

**2024–25 Validation of  
Measurement Years  
2023 and 2024  
Performance Measures**  
for County of Ventura

*September 2025*

## Table of Contents

<b>Validation of Performance Measures.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose and Overview of Report .....	1
Overview of DMC-ODS Plans.....	1
Managed Care in California .....	1
Performance Measures Reporting .....	2
Overview .....	2
Performance Measure Validation Methodology .....	2
Performance Measure Validation Activity.....	3
Pre-Audit Strategy .....	3
Validation Team .....	4
Technical Methods of Data Collection and Analysis.....	4
Virtual Review Activities.....	5
Assessment of DMC-ODS Plan Performance.....	7
Data Integration, Data Control, and Performance Measure Documentation .....	7
Data Integration.....	7
Data Control .....	7
Performance Measure Documentation .....	7
Validation Results .....	8
Information Systems and Personnel.....	8
Membership/Eligibility Data Processing.....	9
Claims Data Processing.....	10
Provider Data Processing .....	10
Data Integration and Measure Production.....	11
Performance Measure Specific Findings.....	13
Strengths, Opportunities for Improvement, and Recommendations .....	14
<b>Appendix A. Data Integration and Control Findings.....</b>	<b>A-1</b>
<b>Appendix B. Denominator and Numerator Validation Findings .....</b>	<b>B-1</b>
<b>Appendix C. Performance Measure Results .....</b>	<b>C-1</b>

### Purpose and Overview of Report

Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §438.350(a) requires states that contract with managed care organizations (MCOs), prepaid inpatient health plans (PIHPs), or prepaid ambulatory health plans (PAHPs) to have a qualified external quality review organization (EQRO) perform an annual external quality review (EQR) that includes validation of contracted entity performance measures (42 CFR §438.358[b][1][ii]).

The purpose of performance measure validation (PMV) is to assess the accuracy of performance measures reported by managed care entities and to determine the extent to which performance measures reported by these organizations follow state specifications and reporting requirements. According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) *EQR Protocol 2. Validation of Performance Measures: A Mandatory EQR-Related Activity*, February 2023 (CMS EQR Protocol 2),<sup>1</sup> the mandatory PMV activity may be performed by the state Medicaid agency, an agent that is not a managed care plan, or an EQRO.

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) administers and oversees the Medicaid managed care program. Health Services Advisory Group, Inc. (HSAG), the EQRO for DHCS, is contracted to conduct PMV activities in accordance with 42 CFR §438.350(a) for 32 Drug Medi-Cal Operating Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Plans in California that are responsible for covering specialty substance use disorder (SUD) services.

### Overview of DMC-ODS Plans

#### *Managed Care in California*

County of Ventura (Ventura) is a DMC-ODS Plan offering specialty SUD services to Medicaid beneficiaries in California.

HSAG worked closely with Ventura's primary contacts throughout the course of PMV activities in calendar year (CY) 2025. Table 1 provides Ventura's primary contact and virtual review information.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. *Protocol 2. Validation of Performance Measures: A Mandatory EQR-Related Activity*, February 2023. <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/downloads/2023-eqr-protocols.pdf>. Accessed on: June 11, 2025.

**Table 1—DMC-ODS Plan Information**

<b>DMC-ODS Plan Name:</b>	County of Ventura
<b>DMC-ODS Plan Location:</b>	1911 Williams Drive, Suite 120 Oxnard, CA 93036
<b>Primary Audit Contact:</b>	Sloane Burt
<b>Primary Contact Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:sloane.burt@ventura.org">sloane.burt@ventura.org</a>
<b>Virtual Review Date:</b>	3/10/2025

## Performance Measures Reporting

### Overview

HSAG conducted a review of PMV activities focused on reviewing data integration, information systems, and measure calculation processes to assess the DMC-ODS Plans’ performance measure reporting in accordance with CMS EQR Protocol 2.

HSAG validated rates for a set of measures selected by DHCS for validation. DMC-ODS Plans were required to report only using the administrative methodology for DHCS-selected measures in the scope of PMV, and they were required to apply measure specifications in accordance with the selected specification stewards.

### Performance Measure Validation Methodology

The scope of PMV activities evaluated the DMC-ODS Plans’ information systems, data integration, and measure calculation processes through the collection of information using the Information Systems Capabilities Assessment Tool (ISCAT). In addition, HSAG evaluated the DMC-ODS Plans’ information systems and processes specific to producing performance measure rates on a set of measures selected by DHCS.

