

Shanen Wright:

Good morning, and welcome to the June 2020 edition of QPPLive!, a production of Quality Insights Quality Payment Program Support Center. We're so pleased to see so many friendly faces returning to our show this month. If you're a returning audience member to QPPLive!, you know the procedure. You can start submitting your questions or comments for our panel of experts at any time during today's show. If this is your first time joining us on QPPLive!, welcome, we're so glad you've decided to spend part of your day with the Quality Insights Quality Payment Program Support Center.

Before we get to the Q&A portion of today's presentation, though, it's my great pleasure to turn things over to Marvin Nichols for today's breaking news and announcements, starting with our Performers of Excellence awards. Marvin.

Marvin Nichols:

Thank you, Shanen. Back in 2019, the Quality Insights team developed an award for performance of excellence, and this award was based on quality improvement strategies and criteria that align with the four performance categories of the Quality Payment Program, that's Quality, Promoting Interoperability, Improvement Activities and Cost. We decided to award this award in three levels, the gold, silver and bronze. It is my great pleasure to introduce the Performer of Excellence Awards for 2019.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Marvin. We're going to start with our gold medal recipients of the Performers of Excellence Award. Special recognition goes to Albright Footcare Center of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania; Bedminster Eye & Laser Center in Bedminster, New Jersey; Brian Schultz of Jackson, New Jersey; Brooks Peters of Sellersville, Pennsylvania; Campbell & Philbin Medical Associates of Pittsburgh; David Bub of Allentown; Delaware Clinical & Laboratory Physicians of Newark; Grand View-Lehigh Valley Health Services of Sellersville, Pennsylvania. And the gold medal recipients continue with Hematology & Oncology Associates of Northeast Pennsylvania, of Dunmore, Pennsylvania; Houser Newman Associates of Tamaqua, Pennsylvania; Neuro-Specialists of Morris-Sussex from Hackettstown, New Jersey; Orthopedic Healthcare Associates of Charlestown, West Virginia; Pulmonary Medical Consultants of Philadelphia; Scott Lim of Erie, Pennsylvania, and as an aside Dr. Lim recently conducted a video blog interview on our website speaking about telehealth. If you haven't had a chance to check that out, make sure you go to our website and see that great presentation that Dr. Lim did on telehealth. Special thanks to him and his practice for lending their time to tell everyone about their experiences using telehealth. We'd also like to recognize as a gold medal recipient Valley Diagnostic Medical Center of Ramsey, New Jersey.

Shanen Wright:

Moving to our silver medal recipients, we'd like to recognize Family Practice of Honey Brook in Honey Brook, Pennsylvania; M. Farrukh Nizam of Edison, New Jersey; Mary-Anne Ost of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. And moving to our bronze medal recipients, we're very proud to recognize Comprehensive Pain Management of Manasquan, New Jersey; David Sheba of Uniontown, Pennsylvania; Justin Sheba of Uniontown, Pennsylvania; Richard Saglimbene of Toms River, New Jersey; Specialty Orthopaedics of Hermitage, Pennsylvania; Steven Hartung of Williamsport, Pennsylvania and Weinstein Imaging Associates of Pittsburgh. Congratulations to all of our gold, silver and bronze medal recipients in

the 2019 Performers of Excellence Awards, sponsored by Quality Insights Quality Payment Program Support Center.

Shanen Wright:

Before we get to more breaking news with Lisa Sagwitz, we'd like to throw a question out for you now. This is a fun one. We're going to make sure you're on your toes right now. This audience polling question just for you says, June 18th is known as what day? Is it Take Your Cat To Work Day? That's every day for me, working from home. International Sushi Day? Take Your Dog To Work Day? Or is it National Rocky Road Ice Cream Day? Hmm, do you know what today is? Go ahead and enter your answer now and we'll find out the results and whether you got the question right coming up. But in the meantime, here's breaking news and announcements with Lisa Sagwitz. Lisa.

