Covidien Supports Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Quality Measure #3040

Covidien

Proposed Medicare Rule Will Enhance Patient Safety by Requiring Respiratory Rate and Oxygenation Monitoring of Patients on Controlled-Analgesia Pumps

Covidien [1] (NYSE: COV), a leading global provider of healthcare products and recognized innovator in patient monitoring and respiratory care devices, today announces its support for the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed quality measure #3040 [2], currently considered for a Medicare program rule. Quality measures [3] help CMS assess performance of hospitals participating in Medicare and determine reimbursement based on factors that demonstrate compliance with high-care standards and “meaningful use,” such as healthcare processes, outcomes and patient perceptions.

Proposed quality measure #3040 calls specifically for monitoring respiratory rate, blood oxygenation (through pulse oximetry) and sedation scores in individuals on patient controlled analgesia pumps (PCAs) longer than 2.5 hours. PCAs, which allow self-administration of pain management drugs, can be associated with dangerous respiratory complications, such as cardiac arrest. By monitoring respiration rate and blood oxygenation, however, clinicians can detect and treat these life-threatening conditions sooner.

“We applaud the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services move to establish procedures that will enhance patient safety in hospitals nationwide,” said Robert J. White, President, Respiratory & Monitoring Solutions, Covidien. “This measure is a great stride in meeting current care recommendations issued by other major clinical and patient safety organizations.”

In particular, organizations such as the Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation (APSF) [4], the Institute for Healthcare Improvement [5], the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) [6] and The Joint Commission [7] recommend continuously monitoring oxygenation and ventilation through pulse oximetry and capnography in patients receiving opioid pain management drugs. As currently written, however, quality measure #3040 would allow hospitals to meet requirements through periodic spot-checking of these important vital signs, which can put patients at risk.

“Continuous monitoring through pulse oximetry and capnography technologies more reliably helps clinicians identify evolving health threats associated with drug-induced respiratory complications compared to intermittent spot checking alone,” said Scott Kelley, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Respiratory and Monitoring Solutions, Covidien.

Covidien is thus urging clinicians and other industry leaders to voice their support

for quality measure #3040 with guidelines added for continuous monitoring through capnography and pulse oximetry. CMS is accepting public comment on the proposed measure Jan. 14-28. Individuals and organizations can express their support by contacting CMS through measureapplications@qualityforum.org [8].

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Links:
[1] http://www.covidien.com/
[2] http://www.qualityforum.org/MAP/
[3] http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/QualityMeasures/index.html?redirect=/QualityMeasures/03_ElectronicSpecifications.asp
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