Table 2 represents the performance measures that HSAG validated, along with the measure specification steward, the data collection methodology, and the measurement period chosen by DHCS. Measurement year (MY) 2023 encompasses dates from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, and MY 2024 encompasses dates from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

**Table 2—List of Performance Measures for Ventura**

Performance Measure	Specifications Steward	Methodology	Measurement Period
<i>Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for Substance Use (FUA)</i>	NCQA*	Administrative	MY 2023 and MY 2024
<i>Pharmacotherapy for Opioid Use Disorder (POD)</i>	NCQA	Administrative	MY 2023 and MY 2024
<i>Use of Pharmacotherapy for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)</i>	CMS	Administrative	MY 2023 and MY 2024
<i>Initiation and Engagement of Substance Use Disorder Treatment (IET)</i>	NCQA	Administrative	MY 2023 and MY 2024

\* NCQA = National Committee for Quality Assurance

## Performance Measure Validation Activity

### Pre-Audit Strategy

HSAG conducted the validation activities as outlined in CMS EQR Protocol 2. To complete the validation activities for Ventura, HSAG obtained a list of the performance measures DHCS selected for validation to support assessing and evaluating information systems, data integration, and measure calculation processes.

HSAG then prepared and submitted a document request memorandum (memo) to Ventura, outlining the scope and steps in the PMV process. The document request memo included a request for the source code for each performance measure, as applicable; a completed ISCAT; any additional supporting documentation necessary to complete the audit; a timetable for completion; and instructions for submission. HSAG responded to any audit-related questions received directly from Ventura during the pre-virtual review phase.

HSAG hosted a DMC-ODS Plan-wide webinar focused on providing technical assistance to the DMC-ODS Plans. The webinar was developed to offer an overview of all activities associated with PMV, to provide helpful tips on how to complete the ISCAT, and to provide a review of expected deliverables.

Approximately two weeks prior to the virtual review, HSAG provided Ventura with an agenda describing all virtual review activities and indicating the type of staff needed for each session. HSAG also conducted a pre-virtual review conference call with Ventura to discuss virtual review logistics and expectations, important deadlines, outstanding documentation, and any outstanding questions from Ventura.

### Validation Team

The HSAG PMV team was composed of a lead auditor and several validation team members. HSAG assembled the team based on the skills required for the validation and requirements of California. Some team members participated in the virtual review meetings with Ventura; others conducted their work at HSAG’s offices. Table 3 lists the validation team members, their roles, and their skills and expertise.

**Table 3—HSAG Validation Team**

Name, Title, and Role	Skills and Expertise
Amelia Porter-Castro, BS, CHCA Senior Auditor, Data Science & Advanced Analytics (DSAA); Lead Auditor	Certified Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) <sup>2</sup> compliance auditor (CHCA); multiple years of systems analysis, quality improvement (QI), healthcare industry experience, data review, analysis, and reporting.
Christine McClurg, BS Auditor I, DSAA; Secondary Auditor	Multiple years of auditing experience related to Medicare/Medicaid regulatory compliance; healthcare industry experience.
Sarah Lemley, BS Source Code Reviewer	Source code/programming review, HEDIS and PMV experience, and data analysis expertise.

### Technical Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The CMS EQR Protocol 2 identifies key data types that should be reviewed as part of the validation process. The following list describes the types of data collected and how HSAG conducted an analysis of these data:

- Information Systems Capabilities Assessment Tool (ISCAT):** The DMC-ODS Plans were required to submit to HSAG a completed ISCAT that provided information on their information systems; processes used for collecting, storing, and processing data; and processes used for performance measure reporting. Upon receipt, HSAG completed a cursory review of the ISCAT to ensure each section was complete and all applicable attachments were present. HSAG then thoroughly reviewed all documentation, noting any potential issues, concerns, and items that needed additional clarification.
- Source code (programming language) for performance measures:** The DMC-ODS Plans that calculated the performance measures using source code were required to submit the source code used to generate each performance measure being validated. HSAG completed a line-by-line review of the supplied source code to ensure compliance with the measure specifications required by DHCS. HSAG identified any areas of deviation from the specifications, evaluating the impact to the

<sup>2</sup> HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

measure and assessing the degree of bias (if any). The DMC-ODS Plans that did not use source code to generate the performance measures were required to submit documentation describing the steps taken for calculation of each of the required performance measures.