Lisa Sagwitz:

Good morning. First some good news about telemedicine grants that are available. The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program received money from the CARES Act. That stands for Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act, and can grant awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$1 million for healthcare and education entities for telecommunications. Those funds can be used for things like audio, video and interactive video equipment, broadband facilities that support distance learning or telemedicine, computer hardware, software, network components, the acquisition of instructional programming and technical assistance and instruction for using the eligible equipment. It is important to note that the application deadline is July 13th. There are three links on this slide. The first one has the details of the grant [<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>], the application if you would like to submit one and that does need to be done electronically. The second link is a one-page fact sheet [[https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fact-sheet/508\\_RD\\_FS\\_RUS\\_DLTGrant.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fact-sheet/508_RD_FS_RUS_DLTGrant.pdf)]. And then the third link is some additional information [[https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDARUS2020\\_DLT\\_FOAR2CARESActFunding\\_04142020.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDARUS2020_DLT_FOAR2CARESActFunding_04142020.pdf)].

Lisa Sagwitz:

More good news. The Medicare 2% sequestration has been suspended, also because of the CARES Act. That was effective May 1st and it runs through December 31st of this year. You may want to review your participation agreements and your remittance advices to determine the impact, but that's wonderful news for most providers. If you'd like additional details, the link at the bottom of the screen will take you to that. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3548/text?q=product+update#toc-id509ABAE6EB2846AFAF3F1D78DAB8137B>

Lisa Sagwitz:

Next, we'll talk about the billing catastrophe and disaster modifiers and codes. On June 1st, the CMS Medicare Learning Network article was revised and it clarifies when to use the catastrophe disaster-related CR modifier and when to use the disaster related DR condition codes. The chart in the article identifies the PHE, or Public Health Emergency, blanket waivers, and flexibilities for which CMS requires the use of this CR modifier or DR condition code. Claims may be denied if they do not contain the modifier or condition code. Two little notes. Providers do not need to resubmit or adjust a previously

processed claim to conform to the requirements unless claims payment was affected, and CMS will not deny claims if the CR modifier or DR condition code is on a claim for services or items related to a COVID-19 waiver that are not on the list or present for services or items that are not related to a COVID-19 waiver.

Lisa Sagwitz:

Just a small announcement about the role that some of you may have that you knew as a "Delegated Official." On June 8th, there was a change and the role "Delegated Official" is now known as "Access Manager," so this would impact anybody who has that role in the Identity & Access Management System, PECOS, NPPES for your NPI numbers, the electronic health record incentive program, HARP. We work with all of you with your HARP program. So just know if you see the term "Access Manager" nothing's changed, just a new name. And now, back to Shanen for the results of poll number one.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Lisa. All right, let's see if you got it right. Oh, my goodness. It looks like we have somewhat stumped you with this question. 39% of people thought it was National Rocky Road Ice Cream Day, and while that sounds very delicious, unfortunately that is incorrect. The 33% of you who chose International Sushi Day were correct. June 18th is the official International Sushi Day. Sounds delicious. I think I might have to go have some for lunch. As far as taking your cat and your dog to work, I know those of us working from home have experienced a lot of time with our pets and we're probably ready to go back to work and let them go back to sleep. Great polling question there. You can amuse your friends with the trivia that today is International Sushi Day.

Shanen Wright:

While we've got the polls open, we're going to check your knowledge about the Quality Payment Program for a moment. Here's another polling question. This one's true or false, so you've got a 50/50 shot at it. For 2020, clinicians and practices are responsible for submitting 12 months of cost data in the QPP portal. Is that true or false? Tell us what you think and we'll have the results coming up after more news with Lisa.

Lisa Sagwitz:

And that's the perfect segue to move to our next slide on the MIPS category of Cost. So, you know within MIPS there are four categories: Cost, Quality, Promoting Interoperability and Improvement Activities. So with those four categories, Cost is probably the one that we cover the least. There's really nothing that you do, but there is an impact with the actions that you take because that will get you a better or a worse score. So Quality Insights has created a user-friendly document called the 2020 Cost Category Overview [<https://qppsupport.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=2b15503e-fb70-4885-93f9-720f01132f45>]. So, through the slides, you can get directly to that link, and then CMS has four different resources on Cost. They are on the QPP website, qpp.cms.gov and we also have links to them here for the Quick Start Guide [<https://qpp-cm-prod-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/816/2020%20Cost%20Quick%20Start%20Guide.pdf>], the Measure Codes [<https://qpp-cm-prod-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/811/2020-cost-measure-codes-list-ebcm-mspb-tpcc.zip>], the Summary of Cost Measures [<https://qpp-cm-prod->

