



BlueCross BlueShield of Texas



## Improving Health Care Quality

# Follow-Up After High-Intensity Care for Substance Use Disorder

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) collects quality data from our providers to measure and improve our members' care. Follow-up after High-Intensity Care for Substance Use Disorder (FUI) is one aspect of care we measure in our quality programs. Quality measures evaluate a prior calendar year performance.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation,  
a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

## What We Measure

We capture the percentage of discharges for members ages 13 and older who were hospitalized, received detoxification or residential treatment for a diagnosis of substance use disorder and who had a follow-up visit or service for substance use disorder. **The follow-up visit must be on a different date than the discharge date.** Two percentages are measured and reported:

- Discharges that had a follow-up visit within 30 days after discharge
- Discharges that had a follow-up visit within seven days after discharge

This measure is based on the number of discharges, not number of members. If members have more than one discharge in a measurement year, all are included in the measure.

FUI is a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measure. See the [National Committee for Quality Assurance \(NCQA\) website](#) for more details.

## Why It Matters

According to the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#), more than 40 million people age 12 and older in the U.S. had a substance use disorder in 2020. [Research that tracks](#) individuals in treatment over extended periods shows that most people who get into and remain in treatment stop using drugs, decrease their criminal activity and improve their occupational, social and psychological functioning. Timely follow-up care after discharge from treatment is critical for health and well-being, according to [NCQA](#).

## Eligible Population

Members ages 13 and older as of the discharge date are included in this measure.

**Exclusions:** Members receiving hospice care are excluded from this measure. Discharges from non-acute care settings that aren't behavioral health are excluded.

## Tips to Consider

- Check that the member has a plan for a follow-up visit for the substance use disorder within seven and 30 days after discharge. This may include an intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization program, outpatient therapy, primary care, medication assisted treatment or a telehealth visit.
- Before discharging the member, schedule a follow-up appointment. Contact the member before the visit to remind them.
- Educate inpatient and outpatient providers about clinical practice guidelines and this measure.
- Submit claims and encounter data in a timely manner. Don't report follow-up visits that occur on the discharge date. They don't meet requirements for this measure.

For more information, see [NCQA's HEDIS Measures and Technical Resources](#).

The above material is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for the independent medical judgment of a physician or other health care provider. Physicians and other health care providers are encouraged to use their own medical judgment based upon all available information and the condition of the patient in determining the appropriate course of treatment. The fact that a service or treatment is described in this material, is not a guarantee that the service or treatment is a covered benefit and members should refer to their certificate of coverage for more details, including benefits, limitations and exclusions. Regardless of benefits, the final decision about any service or treatment is between the member and their health care provider.

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