

TO: Interested Organizations and Individuals
FROM: Policy Accreditation Team
DATE: Updated July 25, 2024
RE: Changes to the NCQA Accreditation Standards for the 2024 and 2025 Standards Years

UM and CR System Controls

For 2025, NCQA replaced the 2024 UM and CR “System Controls” requirements in Health Plan Accreditation; Managed Behavioral Healthcare Accreditation, Accreditation in Utilization Management, Credentialing and Provider Network; and Certification of Credentialing Verification Organizations with UM/CR “Information Integrity” requirements. Organizations are no longer required to describe their process for monitoring each factor or describe their auditing methodology in policies and procedures. Additionally, organizations are no longer required to describe the building security that adequately limits physical access for Credentialing Accreditation and Certification of Credentialing Verification Organizations.

As a result of these changes, NCQA is eliminating the following requirements in the 2025 standards, and will score them NA for 2024 Accreditation and Certification Surveys that begin on or after July 1, 2024, for the products listed.

For 2024 Health Plan Accreditation

- UM 12, Element A, factor 7.
- UM 12, Element C, factor 7.
- CR 1, Element C, factor 5.

For 2024 MBHO Accreditation

- UM 11, Element A, factor 7.
- UM 11, Element C, factor 7.
- CR 1, Element C, factor 5.

For 2024 Accreditation in UM-CR-PN

- UM 12, Element A, factor 7.
- UM 12, Element C, factor 7.
- CR 1, Element C, factor 5.
- CR 1, Element C, factor 6.

For 2024 CVO Certification

- CVO 3, Element B, factor 5.
- CVO 3, Element B, factor 6.

Timeliness of UM Decisions

NCQA changed the UM urgent concurrent decision notification time frame for the commercial and Exchange product lines for **Nonbehavioral Healthcare** and **Behavioral Healthcare** decisions from 24 hours (in the 2024 standards) to **72 hours** (in the 2025 standards) to better align with regulatory allowances and other product lines (Medicare, Medicaid).

As a result, NCQA will allow **72 hours** for urgent concurrent decision notifications for the commercial and Exchange product lines for **Nonbehavioral Healthcare** and **Behavioral Healthcare** decisions. See below for a list of impacted products and requirements for the 2024 standards year. This applies to Accreditation and Certification Surveys that begin on or after July 1, 2024. Guidance for scoring will be

included in the File Review System (FRS) instructions at the element level (i.e., “Important Notice” field) and the FRS Troubleshooting Guide.

For 2024 Health Plan Accreditation

- UM 5, Elements A and B, factor 1.
- UM 5, Element E, factor 1.

Note: UM 5, Element C, factor 1 was inadvertently included in the original memo dated July 22, 2024. Element C, factor 1 remains unchanged because the 24 hour timeframe aligns with CMS.

For 2024 MBHO Accreditation

- UM 5, Element A, factor 1.

For 2024 Accreditation in UM-CR-PN

- UM 5, Elements A and B, factor 1.

Note: UM 5, Element C, factor 1 was inadvertently included in the original memo dated July 22, 2024. Element C, factor 1 remains unchanged because the 24 hour timeframe aligns with CMS.