[content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/826/2020%20MIPS%20-%20Summary%20of%20Cost%20Measures.pdf](https://content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/826/2020%20MIPS%20-%20Summary%20of%20Cost%20Measures.pdf)] and measure information forms [<https://qpp-cm-prod-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/812/2020+MIPS+Cost+Measure+Info+Forms.zip>]. Just a note on Cost, right now it is worth 15 possible points, but it will be increasing in future years and the thought is eventually that Cost and Quality are going to be the same for scores or potential scores. So, just be knowledgeable on this, and we're always happy to talk to you if you want more detail.

Lisa Sagwitz:

Now, we'll move into possibly adjusting your MIPS workflow with COVID-19. We know that COVID-19 has brought many complexities to how clinicians treat and care for their patients. Solo and small practices should continue to serve patients during the pandemic by adjusting their workflow and considering the following four things. We'll talk about each of these in detail on coming slides. But the first one is transitioning to telehealth. We know that this has become very popular in recent months due to COVID. I was on a webinar yesterday and surprised to hear a statistic on how much this has increased. It's been by 4347% in the last few months. You'll probably also want to continue to focus on prevention and chronic disease management in your patients, possibly participate in a clinical trial and stay up-to-date on changing information.

Lisa Sagwitz:

We'll go into a little more detail about the first possible workflow adjustment with COVID, and that's transitioning to telehealth. We know it's become an essential tool in providing healthcare due to COVID. CMS has authorized over 200 services that can be furnished via telehealth and if patients do not have the requisite technology for a Medicare telehealth visit, so say someone doesn't have both the audio and the video portion available, they can arrange a virtual check-in or an e-visit with just their telephone. We have four resources available that you can click on through the slides: a healthcare provider fact sheet [<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicare-telemedicine-health-care-provider-fact-sheet>], a telemedicine tool kit [<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/general-telemedicine-toolkit.pdf>], frequently asked questions [<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/03092020-covid-19-faqs-508.pdf>] and some telehealth FAQs [<https://qppsupport.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=583a4ea0-2244-4439-9906-401e5d2fcaba>].

Lisa Sagwitz:

The second possible workflow adjustment with COVID is prevention and chronic disease management. You want to continue to focus on your preventive services. Follow up with at-risk patients and those with chronic diseases to keep them healthy and keep them out of the hospital or emergency room if possible. And then there's a link at the bottom of the slide with some Q&A on chronic care management, if you'd like to review that [<https://tmfnetworks.org/Portals/0/Resource%20Center/QAChronicCareManagementUsingTelehealth-508.pdf?ver=2020-04-02-150842-930>].

Lisa Sagwitz:

Third possible workflow adjustment – if you are a practice that's treating COVID-19 positive patients, the good news that there's a new Improvement Activity just for this. It's called COVID-19 Clinical Trials

Improvement Activity. The identification number is IA ERP 3 and that is a high weighted activity. It is for clinicians who are treating positive patients with a drug or a biological product. To qualify you'll want to have documentation that you're in a COVID clinical trial and that the date has been entered into a data platform for the study or care of COVID patients and that you've submitted clinical COVID patient data that's going to a clinical data registry for the purposes of a future study. And that slide has two links for additional information [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/results?cond=COVID-19> and [https://qpp-cm-prod-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/987/MIPS%20Dear%20Clinician%20Letter\\_4.28.20.pdf](https://qpp-cm-prod-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/987/MIPS%20Dear%20Clinician%20Letter_4.28.20.pdf)].

Lisa Sagwitz:

The last adjustment for possible workflow changes with COVID is staying up-to-date. So, there are several resources that may be helpful, as well as the Quality Insights newsletter. So if you are not currently receiving the Quality Insights newsletter, post your name, practice and e-mail in the Q&A box, or let us know if there's someone else in your group who would benefit from it. They are sent out on a regular basis and just a great wealth of knowledge. I can't say enough about our Quality Insights newsletters. They're just wonderful.