- **Supporting documentation:** HSAG requested documentation to provide reviewers with additional information to complete the validation process, including policies and procedures, file layouts, system flow diagrams, system log files, and data collection process descriptions. HSAG reviewed all supporting documentation, identifying issues or areas needing clarification for further follow-up.
- **Primary source verification (PSV):** HSAG requested that the DMC-ODS Plans provide output data files that included numerator positive records for performance measures from which auditors selected cases for PSV.

### **Virtual Review Activities**

HSAG conducted a virtual review with Ventura. HSAG collected information using several methods, including interviews, system demonstrations, review of data output files, data process flow descriptions, demonstration of sample cases in source systems, and review of data reports. The virtual review activities are described as follows:

- **Opening session:** The opening session included introducing the validation team and key Ventura staff members involved in the PMV activities. The review purpose, the required documentation, basic meeting logistics, and queries to be performed were discussed. In addition, Ventura provided a high-level overview of the population served, membership volume, key programs supporting performance measure improvement, and any challenges/barriers.
- **Evaluation of enrollment and claims systems and processes:** This evaluation included a review of the information systems and focused on the processing of claims and enrollment data. Throughout the evaluation, HSAG conducted interviews with key staff members familiar with processing, monitoring, reporting, and managing data used for calculation of the performance measures. Key staff members included executive leadership, intake specialists, claims operations processors, business analysts, QI staff members, data analyst staff members, and other front-line staff members familiar with processing, monitoring, and storage of performance measure data.
- **Evaluation of provider data systems and processes:** HSAG evaluated how practitioner data are collected, maintained, updated, and audited. In addition, for measures wherein specifications require services to be rendered by a certain provider specialty type, HSAG evaluated how the DMC-ODS Plan identifies provider specialty types at the service line level and any provider specialty mapping the DMC-ODS Plan performs as part of performance measure calculations.
- **Evaluation of supplemental data sources, systems, and processes:** This evaluation included a review of the data systems and the processes for collecting, validating, storing, and maintaining supplemental data used for performance measure calculation. HSAG conducted interviews with key staff familiar with supplemental data management. HSAG used the interviews to confirm findings from the documentation review and verify that written policies and procedures were used and followed.

- Review of data integration and control for performance measure calculation:** This session included a review of the data process flows and processes used to extract and integrate data sources and produce the analytic file necessary to calculate and report the selected performance measures. HSAG interviewed DMC-ODS Plan staff members and/or vendor staff members regarding software products they use during data integration, analytic file production, and measure computation. In addition, HSAG reviewed backup documentation on data integration and addressed data control and security procedures during this session.
- Primary source verification:** Using this technique, HSAG assessed the processes used to input, transmit, and track the data; confirm entry; and detect errors. HSAG selected cases across measures to verify that the DMC-ODS Plans have system documentation which supports appropriate inclusion of records for measure reporting. This technique does not rely on a specific number of cases for review to determine compliance; rather, it is used to detect errors from a small number of cases. If errors were detected, the outcome was determined based on the type of error. For example, the review of one case may have been sufficient in detecting a programming language error and as a result, no additional cases related to that issue may have been reviewed. In other scenarios, one case error detected may result in the selection of additional cases to better examine the extent of the issue and its impact on reporting.
- Closing conference:** The closing conference included a summation of preliminary findings based on the ISCAT review and virtual review and revisited the documentation requirements for any post-virtual review activities.

HSAG conducted several interviews with key Ventura staff members who were involved with performance measure reporting. Table 4 lists key Ventura interviewees:

**Table 4—List of Ventura Interviewees**

Name	Title
Sloane Burt	QI Manager
Leisa Donovan	Senior Accounting Manager
Yvette Chen	Data Informatics Senior Program Administrator
Narcisa Egan	Chief Financial Officer
Katheryn Rabinovitz	QI Program Administrator
Michelle Rojas	Electronic Health Records (EHR) Program Administrator
Juan Mendoza	Billing Manager, Senior Program Administrator
Alicia Duenas	EHR Program Administrator
Bethany Dominik	Senior Epidemiologist, California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA)

## Assessment of DMC-ODS Plan Performance

### *Data Integration, Data Control, and Performance Measure Documentation*

There are several aspects crucial to the calculation of performance measure data. These include data integration, data control, and documentation of performance measure calculations. Each of the following subsections describes the validation processes used and the validation findings. For more detailed information, see Appendix A of this report.

