

Telemedicine Usage Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question 1: What is the definition of telemedicine?

Answer: Telemedicine is a visit with a provider that uses telecommunication systems between a provider and a patient.

Question 2: When should telemedicine be reported in EQRS?

Answer: Facilities should enter this information every clinical month for each patient.

Question 3: What constitutes a telemedicine visit?

Answer: A telemedicine visit is a visit where a patient receives care (i.e., assessments, education, diagnosis, medication changes, treatment plan changes, etc.) from a provider connected to dialysis or transplant care via telephonically and/or virtually through the internet.

Question 4: How is the facility supposed to know if a patient has received a telemedicine visit?

Answer: The facility will need to determine the best way for the facility to track, monitor and report this information.

Question 5: Why do we have to enter this information into EQRS?

Answer: This measure helps Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) identify the number of patients using telemedicine to communicate with their nephrologist and/or dialysis clinic to receive care. Additionally, tracking telemedicine usage helps CMS assess and encourage the usage of telemedicine in rural and underserved areas. Telemedicine usage should be reported every clinical month for each patient.

Question 6: Where do we enter telemedicine usage in EQRS?

Answer: Enter this data under the *Telemedicine* section on the *Manage Clinical* screen.

Question 7: Does reporting telemedicine usage in EQRS only pertain to dialysis related visits?

Answer: Yes, the telemedicine data should only be reported in EQRS for dialysis-related telemedicine visits, including visits related to transplant. A telemedicine visit is a visit where a patient receives care (i.e., assessments, education, diagnosis, medication changes, treatment plan changes, etc.) from a healthcare provider via telephonically and/or virtually through the internet.

Question 8: Who at the facility is responsible for entering telemedicine information into EQRS?

Answer: Any user who has EQRS access can enter this data into EQRS. The facility should determine the most appropriate person to enter data into EQRS.

Please note: If your facility batch submits or uses a Health Information Exchange (HIE)/Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) method, follow the guidance provided by your organization. However, if batch or HIE submission is unavailable, the facility will be responsible for reporting it in the user interface until batch or HIE submission is available.

Question 9: How will telemedicine usage reporting in EQRS affect my Quality Incentive Program (QIP) score?

Answer: Telemedicine reporting in EQRS is an ESRD Network requirement and will not impact the facility's QIP score.