

Proposed National Patient Safety Goal (NPSG)

Hospital Accreditation Program

NPSG.16.01.01

1 Minimize the overuse of tests, treatments, and procedures to reduce the risk of patient harm.

Rationale

2 There is growing attention to the overuse of various tests, treatments, and procedures in health care. Overuse may be defined as the
3 use of a health service in circumstances where the likelihood of benefit is negligible and, therefore, the patient faces only the risk of
4 harm. Seen from this perspective, overuse is a safety and quality problem. The focus of efforts to identify and eliminate overuse is the
5 specification of the particular indications or reasons for performing a particular procedure, test, or treatment that meet this definition of
6 overuse (“inappropriate indications”). Research has documented that overuse occurs with significant frequency in the United States.
7 Minimizing overuse requires identifying inappropriate indications for specific tests, treatments, and procedures and implementing
8 effective performance improvement methods to prevent these health services from being performed for these reasons. This NPSG
9 provides for incremental implementation, beginning with the selection of an area of focus and the evaluation of potential overuse
10 followed by improvement activities and an evaluation of the effectiveness of those efforts.

Elements of Performance for NPSG.16.01.01

- 11 1. The following element of performance is in effect as of January 1, 2013: Initiate a program to address tests, treatments, and procedures that,
12 when overused, may result in harm to patients by doing the following:
- 13 1. Selecting a treatment, procedure, or test based on a risk assessment of the hospital’s clinical services; use evidence from the literature of
14 potential harm to patients when selecting the topic. OR
 - 15 2. Selecting one of the following treatments, procedures, or tests relevant to the hospital’s services:
 - 16 - Early induction of labor; for example, elective induction of preterm deliveries for pregnancies of 39 weeks gestation or less in patients with
17 no known medical conditions that predispose to such delivery.
 - 18 - Insertion of tympanostomy tubes; for example, the insertion of tympanostomy tubes in children with otitis media and bilateral effusions of
19 less than 60 days and without the presence of other symptoms.
 - 20 - Red blood cell transfusions; for example, packed red blood cell transfusions in patients with hemoglobin of 12 grams or more without clinical
21 signs of hemodynamic instability.
 - 22 - Percutaneous coronary interventions; for example, coronary stenting or balloon angioplasty for coronary stenosis of 40% or less.
 - 23 - Diagnostic ionizing radiation; for example, use of CT scans before considering ultrasound for patients presenting to the emergency
24 department with a primary complaint of abdominal pain.

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- 25 2. The following element of performance is in effect as of January 1, 2013: Evaluate whether overuse is occurring for the selected treatment,
26 procedure, or test, and if it is, how it can be addressed. The evaluation is performed at the organization level and consists of the following
27 elements:
28 - A baseline evaluation of the frequency with which the selected treatment, procedure, or test is used without appropriate clinical indications
29 - Quality metrics for assessing the appropriate use of the selected treatment(s), procedure(s), and test(s) in the area selected by the hospital
30 - Analysis of the factors leading to overuse
31 - The impact of the hospital's previous efforts to minimize overuse, as applicable
- 32 3. The following element of performance is in effect as of January 1, 2014: If the evaluation identifies potential overuse, use performance
33 improvement tools and methods in conjunction with clinical practice guidelines to reduce the inappropriate use of treatments, procedures, and
34 tests. The clinical practice guidelines include the following: (Specific guidelines to be determined)
- 35 4. The following element of performance is in effect as of January 1, 2014: Evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to minimize overuse and take
36 action to improve.
- 37 5. The following element of performance is in effect as of January 1, 2014: Take action when planned improvements are not achieved or
38 sustained.