

Comments of Anne DiGiulio – As Prepared for Delivery
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American Lung Association
For
Annual Review of the Medicaid and CHIP Child and Adult Core Sets of Quality Measures
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Hi, I'm Anne DiGiulio, the National Director of Lung Health Policy with the American Lung Association. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. I'm here today to ask you to vote to keep the "Medical Assistance with Smoking and Tobacco Use Cessation (MSC-AD)" as part of the Behavioral Health Care Core set for 2023. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United State. More must be done to help smokers quit and the data provided by this measure helps identify gaps in treatment.

Medicaid enrollees smoke at a very high rate – while the overall smoking rate is 12.5%, nationally Medicaid enrollees smoke at rate of 22.7%. While some data show that smoking rates in some state Medicaid programs are as high as 50%. Not surprisingly, smoking related illness accounts for approximately \$39 billion annually in the Medicaid program. Helping Medicaid smokers quit makes sense – it will save lives and money.

Individuals with behavioral health and substance abuse disorders also smoke at very high rates compared to the general population in the United States. For example, approximately 34.6% of adults with a mental illness smoke. And these individuals are heavy smokers – individuals with a behavioral health conditions (25% of the population) consume 40% of the cigarettes in the United States. And people with behavioral health conditions that smoke die, on average, 15 years earlier than their counterparts with behavioral health conditions that do not smoke.

The 2020 Surgeon General's Report on Smoking Cessation found that four out of nine adult cigarette smokers who saw a healthcare professional in the past year did not receive advice to quit smoking. However, data has consistently shown that across demographics, most smokers want to quit.

There is a saying, "what gets measured, gets done." There is clearly a need for more tobacco cessation. The current measure in the Behavioral Health Core set has limitations and problems associated with it, but the solution is not to throw it out, but to improve it. There is clearly a sufficient number of smokers in Medicaid from which to gather a robust data set; one solution could be to oversample smokers in the state Medicaid programs. We would also recommend state Medicaid programs work with health plans and providers to encourage patients to respond to the survey.

The data collected from the "Medical Assistance with Smoking and Tobacco Use Cessation (MSC-AD)" measure is important. The measure encourages smoking cessation and identify gaps in patients getting screened and getting treatment. The Lung Association strongly encourages the committee to vote to keep this tobacco cessation measure as part of the Behavioral Health Core set for 2023.

Thank you.