

CarePartners of Connecticut's Star Measure Tip Sheets outline key features of specific Medicare Star Rating program measures. These best practices and tips can optimize Star Ratings and identify opportunities to improve patient care.



Medication Adherence

The Medication Adherence measure assesses the percentage of patients 18 years of age or older who are prescribed a medication for diabetes, hypertension, or cholesterol and fill their prescription often enough to cover 80% of the prescribed course of treatment. The three measures are:

- Medication adherence for **diabetes** medications
- Medication adherence for **hypertension** (RAS antagonists)
- Medication adherence for **cholesterol** (statins)

Medications included in each measure

Diabetes

- Biguanides
- Sulfonylureas
- Thiazolidinediones
- Dipeptidyl peptidase (DPP)-IV inhibitors
- Glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists*
- Meglitinides
- Sodium glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors

Hypertension

- Renin-Angiotensin System (RAS) antagonists, defined as angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors
- Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs), or direct renin inhibitors

Cholesterol

- Statin and statin combinations

Exclusions

- Hospice care during the measurement year
- End-stage renal disease (ESRD) diagnosis or dialysis during the measurement year
- Prescription for insulin (diabetes measure only)
- Prescription for Entresto (sacubitril/valsartan) (hypertension measure only)

Notes:

- **Patients qualify** for the measure on the second medication fill date, but the measurement period begins on the date of the first fill.
- **Patients must use** their Medicare Part D pharmacy benefit, as gap closure is dependent on pharmacy claims.

* for diabetes treatment only; obesity and weight loss medications are excluded from Medicare coverage.

Provider Tips and Best Practices

- **Explain** the importance of the medication plan to patients, emphasizing its impact on the success of their overall treatment plan.
- **Ask** patients about their medication habits (including missed doses) and identify barriers to taking medication such as side effects, financial difficulties, and obstacles to transportation.
- **Supply** patients with medication reference materials/ instructions for review at home or with a caregiver.
- **Review** insurance formularies for lowest-tiered, clinically appropriate medications. With many plans, there is no copay for Tier 1 medications filled at preferred pharmacies or delivered via Optum Rx Home Delivery.
- **Share** [Medicare Prescription Payment Plan](#) information with patients who could benefit (those with high Part D cost sharing early in the year or monthly drug costs of \$350 or more).
- **Provide** 90-day prescriptions to reduce patient trips to the pharmacy.
- **Encourage** patients to enroll in prescription auto-refill through their pharmacy.
- **Suggest** that patients consider using pharmacies that offer free, next-day delivery of prescriptions.
- **Request** that pharmacies synchronize multiple medications for patients to be filled on the same day.
- **Talk** with pharmacists about medication dosage packaging options.
- **Encourage** patients to use pill boxes, and/or smartphone apps with medication reminder alerts.
- **Simplify** dosing schedules when appropriate for patients with higher dosing frequency.
- **Remind** patients to store medication containers in a visible area (properly closed and safely out of children's reach).

Patients can sign up for Optum Rx Home Delivery:

- online at [OptumRx.com](https://www.OptumRx.com)
- by calling:
 - HMO: 800-496-7490
 - PPO: 800-506-3703
- by completing the [online order form](#)



Did you know?



Each year, **125,000** Americans die as a result of poor medication adherence.



Poor adherence to medication costs the U.S. health care system nearly **\$300 billion a year** in medical appointments, hospitalizations, and visits to the emergency room.