#### **Data Integration**

Accurate data integration is essential for calculating valid performance measure data. The steps used to combine various data sources (including claims/encounter data, eligibility data, and other administrative data) must be carefully controlled and validated. HSAG validated Ventura's data integration process, which included a review of file consolidations or extracts, a comparison of source data to warehouse files, data integration documentation, source code, production activity logs, and linking mechanisms. Overall, HSAG determined that the data integration processes in place at Ventura were:

- Acceptable
- Not acceptable

#### **Data Control**

Ventura's organizational infrastructure must support all necessary information systems and its quality assurance practices, and backup procedures must be sound to ensure timely and accurate processing of data and to provide data protection in the event of a disaster. HSAG validated the data control processes Ventura used, which included a review of disaster recovery procedures, data backup protocols, and related policies and procedures. Overall, HSAG determined that the data control processes in place at Ventura were:

- Acceptable
- Not acceptable

#### **Performance Measure Documentation**

Sufficient, complete documentation is necessary to support validation activities. While interviews and system demonstrations provided supplementary information, the majority of the validation review findings were based on documentation provided by Ventura. HSAG reviewed all related documentation, which included the completed ISCAT, job logs, computer programming code, output files, workflow

diagrams, narrative descriptions of performance measure calculations, and other related documentation. Overall, HSAG determined that the documentation of performance measure generation by Ventura was:

- Acceptable
- Not acceptable

## Validation Results

HSAG evaluated Ventura's data systems for processing each data type used for reporting performance measure data. General findings are indicated below.

### *Information Systems and Personnel*

HSAG evaluated the information systems that Ventura had in place to support performance measure indicator reporting, which included the following findings:

- Ventura used SmartCare, an EHR system, effective July 1, 2023. Prior to transitioning to SmartCare, Ventura utilized myAvatar.
  - Ventura performed three rounds of testing and applicable validations in SmartCare post-upload to ensure that all data were accurate and successfully migrated from myAvatar.
  - Ventura's performance measure calculation and EHR vendor, CalMHSA, performed additional validations to ensure all data were in the correct format before data were uploaded into SmartCare.
- CalMHSA used Amazon Web Services, a data warehouse, for storing and integrating data used for performance measure calculations and reporting.

HSAG evaluated the personnel that Ventura, and vendor if applicable, had in place to support performance measure indicator reporting, which included the following findings:

- Three Ventura programmers had an average of 15 years of experience collectively, and three CalMHSA programmers had an average of 10 years of experience collectively.
- CalMHSA's programmers maintained the source code for performance measure calculations within the Azure DevOps repository.
- Ventura programmers utilized structured query language (SQL) and maintained queries and reports to support performance measure validation in a secure folder on Ventura's drive.

HSAG identified no concerns with Ventura's information systems and personnel.

## Membership/Eligibility Data Processing

HSAG evaluated the information system and processes used by Ventura to capture member enrollment data to confirm that the system was capable of collecting data on member characteristics as specified by the State. HSAG's evaluation of Ventura's enrollment system included the following findings:

- Enrollment and eligibility data for Medi-Cal enrollees were maintained within SmartCare.
- Ventura received monthly enrollment files in Monthly Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) Extract File (MMEF) format from DHCS.
- Ventura performed monthly reconciliation between SmartCare and DHCS data to ensure completeness and accuracy of enrollment data.
- Ventura's reconciliation and oversight of enrollment data included verifying completeness of data.
  - Ventura's authorized user downloaded the MMEF from the DHCS portal monthly via a secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) folder and imported the MMEF into SmartCare.
  - Ventura used a member match process to ensure MMEF enrollment data updates were automatically applied to member records if three essential demographic elements (member name, date of birth, and Social Security number) aligned between the MMEF and SmartCare.
  - Ventura front desk staff reviewed members with two out of three demographic matches between the MMEF and SmartCare and generated an eligibility report monthly from the State portal. Ventura staff reviewed and confirmed demographic alignment between the MMEF and SmartCare before applying eligibility updates.
  - Ventura utilized an eligibility table to view historical data based on DHCS/Medi-Cal verification sources. The client coverage screen was used to track program enrollment separately.
- Ventura's system captured and maintained both the state-issued Medicaid ID and a system-generated ID. If the Medicaid ID changed for any reason, Ventura used the system-generated ID to link enrollment history.
- Ventura identified member demographic updates based on the monthly MMEF file and direct communication provided by its active member population during service visits. Self-reported member addresses and phone number changes were updated in SmartCare, and members were also referred to a medical case worker to assist with updating the demographic information in all applicable DHCS systems.
  - Ventura used the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System Lite (MEDSLITE) DHCS portal to verify member demographics during check-in at service visits.

