Trends in HEDIS® Children's Measures for the Louisiana Medicaid Program

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Issues

- ***Health Care and Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS)® measures provide a standard for evaluating quality of care delivered by a health plan or provider.***
- ***The Louisiana Medicaid program has shown relative consistency in Children and Adolescents' Access to Primary Care Practitioners (CAP) measures.***
- ***The Medicaid program has also shown improvement in measures of selected immunizations.***

HEDIS Renamed

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) announced that it is changing its underlying name from Health Care and Employer Data and Information Set to Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set to reflect its broader scope and utility. When initially developed 10 years ago, HEDIS® measures were intended to provide information to employers when making decisions regarding health plan selection for employees. During the intervening period, the measures have evolved and are now widely used by consumers, purchasers, public programs and others to assess and compare physician and health plan performance.

NCQA also announced the addition of 5 new measures -- 3 are intended to be used to evaluate and compare costs for health care delivery. Two others are quality measures for the care of COPD and screening for lead in at-risk children.

Source: NCQA News Release, July 11, 2007. Available at: http://web.ncqa.org/tabid/517/Default.aspx.

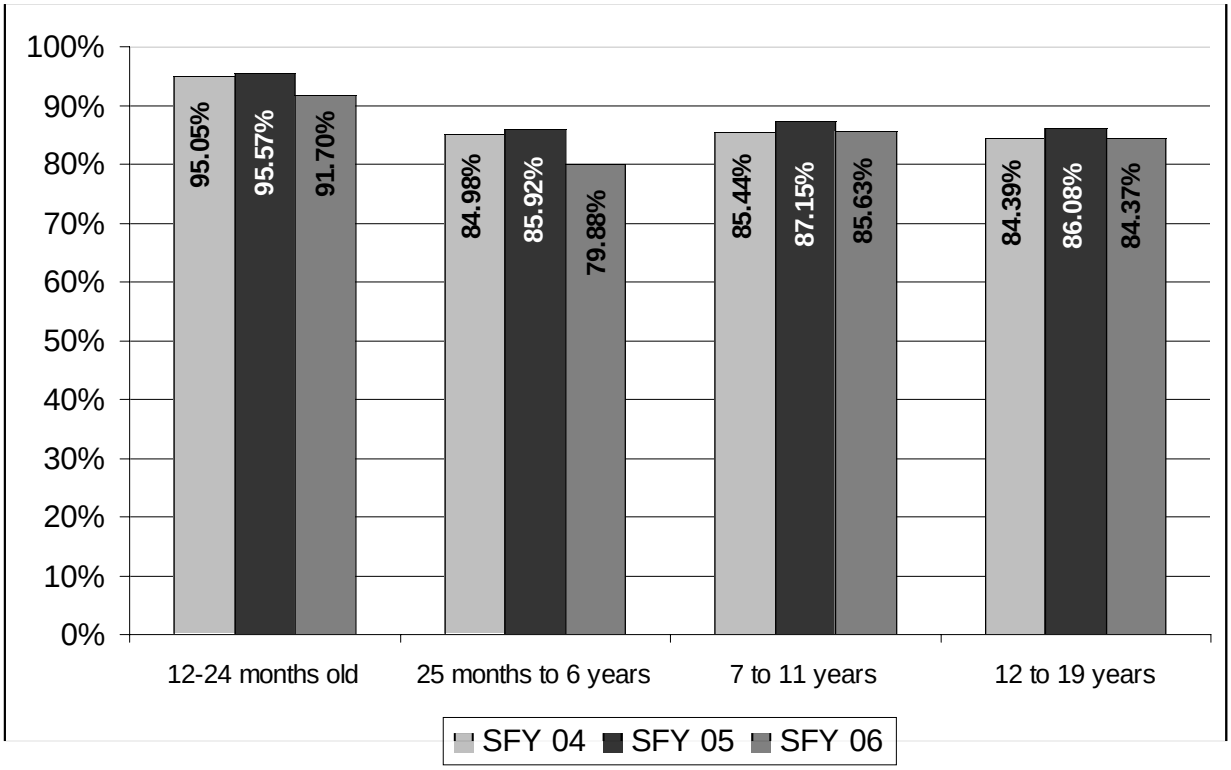
HEDIS®, developed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) about 10 years ago, is a set of performance measures that was originally developed to be a tool for employers to use in selecting from competing health plans for their employees' health care benefits. By using standardized measures, employers could compare the health plans using common metrics, i.e., apples to apples and oranges to oranges. Today, it is used by more than 90% of America's health plans.[1] Some measures can be calculated from paid claims data; others require clinical data from patient charts or electronic medical records; and still others require collecting primary data through member surveys (satisfaction measures). Today the 71 HEDIS® measures cover the following domains of care:

- Effectiveness of Care
- Access/Availability of Care
- Satisfaction with the Experience of Care (CHAPS®)
- Health Plan Stability
- Use of Services
- Health Plan Descriptive Information.

HEDIS® measures are reevaluated at least every three years in order to ensure that the measures still reflect clinical guidelines. Each fall, NCQA publishes the measures, incorporating any new ones and the changes to existing measures. The most recent was the 2008 HEDIS® publications, available in July 2007, that are intended to be used for the 2007 measurement year.

