

Potential Quality Issues (PQI)

What is a PQI?

A PQI is a suspected deviation from provider performance, clinical care, or outcome of care which requires further investigation to determine if an actual quality of care concern exists.

Purpose: To provide a systematic method for the identification, reporting, and processing of a PQI to determine opportunities for improvement in the provision of care and services to Health Plan of San Mateo (HPSM) members, and to direct the appropriate actions for improvement based upon outcome, risk, frequency and severity.

How are PQI's identified?

- Complaints, grievances and appeals
- Concurrent, prospective and retrospective utilization review
- Claims and encounter data
- Care coordination
- Medical record audits

What happens when a quality issue is identified?

- A Quality Improvement Nurse conducts an initial and clinical review of all PQIs and refers the cases to an HPSM Medical Director for review and PQI case level decision.
- Medical records/initial provider responses are requested to hear the provider's concerns and viewpoints regarding the PQI and to ensure that an unbiased investigation can occur.
- All PQIs are scored via the attached PQI Case Leveling Grid by an HPSM Medical Director. For example if no quality issues are noted, then the PQI is scored a P0/S0. The case is then closed and no other follow up is needed from the provider of concern. If a quality of care issue is identified by the HPSM Medical Director, the provider of concern is notified via letter and may be requested to follow up with a provider response which may need to include a corrective action plan and/or other interventions depending on case level severity.
- Due to the nature or complexity of the PQI, it can be referred to the Credentialing Committee with recommendations for PRC. The PRC is comprised of HPSM network providers who represent multiple specialties.

Who can refer a PQI?

- Health plan staff
- Health plan members
- Any contracted or non-contracted provider and staff
- Any member of the community

When should a PQI be referred?

Any time there is a suspected quality of care concern; some examples may include:

- A delay in obtaining a referral
- Rudeness from clinical providers or clinical staff members
- Possible inadequate assessment of an adult or child
- Complication in the delivery of a child
- Unexpected death of an adult or child

How can a PQI be referred?

Please use the PQI Referral Form. The form can be downloaded from the [Provider Forms](#) page on hpsm.org, or call **650-616-2170** to have one sent to you. Completed forms can be returned by email or fax to HPSM's Quality Program.

Quality Program Department

Phone: **650-616-2170**

Email: pqireferralrequest@hpsm.org

Fax: **650-616-8235**