



# Rheumatoid Arthritis Measures

## WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is the most common autoimmune arthritis disease. It affects women disproportionately and can have a profound and diverse impact on patients' day-to-day lives. Advances in the diagnosis and management of RA can slow or halt disease progression and improve functional status and quality of life for many patients. These advances include personalized approaches that incorporate individualized "treat-to-target" goals based on patient preferences and comorbidities as well as treatment risk factors. However, substantial variation in quality of care persists, and personalized treatment approaches are not reflected in quality measures for RA. Together, these factors highlight the need for more measures in RA, particularly measures that incorporate those outcomes that are most important to patients.

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This project facilitated the development of performance measures that capture the "patient voice" (i.e., patient-reported outcomes or PROs) and assess disease activity and functional status for RA patients.

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## PHASE 1: STRATEGY SESSION

As a first step, NQF convened a strategy session with a multistakeholder Expert Panel in March 2017. At this meeting, panelists discussed which PROs are most useful for improving functional status and quality of life for patients with RA. The discussion was informed by **broad patient input compiled by PatientsLikeMe® and NQF** from nearly 10,000 patients with arthritis. The Expert Panel identified two PRO measure concepts that could become performance measures for RA and discussed validated survey instruments (i.e., PRO measures or PROMs) that may suit this purpose. Additionally, panelists outlined a quality measurement roadmap, which describes the structural elements and processes needed to measure PRO performance measures (PRO-PMs) in RA. The Panel recognized the importance of incorporating real-time, actionable PRO data in shared decision making without undue burden to patients or providers.

At a second strategy session convened in April 2017, the Expert Panel explored potential measures focused on the diagnosis and treatment of patients with RA. The Panel recommended complementary measure concepts of personalized treat-to-target approaches. Panelists emphasized the importance of establishing individualized treat-to-target goals through shared decision making, using objective measures of disease activity and PROs, in particular. NQF engaged a broad-based stakeholder group in this project, including individuals with RA, specialty society representatives, providers, payers, researchers, and measure developers.

## PHASE 2: MEASURE INCUBATION

Building on the recommendations from the NQF-convened strategy sessions, the **American College of Rheumatology (ACR)** developed three measure concepts into fully specified and tested performance measures, using practice data from ACR's Rheumatology Informatics System for Effectiveness (RISE) Registry. One measure examines the use of an [RA-specific functional status assessment tool](#) within the clinical care setting. Two RA-specific outcome measures, one of which is a PRO-PM, were also developed to evaluate both [disease activity](#) and [functional status](#) using assessment tools validated by ACR. ACR intends to implement these measures in the RISE Registry and submit them for use in the [Merit-based Incentive Payment System \(MIPS\)](#), ensuring that they will rapidly start influencing practice patterns by highlighting variation in patient outcomes

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