As the use of HEDIS® measures has broadened, they are also being used by state Medicaid agencies to evaluate the quality of care delivered to recipients, not only by Medicaid managed care plans, but also fee-for-service programs, primary care case management programs (PCCM) and other delivery models. For the past 3 years, the Louisiana Medicaid Program has calculated HEDIS® measures using paid claims data. Beginning with the diabetes measures, today 17 measures are calculated on a quarterly basis. Because of the time needed for claims to be submitted, processed and paid, there is a lag between the measurement year and the calculation of measures. Also, some additional time may be required for programming changes, depending on the extent of the annual modifications of the HEDIS® measures. HEDIS® measures are presented as ratios with the denominator being the population of interest and the numerator being those in the population who received the desired treatment. The remainder of this article will present the most recent Children and Adolescents' Access to Primary Care Practitioners (CAP) and Childhood Immunization Status (CIS) measures that were calculated for SFY (state fiscal year) 04 (July 1, 2003-June 30, 2004), SFY 05 (July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005) and SFY 06 (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006). These are "modified" HEDIS® measures as we have changed the measurement year from the calendar year to the state fiscal year in order to present the most current measures available. Please also keep in mind that results were most likely affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Children and Adolescents' Access to Primary Care Practitioners (CAP)



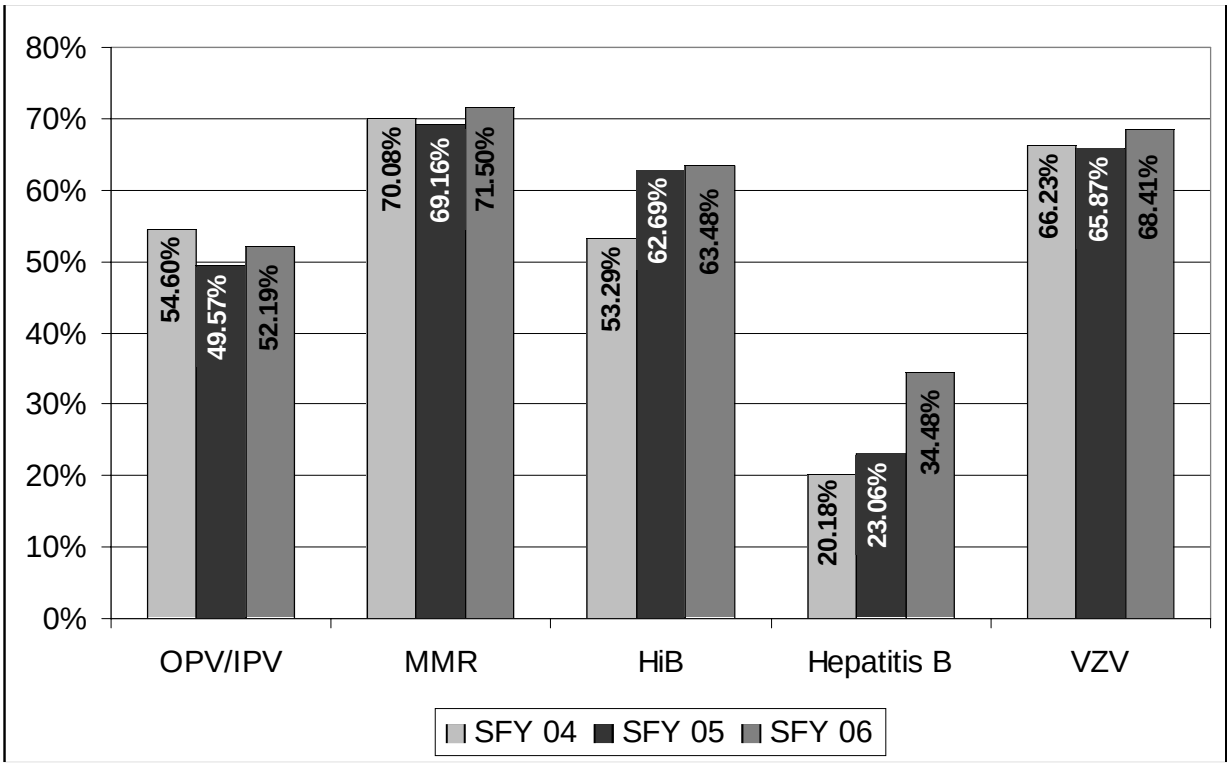
Description: The percentage of enrollees who had a visit with a primary care practitioner during the measurement year.

Denominator: To be included in the denominator, children must have met the following criteria:

- 12 months to 19 years of age on the last day of the measurement year, in this case, June 30th, the last day of the SFY.
- Eligible for Medicaid 11 of the 12 months of the measurement year, including the last month of the measurement year.

Numerator: To be counted in the numerator, children must have a claim with a CPT® code for an office or outpatient service, home service, preventive medicine visit or an ICD-9-CM procedure code for a general medical examination. Mental health and chemical dependency services are excluded as are inpatient procedures, emergency department and specialist visits.[2-4]

Childhood Immunization Status (CIS)



Description: The percentage of enrollees who turned 2 years of age during the measurement year and who had the recommended vaccinations. The actual HEDIS® measure looks at: diphtheria/tetanus (DtaP/DT); polio (IPV); measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); H influenza type B (HiB); Hepatitis B; chicken pox (VZV); pneumococcal conjugate; and various combinations. However, because so many children receive basic immunizations at various sites, for this report, only IPV, MMR, HiB, Hepatitis B and VZV have been reported.

Denominator: To be included in the denominator, children must have met the following criteria:

- 2nd birthday during the measurement year
- Enrolled in Medicaid for 11 of the 12 months prior to the child's second birthday
- Enrolled the month of the child's 2nd birthday.

Numerator: To be counted in the numerator, the child must have a claim with the code for the vaccine, a combination vaccine or a documented history of the illness. [2-4]

Endnotes:

1. HEDIS® web site. Available at: http://web.ncqa.org/tabid/59/Default.aspx.
2. *HEDIS® 2005 Technical Specifications*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Quality Assurance; 2004.
3. *HEDIS® 2006 Technical Specifications*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Quality Assurance; 2005.
4. *HEDIS® 2007 Technical Specifications*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Quality Assurance; 2006.