Cerner Corporation Quality Reporting 2023 Standards Version Advancement Process (SVAP) Updates

Introduction

As part of our efforts to maintain currency with the most contemporary industry standards for interoperability, Cerner Corporation will be releasing updates to eCQM reporting software for both Cerner Millennium® and Soarian Clinicals clients to support quality measurement standards for 2023 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) reporting. These updates will be certified with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) through their Standards Version Advancement Process (SVAP).

To help provide background and address questions that may be raised, we compiled the following FAQs. If you have additional questions that are not addressed, please direct them to ocregulatorycompliance_us@oracle.com.

What is the SVAP?

The Standards Version Advancement Process, or SVAP, is a feature adopted by the ONC in the Cures Act final rule – the same regulation which adopted the 2015 CEHRT Cures Update software requirements and information blocking requirements – for their Health IT Certification Program.

Since the ONC’s certification program provides the software requirements and associated standards and implementation specifications required to be used by healthcare providers for participation in CMS programs impacting reimbursement (e.g., Promoting Interoperability and MIPS), the regulations which cite specific standards (and corresponding versions of those standards) can inadvertently limit industry advancement and innovation or create potential compliance conundrums.

For example, the Cures Update final rule cited the 2020 version of the CMS Quality Reporting Document Architecture (QRDA) Category I and Category III Implementation Guides for eCQM reporting as the required standard and version for the CQM reporting certification criterion. However, CMS updates their specifications on an annual basis and requires the current year’s version for reporting under programs like Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) and MIPS Quality Performance Category. Thus, participants (and their certified technology suppliers) have a need to uplift to the new specification version each year. But doing so could have potential regulatory compliance implications for CEHRT since uplifting means you may no longer be supporting the specification version cited in regulation. This is the dilemma from which the SVAP was born.

The SVAP is the process through which new versions of adopted standards under the certification program related to interoperability (e.g., the CMS QRDA specifications) are reviewed annually and considered for approval for voluntary certification by certified developers, like Cerner Corporation.

This means that instead of having to wait for ONC to adopt new versions of interoperability standards via regulation (which generally happens only once every 3-5 years), developers (and their customers) are able to move forward with new versions of standards on a voluntary basis without any risk of regulatory compliance issues. The result is a more flexible regulatory environment which also lends itself to faster adoption of new interoperability-related innovations across the industry.

How does the SVAP work?

Each January, the ONC provides a list of new versions of current adopted interoperability standards and implementation specifications under the program which have been (or are soon to be) released or published during the current calendar year. These are the new versions of standards that are proposed for adoption under the SVAP for that calendar year. The ONC then provides the industry with an opportunity to submit public
comment on whether each proposed new version should be adopted and made available for voluntary certification.

The proposed standards are published at healthit.gov/svap with a tag identifying them as new version under consideration, and new versions of standards published after January can be dynamically inherited into the review process or recommended by stakeholders via comment.

Public commenting closes in May and ONC reviews comments to come to a decision on which new versions to approve. In June, approved new versions of adopted standards for that year are announced and certified developers can begin voluntarily using those new versions in their certified modules after a 60-day delay period.

You can view the new approved versions for each calendar year on the ONC Health IT Certification Program SVAP page. In the case of the CMS QRDA specifications, the new annual releases for reporting years 2021, 2022, and 2023 have been approved and we fully expect that each new release will be approved for each corresponding calendar year moving forward.

What new quality reporting SVAP standards is Cerner Corporation advancing to for 2023?

For 2023, Cerner Corporation’s certified HIT modules for quality reporting will be advancing to the following respective new versions of quality reporting standards via the SVAP:

- **Millennium (CQMs) (v2018):**
  - HL7 CDA® R2 Implementation Guide: Quality Reporting Document Architecture - Category I (QRDA I); Release 1, DSTU Release 5.3 with errata (US Realm), December 2022

- **Soarian Clinicals (v2015):**
  - HL7 CDA® R2 Implementation Guide: Quality Reporting Document Architecture - Category I (QRDA I); Release 1, DSTU Release 5.3 with errata (US Realm), December 2022

How will these updates affect real world interoperability of the certified eCQM reporting capabilities?

