

FHIR 101:

Know These Four Terms

FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources)

The HL7® FHIR® standard API that lets your systems share data with providers, electronic health records (EHRs), and NCQA.

dQM (digital quality measure)

Self-contained, machine-readable HEDIS files specified in FHIR and CQL. No more manual chart abstraction.

CQL (Clinical Quality Language)

The logic layer inside every dQM. NCQA publishes the code; your vendor runs it against your member data.

ECDS (Electronic Clinical Data Systems)

The NCQA submission standard, your plan's pipeline for sending digital measure results to NCQA.

Open for your six-stop roadmap ›

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Sources: "Understanding ECDS Reporting: Your Questions Answered," NCQA, April 2025; "NCQA's Proposed Timeline for Retiring and Replacing HEDIS Hybrid Measures," NCQA, March 2026; "dQM Reporting Readiness Guide," NCQA, March 2026.

Three Questions to Ask in Your Next Leadership Meeting

Q · 01 Are we compliant now?

Confirm your plan is submitting the nine mandatory digital HEDIS measures via ECDS for measurement year 2025. Non-compliance carries accreditation risk.

Q · 02 Is our vendor validated?

Ask your quality technology partner directly: Do they hold NCQA dQM Validation? Legacy HEDIS certification does not satisfy digital reporting requirements.

Q · 03 Are we using the data?

FHIR-based dQMs allow continuous scoring. If your team only reviews results at submission time, you are leaving star rating improvements and care gap closures on the table.

dQM Readiness Assessment Notes

Talk with Inovalon® about where your dQM readiness stands today.

Date _____

Readiness status _____

Notes _____



Your dQM Readiness Roadmap to 2030

NCQA is moving HEDIS® to fully digital quality measures by 2030. Nine measures are required digitally now. Follow the roadmap to stay ahead of every deadline.

REQUIRED NOW

9

19 ECDS in MY25,
25 ECDS in MY26
(13 required)

FULL DEADLINE

2030

All HEDIS
via ECD

NCQA dQM Compliance Timeline

Complete

2024

ECDS pilot measures launched

Complete

2025

Nine HEDIS measures required digitally

You are here

2026

More measures added; comparative testing available

Upcoming

2027-29

Majority of measures go digital

Deadline

2030

All HEDIS submitted via ECDS or admin

Phase 1 - Foundation

01. Assess Your Current Data Infrastructure DO THIS NOW | 3-6 MONTHS

Most plans discover gaps between what their systems claim to support and what FHIR® actually requires. Those gaps slip deadlines.

- Audit EHR and claims data pipelines for FHIR API readiness.
- Identify which required HEDIS measures your plan is furthest from meeting digitally.
- Flag vendors still using QDM or QRDA instead of FHIR and CQL.

02. Build FHIR-Ready Data Pipelines INFRASTRUCTURE | 6-12 MONTHS

Pull member data from provider EHRs automatically. Not via fax, not via portal scrape, not via spreadsheet.

- Implement FHIR R4 APIs and Bulk FHIR across major provider partners.
- Align data standards to the US Core Implementation Guide.
- Set up governance for member data permissions and access agreements.

Phase 2 - Validation

03. Select a Validated dQM Engine VENDOR DUE DILIGENCE | 3-6 MONTHS

NCQA requires your calculation engine to pass formal Validation, not just legacy Certification.

- Confirm your vendor has achieved NCQA dQM Validation.
- Verify the engine runs NCQA's FHIR and CQL measure logic against NCQA test data.
- Evaluate vendors with active DQIC (Digital Quality Implementers Community) participation.

04. One Year of Comparative Testing RECOMMENDED | 12 MONTHS

NCQA recommends running dQM and traditional HEDIS side by side for a full measurement year to surface data and logic issues early.

- Run digital and traditional HEDIS on live members.
- Understand variance between traditional and digital results and trace root causes.
- Carry existing HEDIS workflows and dependencies forward.
- Use results to close care gaps before year end.

Phase 3 - Scale

05. Shift to Continuous Quality Monitoring COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE | ONGOING

Plans that simply replicate old workflows digitally miss what dQMs unlock: near-real-time visibility. Use continuous scoring to act before deadlines hit.

- Move from annual chart review to continuous dQM calculation.
- Use near-real-time gap closure alerts to drive outreach and provider engagement.
- Connect quality scores to star ratings, value-based contracts, and risk score accuracy.

06. Scale Ahead of the 2030 Mandate 2026-2030 PLANNING | MULTI-YEAR

Nearly all HEDIS reporting is digital by 2030. Plans building now outperform plans scrambling in 2028.

- Map your multi-year vendor and IT roadmap to NCQA's expansion schedule.
- Expand FHIR API connections beyond pilot partners to the full network.
- Invest in staff training on FHIR, CQL, and ECDS submission.