Welcome to APTA’s podcast series on value-based care, which explains how value is measured in the provision of health care, and describes different aspects of the Quality Payment Program, including the Merit-based Incentive Program, or MIPS, and Advanced Alternative Payment Models, or Advanced APMs. Episode 13 is The MIPS Advancing Care Information Category. To get the most from this episode, you may want to check out earlier episodes first.

I’m Heather Smith, APTA’s director of quality.

The Merit-based Incentive Payment System, or MIPS, is part of the Quality Payment Program, or QPP, which began January 1, 2017. MIPS replaces several legacy quality-reporting programs such as the Physician Quality Reporting System. Physical therapists are not yet required to report under MIPS, but they are likely to be added in 2019.

MIPS requires reporting performance across 4 categories: quality, cost, improvement activities, and advancing care information. In this episode, we will go into detail about the advancing care information category, or ACI.

ACI replaces the former meaningful use program, which was related to the use of certified electronic health record technology, or CEHRT. Meaningful use was intended to improve quality of care, safety, and efficiency, and reduce health disparities. In addition, meaningful use aimed to engage patients and family, and improve care coordination. Although the name has changed, the goals of ACI remain the same.

Because PTs were not included in the original meaningful use program, there are questions as to how ACI will apply to PTs once they are added to MIPS. ACI uses electronic quality measures that are collected through the CEHRT to assess the performance of the provider. These measures, although similar to the measures in the MIPS quality category, are different in that they are written to extract data using universal standards required for all CEHRT.

Unfortunately, again as PTs were not included in the original meaningful use program, many physical therapy-specific EHR vendors are not currently certified. These vendors have reached out to APTA for guidance on this portion of the MIPS program, and we are working with the vendors and regulatory agencies such as CMS and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology to get more clarification of CEHRT requirements for our vendors and to better understand how the ACI category might be applied to PTs once they are added to MIPS.

This has been Episode 13 of the podcast series on value-based care. To find all episodes of this series, go to www.apta.org/MACRA/. You also can find these and all APTA podcasts on iTunes by searching APTA Podcasts or by going to www.apta.org/Podcasts. Thanks for listening.

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