Lisa Sagwitz:

Now we'll take a short break and go back to Shanen for the results of the second poll.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Lisa. Let's take a look and see if you've got it correct. Most of you did. We always have such a great audience here. 67% of people got the polling question correct, that it is indeed false when you say, "For 2020 clinician practices are responsible for submitting 12 months of cost data in the QPP Portal." In actuality, CMS continues to collect 12 months of cost data based upon Medicare Part A and Part B claims on behalf of clinicians and practices. While we're in the polling mode, let's open another one during the news. This is a fun one, more trivia you can amaze your friends with. Father's Day is this Sunday, June 21st. In what city was Father's Day celebrated in the United States for the first time in 1910? Is it Spokane, Washington; Concord, New Hampshire; Charleston, South Carolina or Little Rock, Arkansas. Let's see if you know the answer to that and in the meantime, more breaking news and announcements with Lisa.

Lisa Sagwitz:

Thanks, Shanen. So, now back to COVID-19 and we'll talk about the Quality Payment Program. On June 11th, CMS updated a document called Quality Payment Program COVID-19 Response and the link is here [<https://qpp-cm-prod-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/966/QPP%20COVID-19%20Response%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>], or you can go to the website, [qpp.cms.gov](http://qpp.cms.gov) and access that. The resource provides information about changes to the Quality Payment Program in response to COVID-19 and answers frequently asked questions. At this time, CMS has not issued guidance about the potential impact of COVID this year, but please stay tuned, we will keep you up-to-date.

Lisa Sagwitz:

You may remember last year we had a series of wonderful informational webinars about billing and code. Well, we have another one coming up. It's on Wednesday, June 24th at one o'clock Eastern

Standard Time. The title is Key 2020 CPT ICD-10-CM and HCPCS Code Updates. The learning objectives will be to identify and describe key 2020 changes in CPT, ICD-10-CM and HCPCS coding. Items that will be discussed: Examine current coding practices, review new codes as well as deletions, clarify descriptors and the use of key codes. Review expanded 2020 telehealth coding guidelines during the COVID-19 crisis. And then looking ahead to 2021, discuss the upcoming significant changes to E/M guidelines and impacts to documentation and reimbursement. To register, click the "register here" link [<https://wvmievents.webex.com/wvmievents/onstage/g.php?MTID=e23f5aec0cf191ea8d3f38880f87f0f56>]. We recently sent a newsletter announcing the webinar. If you're on our call today and have not received this, post your contact information in the Q&A box. We'll make sure that we get an invite out to you and you are welcome to ask appropriate staff, your billers, if they would also like to attend. Should you be busy on the 24th at one o'clock, you can still register and, as always, we will send you slides and the recording, and that would be available for you to listen to or view at your convenience.

Lisa Sagwitz:

One other thing, all of our webinars are recorded and kept on our website, and that is [www.qppsupport.org](http://www.qppsupport.org). If you go under the "events" tab and then "archived events," all of our webinars are listed by date and title. So that's another way to access past events if you wanted to reference them later.

Lisa Sagwitz:

A few COVID-19 resources. The Quality Insights website has a specific section just on Coronavirus. That first link will take you right there [<http://www.qualityinsights.org/Coronavirus.aspx>]. The second one is Quality Insights' telehealth information [<https://www.qualityinsights.org/Coronavirus/Telehealth.aspx>]. There's some specific resources that were put together that are helpful compilations of that, as well as other data that we thought was helpful for practices. You can click there and get it. The White House Task Force information, the link is there [[www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov)]. And then some CMS information about current emergencies [<https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>].

Lisa Sagwitz:

You know that QPPLive! is the third Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m., so here's a sneak peek for July 16th. We will be talking about MIPS for beginners. So, if you are new to MIPS, you have someone new in your office or someone who just isn't familiar with it, that might be a great time to have them join us, and we will also highlight important information about the 2019 final scores. We believe those will be released in July. And we'll also talk about the targeted review process. So if something is not correct with your 2019 final score, we'll tell you how to file and request a re-review of that.