HSAG identified no concerns with Ventura's enrollment data capture, data processing, data integration, data storage, or data reporting.

## Claims Data Processing

HSAG evaluated the information systems and processes used by Ventura to capture claims/encounter data to determine whether they supported complete and accurate data collection and submission to the State. HSAG's evaluation of Ventura's claims/encounter data system included the following findings:

- Ventura entered service data and generated claims for Medi-Cal consumers within SmartCare.
- SmartCare contained sufficient built-in edit checks to ensure accuracy of claims and encounter data, including checks for member eligibility, valid codes, identification of duplicate claims, and other reasonability checks.
- In 2023, Ventura received 99.48 percent of claims electronically through direct SmartCare entry and 0.52 percent in a CMS-1500 and UB-04 paper format.
  - Paper claims data were manually entered into SmartCare by Ventura's finance and billing teams, validated, and converted to 837 file format for processing in SmartCare.
- In 2024, Ventura received 99.84 percent of claims electronically through direct SmartCare and 0.16 percent in a CMS-1500 and UB-04 paper format.
  - Paper claims data were manually entered into SmartCare by Ventura's finance and billing teams, validated, and converted to 837 file format for processing in SmartCare.
- All services that met the criteria for Medicaid coverage were submitted to DHCS for adjudication and payment. Ventura generated interim batch claim files after pre-billing checks were performed according to coverage-specific rules set by the payer. Charge errors were displayed for any charges that did not pass the pre-billing checks and were excluded from the interim batch files due to data omissions or misalignments with billing standards. Once charge errors were resolved, Ventura completed a final check and created the interim batch claim file from SmartCare for submission to DHCS for adjudication monthly.
- In MY 2023, Ventura had a claims acceptance rate from DHCS of 91.42 percent and claims denial rate of 8.58 percent.
- In MY 2024, Ventura had a claims acceptance rate from DHCS of 94.95 percent and claims denial rate of 5.05 percent.
- Ventura conducted routine audits of all service data for accuracy. Periodic utilization reviews (URs) were conducted using a 5 percent random sample review of documentation to ensure compliance and adherence with federal and DHCS guidelines. Additionally, URs validated billing accuracy to prevent duplicate billing, overbilling, and undocumented or incomplete services.

HSAG identified no concerns with Ventura's claims/encounter data capture, data processing, data integration, data storage, or data reporting.

## Provider Data Processing

HSAG evaluated the information systems and processes used by Ventura to capture provider data and identified the following findings:

- Ventura ensured that data received from providers were accurate and complete by verifying the accuracy and timeliness of reported data.
- Ventura screened the data for completeness, logic, and consistency.
- Ventura collected data from providers in standardized formats to an extent feasible and appropriate.

HSAG's evaluation of Ventura's provider data system(s) included the following findings:

- Ventura maintained provider credentialing data in SmartCare.
- Ventura's procedures for updating and maintaining provider data included the following:
  - New providers completed a background check, Social Security number verification, employment history, and licensing or associate status checks.
  - The information provided was reviewed and submitted to Health Care Agency (HCA) Human Resources. HCA Human Resources provided Ventura with a hiring date for the provider once all forms were reviewed and a background check was completed with no findings.
  - Ventura's billing staff validated the data against the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System, the National Provider Identifier Registry, and the California Board of Behavioral Sciences site.
  - The Ventura Credentialing team reviewed the Office of Inspector General List of Excluded Individuals/Entities, Excluded Parties List System via the System Award Management system, and the CA Medi-Cal List of Suspended and Ineligible Providers, upon hire and monthly thereafter to identify providers or organizations excluded from Medicaid. If matches were identified during the exclusion review, the Ventura compliance senior manager investigated the issues and presented findings to the behavioral health directors and division chief, as applicable. Providers would be contacted with a plan of correction and an explanation of the found deficiencies as applicable.
  - Ventura's QI staff sent files to clinic administrators and program leads who verified and updated their list of active providers monthly to ensure accuracy for staff rosters.
  - Ventura Human Resources generated reports to track provider licensure expiration dates in SmartCare and sent notification emails to providers 30 days prior to the licensure expiration dates.

HSAG identified no concerns with Ventura's provider data capture, data processing, data integration, data storage, or data reporting.

### ***Data Integration and Measure Production***

HSAG's assessment of Ventura's performance measure reporting processes included the following findings:

- CalMHSA integrated claims data files in an 837 file format (or direct EHR extract) with enrollment data from monthly MMEF and encounter data from the physical health plans on the Plan Data Feed (PDF) files received from DHCS for performance measure reporting.

