



# Effective Health Care

## Outcomes of Serious Mental Illness

### Nomination Summary Document

#### Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Outcomes of serious mental illness will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

#### Topic Description

**Nominator:** Organization

**Nomination Summary:** The nominator is interested in examining quality measures and performance metrics that have been proposed for use in serious mental illness. In addition, they would like to assess whether use of these quality measures or performance metrics, especially when gathered longitudinally over the long term, improves treatment outcomes and patients' experiences in the healthcare system. The nominator also mentions an interest in exploring the use of electronic health records and databases as a means of facilitating the use of quality measures and performance metrics.

#### Staff-Generated PICO

**Population(s):** Persons aged 18 years or over who currently have, or at any time during the past year have had, a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified within DSM-IV or their ICD-9-CM equivalent (and subsequent revisions). Excluded diagnostic criteria are DSM-IV "V" codes, substance use disorders, and developmental disorders, unless they co-occur with another diagnosable serious mental illness. To constitute SMI, the mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder must result in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities include basic daily living skills (e.g., eating, bathing, dressing), instrumental living skills (e.g., maintaining a household, managing money, getting around the community, taking prescribed medication), and functioning in social, family, and vocational/educational contexts.

**Intervention(s):** (1) interventions that employ quality measures or performance metrics; (2) interventions that examine how documentation (e.g., electronic health records) affects the use of quality measures and performance metrics; (3) interventions that study

whether documentation facilitates assessment of patient-centered outcomes.

**Comparator(s):** Interventions that do not employ quality measures or performance metrics; interventions without documentation.

**Outcome(s):** Improvements in treatment results for patients (these results could be measured using patient-centered outcomes), intervention-related changes in how clinicians treat patients, and changes in the manner in which the healthcare system approaches the treatment of SMI.

**Key Questions  
from Nominator:**

1. Does the use of validated and evidence-based outcomes measures improve care (outcomes) for people with serious mental illnesses?
2. Does the use of validated and evidence-based outcomes measures improve clinician outcomes?
3. Do systems of care get better when they use validated, evidence-based outcomes measures?
4. Overall, can systematic outcomes measurement be used to improve outcomes for patients, individual providers, and systems?

## Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Performance metrics, quality measures, and patient-centered outcomes are an important and emerging component of serious mental illness (SMI) care; however, these measures are not standardized across organizations.
- No existing guidelines that directly address issues surrounding the topic nomination were identified. In addition, a lack of clarity regarding the definition of performance metrics, quality measures, and patient-centered outcomes was identified. Therefore, a review on this topic could help to clarify available measures, how they were developed, and how use of these measures impacts outcomes.