Lisa Sagwitz:

Little tidbit, when you register for QPPLive! now you might notice that there is a section to send in a question in advance, so we welcome those questions, and of course during QPPLive!, you're always welcome to ask questions in the Q&A box or verbally when the lines are opened, and registration will be sent out soon for the July 16th edition of QPPLive!. Now, back to Shanen for some poll results.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you so much for that information, Lisa. Let's see if you got this trivia question right. This was kind of a tough one, knowing where Father's Day was first celebrated in 1910. It looks like we have stumped you. Actually, the lowest polling result in the webinar is the correct answer. 33% said Concord, New Hampshire; 19% said Charleston, South Carolina; 19% said Little Rock, Arkansas. But the correct answer was actually Spokane, Washington, and only 14% of people guessed that. But now you know and you can wow your friends with some Cliff Clavin-like trivia tonight over dinner, knowing that Father's Day was celebrated for the first time on the third Sunday of June in 1910 in Spokane, Washington.

Shanen Wright:

We've got a few more polling questions coming up to keep your on your toes, so you'll learn some trivia and a little bit about CMS' Quality Payment Program as well. But right now, let's meet our panel of experts who are here to address your questions today. This is Quality Insights' QPP team, which includes Kathy Wild, who is our project manager, Amy Weiser, who is lead project coordinator, me, I'm Shanen Wright, associate project director for the Quality Insights QPP team.

Shanen Wright:

We also have our panel of experts, which includes Roxanne Fletcher, Andrea Phillips, Shirley Sullivan, Marvin Nichols, Julie Williams, Joe Pinto, Rabbecca Dase and Lisa Sagwitz, who just delivered the news. Speaking of Rabbecca Dase, she will also be providing links to the resources we are talking about directly in your chat window in WebEx. If you don't see it, hey, we'll tell you how to bring it up right now. You can ask questions using Q&A or get those links from the chat feature. Now, if you don't see the Q&A icon or this might be your first time ever on QPPLive!, all you have to do is click on the little three dots there at the bottom of your screen and it'll bring up your Q&A window. You can type your question in there on the right of your screen and then hit send. We'll answer as many questions as we can, as time will allow, during today's episode of QPPLive!.

Shanen Wright:

As Lisa mentioned as well, we also have those advance submitted questions. We love those. We got a lot of them this month. Keep them coming. We'll be addressing those as well during the episode today. Now, the chat icon, if you're not seeing those direct web links from Rabbecca, just click on the little blue bubble down there, and then you'll be able to click directly on the links that are being provided to resources, both from Quality Insights and from CMS as well.

Shanen Wright:

Most of you are probably listening on your computer speakers today, but if you have dialed in from the telephone, at least once during today's episode we will unmute the phone lines so that you can ask questions or provide feedback for our panel of experts verbally. The one thing we do ask is if you don't have a question, please make sure and mute your phone line on your end so we don't hear what's going on in your practice or maybe at your home, or anything that we shouldn't be hearing. So if you don't have a question and you're on the phone, just make sure and mute on your end.

Shanen Wright:

Keep in mind that we here at Quality Insights are also here to help you any time, not just on the third Thursday of every month during QPPLive! at 9:30. If you don't realize who your contact is at Quality Insights, you can use our general QPP inbox for inquiries or reach out to anyone from our team. We'll make sure you get to the right person to help you. We'll do the best we can to answer all of the questions you submitted today, but know that we may need to follow up at a later time. We want to make sure we're being accurate. Please keep in mind as well that rules and interpretations change over time, especially if you're viewing this as a recording and not at 9:57 a.m. on June 18, 2020. So if you're viewing the recording, know that it may change over time, but most of all we here at Quality Insights want to establish a relationship with you so that you can succeed in CMS' Quality Payment Program.

And with that, we're going to jump into some of the great questions that we have received. You can go ahead and submit them in the Q&A box as well, but the first one we have here says, "If I am interpreting correctly, telemedicine visits invalidate the meeting of the measurement. Is that correct?"

Marvin Nichols:

Hi, Shanen. This is Marvin. I'll take that. So, Quality ID #52 is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease long-acting inhaled bronchodilator therapy measure and in the denominator it does state without telehealth modifier, and that's from the specification sheet.

Quality ID #374 is closing the referral loop, and that one also states "without telehealth modifier." So, yes, the person is correct with that measure as well.