- CalMHSA maintained data control procedures to ensure accuracy and completeness of data merges between Ventura’s claims data, MCO encounter data, and eligibility data files by monitoring the volume of all records loaded into its database and then testing and validating the merged output. CalMHSA notified Ventura if it identified any potential missing data based on the volume of records received in a monthly file compared to the volume of records in other monthly files.
- CalMHSA conducted data reasonability checks by creating programming code to calculate MY 2022, 2023, and 2024 rates and then checking the rate trends for all three years to ensure the rates were comparable. CalMHSA then compared the MY 2022 rates it calculated with the rates DHCS calculated for MY 2022. Finally, CalMHSA compared all HEDIS measure rates with NCQA’s Quality Compass<sup>3</sup> benchmarks for MYs 2023 and 2024.
- CalMHSA used SQL to produce performance measure data and rates.
- CalMHSA maintained performance measure reports by archiving copies of the member-level detail files and rate templates produced for HSAG PMV audits on a network file server with the files labeled for each measure year and version.
- CalMHSA conducted a peer review of all SQL code used to calculate the measures and ran a test of the measure output using a member-level detail file to ensure that all denominator and numerator cases met technical specifications and value set criteria.
  - HSAG reviewed CalMHSA’s SQL code and identified specification misalignment related to age calculations, anchor dates, member matching logic, procedure codes, and emergency department and inpatient bundling logic. CalMHSA applied source code updates in alignment with the measure specifications, and all source code was approved by HSAG.
- To ensure continuity of performance measure production, CalMHSA saved all programming code in the Azure DevOps database platform, which allows the vendor to see the code, including any changes for each measure year, and compare the code changes to the specification or value set changes that are published each year.
- CalMHSA documented mapping it performed during data preparation of provider specialties and state-specific service codes included in Ventura’s claims data in Excel data files that the HSAG auditor reviewed in accordance with NCQA guidelines.
  - HSAG reviewed CalMHSA’s provider mapping for alignment with Appendix 3 of the HEDIS Volume 2 Technical Specifications. HSAG identified multiple taxonomies that did not align with the mental health provider description. CalMHSA updated its provider mapping, which was approved by HSAG.

HSAG identified no concerns with CalMHSA’s performance measure calculation process. However, HSAG identified that Ventura’s performance measure rate calculations were limited to Ventura’s active member population, which indicates a potential omission of data in alignment with the measure specifications. HSAG also identified that Ventura purchased its own copy of the HEDIS Volume 2 Technical Specification to aid with the validations of performance measures; however, it was unable to complete the validations for this audit period due to limited data provided back from CalMHSA.

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<sup>3</sup> Quality Compass<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of the NCQA.

## Performance Measure Specific Findings

Based on all validation activities, HSAG determined results for each of the performance measures. The CMS EQR Protocol 2 identifies four possible validation finding designations for performance measures, which are defined in Table 5. For more detailed information, please see Appendix B.

**Table 5—Designation Categories for Performance Measures**

<b>Reportable (R)</b>	Measure was compliant with measure specifications.
<b>Do Not Report (DNR)</b>	The DMC-ODS Plan’s rate was materially biased and should not be reported.
<b>Not Applicable (NA)</b>	The DMC-ODS Plan was not required to report the measure.
<b>Not Reported (NR)</b>	Measure was not reported because the DMC-ODS Plan did not offer the required benefit.

According to the protocol, the validation designation for the measure is determined by the magnitude of the errors detected for the audit elements, not by the number of audit elements determined to be not compliant based on the review findings. Consequently, an error for a single audit element may result in a designation of *DNR* because the impact of the error biased the reported performance measures by more than 5 percentage points. Conversely, it is also possible that several audit element errors may have little impact on the reported rate, and the measure could be given a designation of *R*. Table 6 displays the measure-specific review findings and designations for Ventura.

