



# Quality Reporting and ACOs

Now is the time to start reporting.

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If you are contracted with an ACO they may be reporting quality for you. But the situation may not be as good for your MIPS score as you may think. Please read this article carefully to fully understand what partnering with an ACO means to you as a podiatrist.

If you are participating with an ACO **AND** over 35% of your billing is through the tax ID of the ACO, then you are in line for a MIPS bonus of 5%. This is great, except that the majority of podiatrists who contract with an ACO bill under their own Tax ID and receive their payments directly from the insurance company.

If you are participating with an ACO **AND** less than 35% of your billing is through the tax ID of the ACO, then your incentive will be based upon the MIPS quality reporting of the ACO.

- You still need to report your own Improvement Activities.
- You still need to report your own

Promoting Interoperability Activities.

The ACO is an organization that is focused on cost containment and involved in a shared savings program. The 5% bonus is based upon that aspect of an ACO. Therefore, they have very little incentive to demonstrate

In 2020, however, the threshold to avoid a MIPS penalty is projected to be about 70 and a low quality score could put you in line for a payment penalty. But there is an option. If you report quality directly to CMS through a registry, your quality

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a high quality score (their bonus is NOT based upon the quality score). As a result, it is quite possible that the ACO will not work to ensure that their quality score is optimized, and it may be very low. This will mean that you will be scored on that potentially low ACO score.

Up until 2020, the threshold to avoid a penalty has been very low, so this probably has not had a negative impact upon your bottom line.

score will be either the ACO quality score, or the quality score you report, whichever is higher.

Right now, you do not know what the ACO will report for performance year 2020, and you do not have any control over what they report. Now is the time to make sure your income is protected. If you have not been reporting in previous years, now is the time to start reporting. Re-

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port on measures that are relevant to your practice and measures that you can score well on.

**you will score best on**, and then any additional high priority and outcome measures you can report. You will get 1 bonus point for each additional high priority measure and 2 bonus

is a large component of your MIPS composite score and will have the greatest impact on any bonus or penalty you will receive for performance year 2020. If you have any questions or need support, please reach out to your EHR vendor or post a question to *PM News* as I will be monitoring that forum closely over the first few months of 2020. **PM**

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## Learn how to use your EHR to document your quality activities.

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### Steps to Take Now

**1) Check with your EHR vendor and determine which measures your software supports.** It will be difficult to report on measures that are not supported by your vendor.

**2) Visit the CMS QPP website and review the benchmarks file ([qpp.cms.com](http://qpp.cms.com) -> Resource Center).** This file will give you an idea as to how well you need to perform on each measure to get a good score for the measure.

**3) Select the 6 measures that**

points for each outcome measure, and you want to maximize your bonus points.

**4) Learn how to use your EHR to document your quality activities.**

**5) Monitor your progress and performance** on each of your selected measures each month and if you are not doing well, adjust the workflows in your practice to improve your score.

By following those steps, you can maximize your quality score, which



**Dr. Michael Brody** has presented webinars for the e-Health initiative, ([www.ehealthinitiative.org/](http://www.ehealthinitiative.org/)) and is active in the EMR workgroup of the New York E Health Collaborative ([www.nyehealth.org/](http://www.nyehealth.org/)). He has provided consulting services to physicians for the implementation of EHR software and to EHR vendors to assist in making their products more compatible with CCHIT and HIPAA guidelines. Dr. Brody is a member of AAPPm.

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