However, Quality ID #236, which is controlling high blood pressure, does not have "without telehealth modifier," so that one you should be able to use with telehealth, but we will follow up with the person that requested this information, just to ensure that they're collecting the correct data and to make sure that nothing has changed with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Marvin. Another question here says, "If he chooses MIPS measures that include procedure codes for facility patient care, there is no connection to our EMR, therefore no documentation for mining by our qualified registry. The office visits for in-office patients are nonexistent now and at least until mid-July."

Marvin Nichols:

I'll take this one as well, Shanen. Depending on how many patients the physician has seen at the facility will determine if this clinician can use the facility-based scoring for the Quality or the Cost category. Since this person is working with one of our practice transformation specialists right now, I'll have that practice transformation specialist reach out to the person that asked this question.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Marvin. Keep in mind, if you don't have your chat window open, make sure and open it. You can access direct links, courtesy of Rebecca, that will send you to resources just like what Marvin is talking about here, so you can click right on them. We're going to continue through some of our pre-

submitted questions. Thanks again for submitting those. And if you have other ones, follow-up questions or anything else, use that Q&A box before time runs short today.

Our next question asks, "Do you expect changes regarding MIPS scoring in light of the pandemic?"

Amy Weiser:

Hi Shanen, this is Amy. I'll take that one. As Lisa mentioned, and it's in our slides about the COVID-19 updates, we do not know what CMS is planning exactly for 2020. The best guidance we can give you is to stay in touch with us and make sure that you're reading our newsletters and keeping up-to-date with that information, because we will absolutely keep you up-to-date on anything that we hear from CMS related to any changes. As of right now, nothing has changed as far as the MIPS scoring. You still need 45 points to avoid a penalty. All of the categories are weighted accordingly. So right now, we're almost at the halfway point of the year. Right now, everything is moving ahead as we have anticipated so far.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Amy. All right. Here is another great question submitted from our audience. This individual asks, "How will the COVID-19 pandemic impact MIPS for 2020? As mentioned, there is a hardship exception process."

Amy Weiser:

Coupled with the fact that in the past we've had the opportunity to submit a hardship exception for Promoting Interoperability or extreme and uncontrollable circumstances, those do exist for 2020. They are available on the QPP website if you look under the exception applications and we are happy to help you with that. So it's not changing the scoring, per se, but those hardship exceptions are available.

Shanen Wright:

All right. Thank you, Amy. Coming up, we've got another polling question for you to test your knowledge of CMS' Quality Payment Program. But first, let's go back to another great question we had submitted here. This one says, "There continues to be what seems like conflicting information on whether ACO members in an AAPM need to report PI information and we would like some final clarification."

Amy Weiser:

I can take that, Shanen. This is kind of a complex and convoluted topic, because there are different types of ACOs and within APMs, as an APM, etc. What we would recommend is that we follow up with you directly, one-on-one. If you already have a practice transformation specialist that you're working with, you can reach out to them individually. Or if you need help and you haven't connected with one of us, just let us know, because we want to make sure that we're giving you the best information based on the ACO that you're in. We're not entirely sure exactly what might happen because of the pandemic and those associated things. So, again, we think that this is something that you should talk to us directly about and we will be happy to help you.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Amy. April, let's open up another polling question, see if folks are on their toes this Thursday morning. This question asks what are the main objectives of the Quality Payment Program? Is it A, to improve the care received by Medicare beneficiaries; B, to lower cost to the Medicare program through improvement of care and health; C, to maximize QPP participation through education, outreach and support tailored to the needs of practices, especially those that are small, rural and underserved areas; D, to expand alternative payment model participation; E, to provide accurate, timely and actionable performance data to clinicians, patients and other stakeholders or, wow, what a mouthful, F, all of the above? Which one is it? Enter your answer and we will find out whether you got that correct or not coming up. And remember, before time runs out, submit your questions using the Q&A feature and we'll get to as many as we can.

Let's go to another great one that was submitted. This one asks, "Does anyone have suggestions for a small non-patient basing practice that is not using an EHR to come up with ways to be successful in the MIPS program if we do not bill E&M codes and in 2020 only have three quality measures that are applicable to our office?"

