicators as evidenced by user feedback, evidence scans, and the very low number of questions received by AHRQ regarding the area-level PSIs. Although sometimes used at the State or County level for population health assessment, knowledge gaps on how to use the area-level indicators, what data they can be used on, and how they differ from the provider-specific PSIs may impact the uptake and use of these indicators by QI stakeholders.

The original concept of the area-level PSIs is no longer easily operationalized using only inpatient discharge data. As care has changed over time, updated validation work on the area-level PSIs would be needed to continue to refine and improve the PSI specifications for use in area-level reporting. For instance, there are problems with operationalizing PSI 25 as an area-level measure without linked data at the patient level, because it requires an abdominopelvic operation followed by another abdominopelvic operation to repair an injury that occurred during the first operation.

In September 2016, the AHRQ Quality Indicator Standing Workgroup reviewed and discussed the utility of the measures and the need for significant analytical work for the area-level PSIs as outlined above. The workgroup recommended that the area-level PSI indicators should be retired in order to focus on new and high-impact areas of healthcare quality. Therefore, AHRQ is retiring PSI 21 - 27 based on Workgroup recommendations, evidence of low visibility and use, and the need for significant improvement and adaptation.

AHRQ will continue to maintain and refine all of the provider (or hospital) level PSIs including:

- PSI 02: Death Rate in Low-Mortality Diagnosis Related Groups (DRGs)
- PSI 03: Pressure Ulcer Rate
- PSI 04: Death Rate among Surgical Inpatients with Serious Treatable Complications
- PSI 05: Retained Surgical Item or Unretrieved Device Fragment Count
- PSI 06: Iatrogenic Pneumothorax Rate
- PSI 07: Central Venous Catheter-Related Blood Stream Infection Rate
- PSI 08: In-hospital Fall with Hip Fracture Rate
- PSI 09: Perioperative Hemorrhage or Hematoma Rate
- PSI 10: Postoperative Acute Kidney Injury Requiring Dialysis Rate
- PSI 11: Postoperative Respiratory Failure Rate
- PSI 12: Perioperative Pulmonary Embolism or Deep Vein Thrombosis Rate
- PSI 13: Postoperative Sepsis Rate
- PSI 14: Postoperative Wound Dehiscence Rate
- PSI 15: Unrecognized Abdominopelvic Accidental Puncture or Laceration Rate
- PSI 16: Transfusion Reaction Count
- PSI 17: Birth Trauma Rate – Injury to Neonate
- PSI 18: Obstetric Trauma Rate – Vaginal Delivery With Instrument
- PSI 19: Obstetric Trauma Rate – Vaginal Delivery Without Instrument
- PSI 90: Patient Safety and Adverse Events Composite