

# Overview of Quality Improvement Program

## Scope and Purpose

The purpose of the quality improvement program is to ensure Scott and White Health Plan (SWHP) is providing the highest quality medical and behavioral health care that is accessible and affordable to our members regardless of plan type, age, and race/ethnicity or health status. The Quality Improvement (QI) Program described in this document supports our mission by engaging members, providers, partners and staff in pursuit of the “Triple Aim.” First defined by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) in 2008, the Triple Aim provides an organizing framework for strategies that simultaneously seek to improve the individual experience of care, improve the health of populations, and reduce the per capita costs of care for population. SWHP supports and strives for achievement of the “Triple Aim” goals. SWHP Quality programs and improvement projects are designed to improve member outcomes.

The scope of the QI Program is to monitor, evaluate and improve:

- The quality and safety of clinical care
- The quality of service provided by SWHP
- The quality of care and service provided by SWHP practitioners and providers
- The availability and accessibility of health care
- The overall wellness of our members
- The overall member experience with Health Plan and providers services

SWHP strives for personal differentiation. The member is our focus. SWHP has many examples of helping members navigate the maze of healthcare, as well as thoughtful interventions that have improved health outcomes. SWHP’s close connection to the member and provider community creates a unique position to act as an effective member advocate. As a regional health plan, SWHP has exceptional opportunities to finance health care in a way that is intrinsically superior by aligning incentives, identifying gaps in health care delivery, and facilitating smooth and seamless coordination of care throughout the health care continuum.

## QI Program Goals — Objectives

1. **Improve Health Outcomes** — through prevention, decision making assistance, disease guidance (management), and case management for members with complex health needs.
2. **Improve Patient Safety** — by fostering a supportive environment that helps providers to improve the safety of their practice, conducting continuous improvement activities devoted to improving SWHP pharmacy medication safety, and providing members with information that improves their knowledge about clinical safety in their own care. Medical safety initiatives include, but not limited

to: over- and under-utilization, monitoring appropriate use of clinical practice guidelines, risk management, CT scan overuse, adverse occurrence monitoring, monitoring quality of care complaints, monitoring of medication errors and multiple medication use in the elderly.

3. **Increase Member (Enrollee) Satisfaction** — by prompt identification and resolution of member dissatisfaction with administrative, behavioral health or medical processes and monitoring for process improvements when appropriate. SWHP uses CAHPS scores as a measurement of members' experience with services available to them and where to improve services.
4. **Meet the Cultural and Linguistic Needs of the Membership** — by identifying language and other cultural and social needs of SWHP members. SWHP meets the needs by providing translator services, translated materials, cultural diversity education, training for SWHP staff, and an adequate network of multilingual providers. SWHP regularly monitors member demographic data and member feedback and make adjustments to the network as needed to meet cultural and linguistic needs.
5. **Provide Affordable Care** — by reducing the variations in clinical care, preventing overuse, under use or misuse of services; redirecting care to the most appropriate place of service; continuing improvement of SWHP's member services, assisting members to optimize care; and reducing unnecessary care.
6. **Organizational Effectiveness** — by striving to achieve statistically significant improvements in all quality measurements to meet or exceed regional or national averages set forth by NCQA, CMS, HHSC and other accepted quality standards.

## Process

Quality Improvement at SWHP is an integrative process of continuous assessment and monitoring that strives to improve care and service provided to SWHP members. The SWHP Quality Improvement Program or QAPI follows the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Cycle: Plan, Do, Study, Adjust.

Measurement and continuous improvement is accomplished through SWHP QI & Analytics Department. Results of the management of chronic diseases and preventive health measures are tallied, goals are analyzed, barriers to improving care are carefully reviewed, and interventions developed as appropriate. During the routine measurement phases of the QI Work Plan, SWHP uses annual HEDIS, CAHPS, Medicare HOS, member complaints and appeals, or formal survey tools to evaluate the needs and improvement opportunities of the members. Each year clinical and service goals are established and or reaffirmed. The QI team members meet with SWHP Medical Directors and practicing BSWH clinical staff and other expert clinicians, who champion interventions to improve care.