Amy Weiser:

Hi, this is Amy. I can take that one. Thanks for the question. I'll preface this by saying that the best resource that you have is to speak to one of us directly so that we can give you customized technical assistance related to your question. We've also created a tool to help practices avoid the 9% negative payment adjustment for 2020, and it gives you a number of scenarios based on things going on in your practice, whether you have an EHR or don't have an EHR, and I just want to stress that. Not having an EHR, number one, does not exempt you from submitting data, and it also doesn't stop you from participating. So, that being said, we are here to help you and we would be happy to go through that document about avoiding the penalty one-on-one with you to make sure that we're making sure that you have everything that you need in place.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Amy. Let's take a look at those polling results and see if you knew ... Oh, my goodness. Now that's the audience we know and love here on QPPLive!. 86% of you got it correct. It is all of the above. The 7% that said to improve the care received by Medicare beneficiaries, that is correct, too, because it is all of the above. So, great question there and glad to see everybody on their toes this morning knowing what the main objectives are for the Quality Payment Program.

Shanen Wright:

Coming up, we're going to unmute those phone lines if you have a question or comment for our panelists, but first let's go back to some great submitted questions. We've got one here. This one says, "Can you explain the CMS bucketing process for MIPS and the changes associated with it each subsequent reporting year?"

Amy Weiser:

Hi, this is Amy. MIPS continues to be a budget neutral program, according to the MACRA legislation, so that has not changed. You can still receive a positive payment adjustment, a neutral payment adjustment or a negative payment adjustment. That is not changing. As far as we know, that will not change, because it's under the legislation.

Shanen Wright:

Here's another great one. "Is there an exception for MIPS reporting and meeting the measures during this time, as not all providers are seeing patients in office?"

Marvin Nichols:

Hi, Shanen. This is Marvin. I'll take this one. As Amy previously discussed, there has been no information regarding the QPP, Quality Payment Program, that CMS has issued as of yet. Now that being said, there are a couple of different exceptions that you can do for this year, but that hasn't changed from previous years, being that you have a hardship exception and you have a PI exception. So the program as it is still is the same until we receive further guidance from CMS.

Amy Weiser:

This is Amy. I'd like to just add a little something to that, if you don't mind. We've had a practice share with us: "We've performed very well in the past. We're a small practice, we've performed well. We don't know what to do moving forward, especially with the pandemic and things going on." What I'd like to share is that we want you to continue the positive momentum of being in the Quality Payment Program and doing well. It's good to have goals, to continue to try to earn incentives and keep up with the changes in future years for reporting. Because this is not going to go away. There may be some changes moving forward, of course, but it's not going to go away. So we want you to continue to do well and we are here to support you in that effort. So we just want to reassure you that we know that there's a lot of anxiety. We know that it's a stressful time for everyone. But we are here to help you. Again, it's not cost assistance. If you've not worked with us before, it's completely no cost. We truly want to be the support that you need to continue to score well and to do well. If for some reason you can't report, we will guide you through the hardship exception process as well. Just so you know that there are things in place to help you and you're not alone. Thank you.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Amy. We've got one last fun polling question, some great trivia for you coming up. But first, let's have another question. This one asks, "Do I need data from my EMR if I switched to another EMR in February of the PY? Can I assume 70% of my data is in EMR two or do I need an analysis?"

Marvin Nichols:

Hi, Shanen. This is Marvin. I would suggest that you do an analysis and the reason why is that you should aggregate your data for the whole year, even though the data completeness rate is 70%. The reason why you'd want to aggregate your data is because you don't want to cherry pick. What I mean by that is

CMS looks to see if you're just picking data to make your score data. So I would definitely aggregate the whole year's worth of data, if possible.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Marvin. All right, here's our final trivia-oriented polling question of the day for QPPLive!. Coming up, West Virginia Day ... That's right, for those of us here in West Virginia ... will be celebrated on June 20th to mark the anniversary of West Virginia being admitted in the United States in 1863. With that in mind, what is known as the unofficial state food of West Virginia? Is it deviled eggs, fried green tomatoes, the pepperoni roll or biscuits and gravy? I must confess all four are making me hungry right now. Is it lunch time yet?

Shanen Wright:

Well, let's see if you get the answer right and in the meantime, here is another question submitted to us. "Do you expect any MIPS changes secondary to COVID?"

