



For Public Comment
February 25–March 25, 2025
Comments due 11:59 p.m. ET
March 25

LTSS Distinction in 2026 Health Plan Accreditation Standards: Overview Memo

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You can find the public comment questions here [2025 Accreditation and Recognition Public Comment Questions](#).

LTSS Distinction in 2026 Health Plan Accreditation: *Overview Memo*

NCQA's Mission: Improve the Quality of Health Care

NCQA is dedicated to improving health care quality.

For 35 years, NCQA has driven improvement throughout the health care system, helping to advance the issue of health care quality to the top of the national agenda. NCQA's programs and services reflect a straightforward formula for improvement: measurement, transparency, accountability.

This approach works, as evidenced by the dramatic improvements in clinical quality demonstrated by NCQA-Accredited health plans. Today, approximately 180 million Americans are enrolled in an NCQA-Accredited health plan.

The NCQA Advantage

The proposed update to LTSS Distinction in Health Plan Accreditation aims to align standards with the changing market landscape and stakeholder (states, employers, CMS, consumers) needs and regulatory requirements, and to assist organizations in their pursuit of quality care. The NCQA Accreditation seal is a sign that organizations deliver high-quality care and have strong member protections.

Stakeholders Participating in Public Comment

NCQA shares these updates for public comment to generate thoughtful commentary and constructive suggestions from interested parties. Many comments lead to changes in our standards and policies, and the review process makes our standards stronger for all stakeholders. NCQA asks respondents to consider whether the requirements are feasible as written and are clearly articulated, and to highlight areas that might need clarification.

Background

NCQA introduced the following four HEDIS LTSS measures in HEDIS measurement year (MY) 2018, which are specified for use by organizations that provide Medicaid long-term services and supports (LTSS):

- LTSS Comprehensive Assessment and Update (LTSS-CAU).
- LTSS Comprehensive Care Plan and Update (LTSS-CPU).
- LTSS Shared Care Plan with Primary Care Practitioner (LTSS-SCP).
- LTSS Reassessment/Care Plan Update After Inpatient Discharge (LTSS-RAC).

The measures have remained in "first year" status since they were introduced, meaning that organizations have voluntarily reported HEDIS LTSS measure data to NCQA, but data have not been publicly reported.

NCQA's Committee on Performance Measurement approved the measures for public reporting, beginning with HEDIS MY 2024; therefore, HEDIS LTSS measure data will be available in fall 2025 via NCQA's Medicaid Quality Compass® product.

Summary of Proposed Update

To create a more robust data set for the HEDIS LTSS measures, and to support states' efforts in LTSS measure reporting, NCQA proposes to require organizations with LTSS Distinction in Health Plan Accreditation to annually submit data for the four HEDIS LTSS measures, beginning June 2028, for surveys on or after July 1, 2027.

NCQA proposes to include language in the 2026 Health Plan Accreditation Policies and Procedures as advance notice to organizations that will seek LTSS Distinction in Health Plan Accreditation on or after July 1, 2027.

At this time, NCQA does not propose to rate or compare organizations based on their performance on the HEDIS LTSS measures.

Targeted Question

1. For LTSS Distinction in Health Plan Accreditation, do you support the proposal to require organizations to annually report the four HEDIS LTSS measures for surveys on or after July 1, 2027?

Public Comment Instructions

Public Comment Questions

Public comment is integral to the development of all NCQA standards and measures. NCQA considers all suggestions. NCQA encourages reviewers to provide insights on global issues related to the proposed updates including:

1. Will proposed updates assist your organization in meeting its objectives? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. Are there key expectations not addressed in the proposed updates?

How to Submit Comments

Respond to topic and element-specific questions for each product on NCQA's public comment website. NCQA does not accept comments by mail, email or fax.

1. Go to <http://my.ncqa.org> and enter your email address and password.
2. Once logged in, scroll down and click **Public Comments**.
3. Click **Add Comment** to open the comment box.
4. Select one or more of the following from the drop-down box:
 - **Updates to LTSS Distinction 2026**
5. Click to select the **Topic** and **Element** (question) on which you would like to comment.
6. Click to select your support option (**Support, Do not support, Support with modifications**).
 - a. If you choose **Do not support**, include your rationale in the text box.
 - b. If you choose **Support with modifications**, enter the suggested modification in the text box.
7. Enter your comments in the **Comments** box.

Note: There is a 2,500-character limit for each comment. We suggest you develop your comments in Word to check your character limit; use the "cut and paste" function to copy your comment into the Comments box.
8. Use the **Submit** button to submit more than one comment. Use the **Close** button to finish leaving comments; you can view all submitted comments in the **Public Comments** module.

All comments must be entered by 11:59 ET on March 25

Next Steps

The final Standards and Guidelines for 2026 Health Plan Accreditation will be released in July 2025, following approval by the NCQA Standards Committee and the Board of Directors.