**Table 6—Measure-Specific Review Findings and Designations for Ventura**

Performance Measure	Performance Measure Description	Measure Designation
<i>Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for Substance Use (FUA)</i>	The percentage of emergency department (ED) visits among members ages 13 years and older with a principal diagnosis of SUD, or any diagnosis of drug overdose, for which there was follow-up within 7 or 30 days of the ED visit.	DNR
<i>Pharmacotherapy for Opioid Use Disorder (POD)</i>	The percentage of opioid use disorder (OUD) pharmacotherapy events that lasted at least 180 days among members 16 years of age and older with a diagnosis of OUD and a new OUD pharmacotherapy event.	DNR

Performance Measure	Performance Measure Description	Measure Designation
<i>Use of Pharmacotherapy for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)</i>	<p>Percentage of Medicaid beneficiaries ages 18 and older with an OUD who filled a prescription for or were administered or dispensed a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved medication for the disorder during the measurement year. Five rates are reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total (overall) rate capturing any medications used in medication-assisted treatment of opioid dependence and addiction (Rate 1).</li> <li>• Four separate rates representing the following types of FDA-approved drug products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Buprenorphine (Rate 2)</li> <li>– Oral naltrexone (Rate 3)</li> <li>– Long-acting, injectable naltrexone (Rate 4)</li> <li>– Methadone (Rate 5)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	DNR
<i>Initiation and Engagement of Substance Use Disorder Treatment (IET)</i>	<p>The percentage of new SUD episodes that result in treatment initiation and engagement. Two rates are reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiation of SUD Treatment. The percentage of new SUD episodes that result in treatment initiation through an inpatient SUD admission, outpatient visit, intensive outpatient encounter, partial hospitalization, telehealth visit, or medication treatment within 14 days.</li> <li>• Engagement of SUD Treatment. The percentage of new SUD episodes that have evidence of treatment engagement within 34 days of initiation.</li> </ul>	DNR

### Strengths, Opportunities for Improvement, and Recommendations

By assessing Ventura’s performance measure reporting process, HSAG identified the following areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. Along with each opportunity for improvement, HSAG has also provided a recommendation to help target improvement efforts.

#### Strengths

**Strength #1:** Ventura provided timely responses and follow-up documentation to all audit deliverables, demonstrating engagement, partnership, and commitment to the process and expected outcomes.

**Strength #2:** Ventura had strong initiatives in place, including the implementation of a billing dashboard, which leadership monitored daily for completeness. Ventura also purchased its own copy of the HEDIS Volume 2 Technical Specification to aid with the validations of performance measures. While performance measure calculations were not validated for MY 2023 or MY 2024

due to the lack of data provided by CalMHSA, Ventura did acknowledge it was in communication with CalMHSA to receive more data back so it will be able to perform these validations for future audits.

## Opportunities for Improvement

**Opportunity #1:** During the data output file review and PSV, HSAG noted multiple areas of specification misalignment, including incorrect use of procedure codes, place of service codes, age requirements, anchor dates, and emergency department bundling. Ventura acknowledged that it did not review the performance measure data output files to conduct comparisons of the data for reasonableness of each performance measure rate calculation. However, during the virtual review, Ventura acknowledged that it was still in the process of leveraging internal dashboards for the review of performance measure data output files.

**Recommendation:** HSAG recommends that Ventura work with CalMHSA to obtain the data output files and to assess a sample selection against the raw data files and measure specifications for completeness and accuracy of the reported data.

**Opportunity #2:** During the virtual review, Ventura indicated that it was only using the MMEF, its own 837 files, and the PDF files, which included only members who were active with Ventura, to calculate performance measure rates. Because Ventura was not using additional data streams to encompass all medical, behavioral health, and pharmacy data for eligible Ventura County Medi-Cal members, HSAG noted a potential omission of data in alignment with the measure specifications.

**Recommendation:** HSAG recommends that Ventura identify and integrate additional data streams that include medications, hospitalizations and emergency department visits that would inform the performance measure denominators into its performance measure rate calculations to ensure the completeness of medical, behavioral health, and pharmacy data for all Medi-Cal eligible members registered in Ventura County. This may require Ventura to solidify data sharing agreements with MCOs, health information exchanges, or similar partners and agencies to obtain the necessary data for performance measure reporting.

**Opportunity #3:** During the Enrollment and Eligibility portion of the audit, Ventura acknowledged that due to reporting limitations within SmartCare, a partial match report was not being generated for members with two out of three demographic matches between the MMEF and SmartCare.

**Recommendation:** HSAG recommends that Ventura work with SmartCare to be able to generate a partial match report and implement a process for validating members identified with two out of three demographic matches between the MMEF and SmartCare to confirm alignment.