The update to the new versions of these QRDA Category I and Category III standards is a necessary step to align with requirements for CMS eCQM reporting programs for 2023. Further, Cerner Corporation has always made such updates annually to maintain currency with CMS eCQM reporting programs like Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) for Medicare participating hospitals or the Quality Performance Category of CMS’s Quality Payment Program (QPP) Merit based Incentive Payment System (MIPS).

Therefore, we do not believe these updates will introduce any potential negative impacts to the real-world usability or interoperability of the certified quality reporting capabilities for Cerner Millennium® and Soarian Clinicals clients.

Will Cerner Corporation continue to support the 2022 version of the QRDA standards that is currently certified for eCQM reporting via the SVAP?
Considering that this new version of the QRDA standards is now the only version accepted for 2023 CMS program reporting, previous versions of the standards will no longer be supported for CMS program reporting purposes. However, the previous year’s version of the QRDA standards (2022 in this case) will continue to be supported for basic QRDA export and import capabilities.

**Does this new process change how annual eCQM submission has been done historically?**

The SVAP does not change anything for healthcare providers regarding eCQM reporting processes. Uplifting to CMS’ new annual specifications for each year’s eCQM reporting is a well-established process that Cerner Corporation has always undertaken for clients participating in programs such as IQR for Medicare participating hospitals or the MIPS Quality Performance Category for eligible clinicians, and that will not change.

Both Cerner Millennium® and Soarian Clinicals clients will continue to follow the established processes for uplifting to the new annual QRDA specifications (more details available under the final FAQ below). The only change is that ONC has now adapted their program to better align with that annual uplift process by enabling developers to explicitly certify for each annual specification version, as opposed to doing so “under the covers” of the certification program with sub-regulatory blessing from ONC.

**Does this impact my EHR Certification ID created for CMS program attestations?**

No. Once it is completed, the certification for the new versions of the HL7 and CMS QRDA specifications will be inherited under the existing certified product listings for the Millennium (CQMs) v2018 and Soarian Clinicals v2015 certified health IT modules on the [Certified Health IT Product List](https://www.healthit.gov/tutorials/certified-health-it-products) (CHPL). Accordingly, you should continue to follow normal procedures for obtaining an EHR Certification ID and developer verification letter (no new or special considerations to account for with the SVAP).

*Cerner Millennium* clients are highly recommended to utilize the Regulatory Central EHR Certification ID Generator tool for producing Certification IDs and submitting verification letter requests. See [Generating an Electronic Health Record Certification ID](https://www.healthit.gov/tutorials/certified-health-it-products) for more information and guidance.

**Where can I find more information on Cerner Corporation’s requirements and process for the new 2023 QRDA specifications uplift?**

Provided below are the minimum code requirements for the 2023 QRDA specification uplift, along with reference links for more details on the standard process.

**Code requirements for Eligible Clinician Cerner Millennium clients** (for additional details on uplift process, see [Eligible Clinician eSubmission Overview](https://www.healthit.gov/tutorials/certified-health-it-products)):

- #627473 Quality Reporting Document Architecture (QRDA) Import for ECs and EHs 2023 (August 2023)
- #627472 2023 Ambulatory Clinical Quality Measures Phase 3 (August 2023)

**Code requirements for Eligible Hospital Cerner Millennium® clients** (for additional details on uplift process, see [eCQM Hospital 2023 Version Update](https://www.healthit.gov/tutorials/certified-health-it-products)):

- #610739 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): ED Throughput 2023 (May 2023)
- #610819 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): PC 2023 (May 2023)
- #610820 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): Stroke 2023 (May 2023)
- #610821 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): VTE 2023 (May 2023)
- #610818 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): Safe Use of Opioids 2023 (May 2023)
- #610823 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): STEMI-ED 2023 (May 2023)
- #610822 (Version 2) eMeasures Reporting (US): Hospital Harm 2023 (May 2023)
Code requirements for Soarian Clinicals clients (please reference 2023 Program Requirements and Solution Summary for additional details)

- Healthcare Intelligence 8.04 SP5 and 8.05 SP 2 (June 2023)