Marvin Nichols:

I'll take that one as well, Shanen. The only thing that's constant is change, right? So that being said, like I said before, we haven't received any guidance from CMS about any changes to the QPP, Quality Payment Program. Amy suggested that you guys keep your momentum, and that's good. We know it's going to change at some point, right? We know it's going to change, they're going to adjust, but just keep that momentum of doing the program, because the program isn't going to change. The program isn't going anywhere. So if you just cheat that momentum, keep doing the things that you need to do to get a high score, you'll be able to navigate those changes a bit better than if you would just stop collecting data. So just keep moving. We expect something to come out, but in the meantime, just keep that forward momentum and keep making your score a little bit higher.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Marvin. All right, let's take a look at those polling results, April. Let's see if people got it right. Oh, no, we must not have many West Virginians on the line today because we stumped you yet again. We can't stump you with the QPP questions, but we have with the trivia. 45% of people said biscuits and gravy and wow, we sure love us some biscuits and gravy in West Virginia, including the great chain Tudor's Biscuit World, if you've ever been here. That is not the correct answer. 27% of people said fried green tomatoes, also not correct. Number three in the polling question is actually the correct answer. 18% of our participants said the pepperoni roll, which is the unofficial state food of West Virginia. It's a standard in convenience stores throughout the state. I can't tell you how many I've eaten while driving through the years. The savory snack has roots in our coal mining history, not to mention it's the ultimate crowd pleaser with its versatile ability to be a full meal or a road trip companion, wedding favor, ballpark food, bakery staple or school lunch. It's everywhere. Come down and try a pepperoni roll if you've never had one. They are truly, truly delicious.

Shanen Wright:

All right. We've got a few more minutes. If you've got questions, please submit them using the Q&A feature. We've got a question that came in here that says, "A number of Medicare managed insurances

we participate with that processed our claims for 99441, 99443 at the lower reimbursement rate. Do you have any suggestions for our small practice seeking resolution for these claims to process at the new rate?"

Amy Weiser:

Hi, Shanen. It's Amy. This is a question I'd probably have to follow up with you on. So, Patty, I see your question here and we will make sure that we follow up with you. Thank you for the question.

Shanen Wright:

Thanks, Amy. We have one final question submitted to us today. If you've got any more, get them in quickly because we'll be wrapping up in about three minutes. This question asks, "How best to choose measures for the specialist physician working with a very small practice and also working in the facility setting, which is not part of the office medical records?"

Marvin Nichols:

Hi, Shanen. This is Marvin again. If you navigate to [qpp.cms.gov](http://qpp.cms.gov) website, there are four tabs at the top, the first tab being MIPS, the Merit-based Incentive Payment System, and if you open that tab, there's a box that says, "Explore measures and activities." If you press that box, a tool will open up, and if you scroll down, you will see it's a grayed out box and there's three boxes within that grayed out box. It has the measure type, it has the specialty measure set and it has the collection type. So if you drop it down, you can choose a measure type. However, in that second box that says "specialty measure set," you can choose different specialties and then whatever specialty that you choose, it will show you the measures associated with that specialty.

The second part of this question is about facility-based. So, if you have over 75% or more of your covered professional services in POS 21, which is inpatient hospital, or POS 22, which is on-campus outpatient hospital, or the ER, which is POS 23, you can use the quality score of that facility. Now, obviously you won't know that until the end of the year, so just keep those two things in mind. So if you're going to see 75% of your patients in the hospital, then you're probably going to use facility-based scoring and you can use the quality score of that facility. And if you're not, you can navigate on the QPP website to identify the measures associated with the specialty.

Shanen Wright:

Thank you, Marvin. And thank you for joining us for this June 2020 edition of QPPLive!. If you have additional questions, you can contact us at [qpp-surs@qualityinsights.org](mailto:qpp-surs@qualityinsights.org), call us at 1-877-497-5065 or visit our website at [qppsupport.org](http://qppsupport.org). Mark your calendar because we'll do this again on the third Thursday of July, that's July 16th, at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Time.

Shanen Wright:

On behalf of everyone at the Quality Insights Quality Payment Program Support Center, thanks again for joining us, and have a great day.