The 2018 clinical domains that are assessed by SWHP include:

- **Staying Healthy**— measures utilized include HOS measures for Improving or maintaining physical and/or mental health, as well as quarterly monitoring of HEDIS screenings (e.g., breast cancer, colorectal cancer, cholesterol, and cervical cancer), receipt of flu and pneumococcal immunizations, and annual review and analysis of the CAHPS data.
- **Management of Chronic Conditions**— measures utilized for assessment are diabetic care metrics, osteoporosis and rheumatoid arthritis management, control of high blood pressure, improving bladder control, reducing the risk of falling and “all cause” readmissions through quarterly review and analysis of HEDIS and annual review and analysis of the HOS data.

The 2018 Non-Clinical Domains that are assessed by SWHP include:

- **Members Experience with the Health Plan**— measures utilized for assessment are getting needed care, getting appointments and care quickly, overall rating of health care quality, and care coordination through annual review and analysis of the CAHPS data.
- **Member Complaints, Problems Getting Care, and Improvement**— measures utilized for assessment are review of internal complaints and appeals on a monthly basis; access and availability through geo-mapping review and analysis on an annual basis and as needed; next appointment availability survey annually; and the overall Plan rating for quality improvement through annual NCQA and CMS Star ratings.
- **Customer Service**— measures utilized for analyses are the “timely decisions about appeals” metrics and review of internal and external appeal determinations on a quarterly basis.
- **Measurement of Outcomes**— SWHP measures changes in its member’s health status, functional status and member satisfaction on an ongoing basis and as noted below:
  - **Changes in Health Status**
    1. SWHP segments member’s health risk into high, medium and low based on all current, available data.
    2. SWHP monitors the member’s utilization of health care services such as ED visits, hospitalizations, and requests for services or equipment (DME)
    3. SWHP monitors all ED visits greater than or equal to three (3) visits/quarter and any member qualifying is immediately referred to Case Management and the member’s status is reassessed.
    4. SWHP regularly reviews all high utilization and members in this category are referred immediately to Case Management for additional assessment.
    5. All readmission's within thirty (30) days will generate referrals to Case Management and when needed a face-to-face assessment is performed.

- **Changes in Functional Status**
  1. SWHP reviews requests for therapies (PT, OT, and/or Speech).
  2. SWHP reviews new request for DME or home health services of any kind
  3. SWHP review admissions to Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF), Inpatient Rehabilitation (Rehab) or Long-Term Acute Care (LTAC)
  4. SWHP monitors referrals after hospitalization
  
- **Enrollee Satisfaction**
  1. SWHP monitors CAHPS results.
  2. SWHP monitors satisfaction surveys for individual programs (i.e., disease management, case management, etc.)
  3. SWHP reviews complaints and appeals and grievances and trends against peer regional and national benchmark data. SWHP reviews these for each lines of business individually, as well as overall. SWHP also evaluates results of Independent Review Organization (IRO) determinations.

## **Effectiveness of Activities**

The reported 2017 HEDIS® rates resulted in SWHP ranked by NCQA as the #1 health plan in Texas for Commercial. SWHP maintained NCQA ranking of “Commendable” for the SeniorCare and Commercial HMO/POS plans. When 2017 HEDIS® rates were compared to 2016 HEDIS® rates, SWHP performed particularly well in four dimensions of care: Well-Child Assessments, Diabetes Glucose Control, Asthma Medication Adherence, and Controlling Blood Pressure. On the other hand, SWHP identified areas of opportunity for 2018: Hospital Readmissions, Diabetic Eye Exams, Colorectal Cancer Screening, and Follow-Up After Hospitalization for Mental Illness.

The 2017 Commercial CAHPS survey results when compared to 2016 show SWHP significantly improved in four areas; 1) Rating of Health Plan, 2) Getting Needed Care, 3) Claims Processing, and 4) Rating of Personal Doctor. SWHP exceeded the Texas state average in all areas except two. The two areas identified as areas of opportunity for improvement to focus on in 2018 are Getting Care Quickly and Health Plan Customer Service.

*To receive a full copy of the QI Program Description, contact the Scott and White Health Plan at 1-800-321-7947.*