



July 18, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady
1011 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady:

We, the Friends of the National Quality Forum (NQF) are a coalition committed to NQF and its role in improving the nation's healthcare. We strongly urge you to support continuing the currently authorized \$30 million in annual Medicare funding for NQF and quality and performance measurement. NQF's work is vital to advancing our national commitment to safer, more effective care.

NQF is a private, nonpartisan, independent organization that convenes physicians, hospitals, payers, consumers, and national experts in a consensus-based process to endorse the best measurement tools for improving accountability and patient care. NQF's multistakeholder approach to high-impact measurement is key to driving better quality care and lower costs, while also decreasing the burden on physicians and other providers. NQF is foundational to our efforts to achieve a cost-efficient, high-quality, value-based healthcare system that ensures the best care for Americans and the best use of the nation's healthcare dollars.

Consistent, continued Medicare Trust Fund support for NQF's work directly improves the health and well-being of the nation's 57 million Medicare beneficiaries, and all Americans, while also lowering costs.

NQF provides invaluable private sector input prior to the regulatory process to assist the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in selecting the best quality performance measures for use in public payment and reporting programs. NQF also makes recommendations to CMS to reduce and align measures used in federal programs. In 2017, NQF recommended a 20 percent reduction of less-effective measures used across seven federal programs in order to increase the focus on measures that drive improvement and to lessen the measurement burden for physicians and other providers.

Federal improvement programs that use NQF-endorsed quality measures have reduced patient harm in hospitals by 21 percent, saving 125,000 lives and \$28 billion in costs. The 3.1 million fewer harms to patients achieved from 2010-2015 include a 91 percent decrease in central line infections and a 16 percent decrease in surgical site infections. Hospital readmission rates for Medicare patients have decreased by 8 percent since 2012.

NQF-endorsed measures and guidance are also important to private sector payment programs. Without NQF's efforts, it would be impossible to know whether new payment models are working as intended to secure better quality and more cost-effective care for

patients and families.

NQF is working to meet healthcare stakeholder and policymaker calls for more efficient, effective measures that will result in high-quality care at lower costs. Specifically, NQF is:

- Setting measurement priorities to focus on health outcomes important to the nation;
- Streamlining NQF's endorsement process for quicker review of measures;
- Collecting feedback from healthcare's frontline providers to understand better the impact of measurement, reduce burden on physicians and other providers, and ensure that measurement produces valuable, actionable information; and
- Creating new pathways to access NQF's measurement expertise so the development of new measures is more informed, efficient, and effective.

The Friends of NQF appreciate your consideration of our request to support continuing the currently authorized \$30 million in annual Medicare funding for NQF and quality and performance measurement. Thank you for your ongoing leadership of and support for improving healthcare quality and the critical role NQF plays in securing it for patients, families, healthcare providers, payers, and the nation's taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy
AdvaMed
Adventist Health System
American Academy of Dermatology
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association on Health and Disability
American Board of Medical Specialties
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Cardiology
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Physicians
American College of Surgeons
American Health Quality Association
American Heart Association National Center
American Medical Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Physical Therapy Association

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American Psychiatric Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
American Society of Nephrology
America's Essential Hospitals
America's Health Insurance Plans
AmeriHealth Caritas
AMGA
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
bioMérieux
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association
CAPG
CareFirst BlueCross Blue Shield
Carilion Clinic
Children's National Medical Center
Coalition to Transform Advanced Care
Compassus
Consumer Coalition for Quality Health Care
Council of Medical Specialty Societies
Dental Quality Alliance
Eli Lilly and Company
Federation of American Hospitals
Fresenius Medical Care North America
Geisinger
GlaxoSmithKline
Greater Philadelphia Business Coalition on Health
Harborview Medical Center
HCA
Health Action Council
Health Care Service Corporation
Healthcare Leadership Council
HealthPartners, Inc., Bloomington Minnesota
HealthSouth
Human Services Research Institute
Humana
Henry Ford Health System
Informed Patient Institute
Johns Hopkins Health System
Johns Hopkins Medicine Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality
Johnson & Johnson Health Care Systems, Inc.

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Kaiser Permanente
Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA
Memorial Hermann Health System
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Memphis Business Group on Health
Minnesota Health Action Group
MN Community Measurement
National Association of ACOs
National Business Group on Health
National Committee for Quality Assurance
National Health Policy Group
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
National Partnership for Hospice Innovation
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel
Nemours Children's Health System
Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement
Next Wave, Inc.
Northeast Business Group on Health
Pacific Business Group on Health
PCPI Foundation
Pharmacy Quality Alliance
PhRMA
Planetree International
Premier, Inc.
Press Ganey
Quality Insights, Inc.
SNP Alliance
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Interventional Radiology
Society of Thoracic Surgeons
St. Louis Area Business Health Coalition
Tenet Healthcare, Inc.
The Alliance
The Council on Quality and Leadership
The Joint Commission
The Leapfrog Group
University of Pennsylvania Health System Penn Medicine
University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
Vizient, Inc.

CC: Members of the House Committee on Ways and Means
Members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Members of the Senate Committee on Finance