## Appendix A. Data Integration and Control Findings

<b>DMC-ODS Plan Name:</b>	County of Ventura
<b>Virtual Review Date:</b>	3/10/2025
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Amelia Porter-Castro, BS, CHCA Christine McClurg, BS

Data Integration and Control Element	Met	Not Met	NA	Comments
<b>Accuracy of data transfers to assigned performance measure data repository</b>				
The DMC-ODS Plan accurately and completely processes transfer data from the transaction files (e.g., membership, provider, encounter/claims) into the performance indicator data repository used to keep the data until the calculations of the performance indicators have been completed and validated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ventura’s transaction files were incomplete, as Ventura indicated that it was only using the MMEF, its own 837 files, and the PDF files, which included only members who were active with Ventura, to calculate performance measure rates.
Samples of data from the performance indicator data repository are complete and accurate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Data within the performance indicator data repository were incomplete, as Ventura indicated that it was only using the MMEF, its own 837 files, and the PDF files, which included only members who were active with Ventura, to calculate performance measure rates.
<b>Accuracy of file consolidations, extracts, and derivations</b>				
The DMC-ODS Plan’s processes to consolidate diversified files and to extract required information from the performance indicator data repository are appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Actual results of file consolidations or extracts are consistent with those that should have resulted according to documented algorithms or specifications.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Procedures for coordinating the activities of multiple subcontractors ensure the accurate, timely, and complete integration of data into the performance indicator database.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Data Integration and Control Element	Met	Not Met	NA	Comments
Computer program reports or documentation reflect vendor coordination activities, and no data necessary for performance indicator reporting are lost or inappropriately modified during transfer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ventura did not provide policies or processes to reflect vendor oversight and monitoring activities for performance indicator reporting.
<b>If the DMC-ODS Plan uses a performance indicator data repository, its structure and format facilitate any required programming necessary to calculate and report required performance indicators</b>				
The performance indicator data repository’s design, program flow charts, and source code enable analyses and reports.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Proper linkage mechanisms are employed to join data from all necessary sources (e.g., identifying a member with a given disease/condition).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Assurance of effective management of report production and of the reporting software</b>				
Documentation governing the production process, including DMC-ODS Plan production activity logs and the DMC-ODS Plan staff review of report runs, is adequate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prescribed data cutoff dates are followed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The DMC-ODS Plan retains copies of files or databases used for performance indicator reporting in case results need to be reproduced.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The reporting software program is properly documented with respect to every aspect of the performance indicator data repository, including building, maintaining, managing, testing, and report production.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The DMC-ODS Plan’s processes and documentation comply with the DMC-ODS Plan standards associated with reporting program specifications, code review, and testing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ventura did confirm it purchased its own copy of the HEDIS Volume 2 Technical Specifications, however, it was unable to conduct validations on the performance measure calculations due to lack of data provided by CalMHSA.

## Appendix B. Denominator and Numerator Validation Findings

<b>DMC-ODS Plan Name:</b>	County of Ventura
<b>Virtual Review Date:</b>	3/10/2025
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Amelia Porter-Castro, BS, CHCA Christine McClurg, BS

Denominator Validation Findings for Ventura				
Audit Element	Met	Not Met	NA	Comments
For each of the performance measures, all members of the relevant populations identified in the specifications are included in the population from which the denominator is produced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ventura indicated that it was only using the MMEF, its own 837 files, and the PDF files, which included only members who were active with Ventura, to calculate its performance measure rates.
Adequate programming logic or source code exists to appropriately identify all relevant members of the specified denominator population for each of the performance measures.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The DMC-ODS Plan correctly calculates member months and member years if applicable to the performance measure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Measures in scope of the audit do not require member months and member years.
The DMC-ODS Plan properly evaluates the completeness and accuracy of any codes used to identify medical events, such as diagnoses, procedures, or prescriptions, and these codes are appropriately identified and applied as specified in each performance measure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If any time parameters are required by the specifications for the performance measure, they are followed (cutoff dates for data collection, counting 30 calendar days after discharge from a hospital, etc.).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Exclusion criteria included in the performance measure specifications are followed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Systems or methods used by the DMC-ODS Plan to estimate populations when they cannot be accurately or completely counted (e.g., newborns) are valid.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ventura did not estimate populations.

Numerator Validation Findings for Ventura				
Audit Element	Met	Not Met	NA	Comments
The DMC-ODS Plan uses the appropriate data, including linked data from separate data sets, to identify the entire at-risk population.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ventura indicated that it was only using the MMEF, its own 837 files, and the PDF files, which included only members who were active with Ventura, to calculate its performance measure rates.
Qualifying medical events (such as diagnoses, procedures, prescriptions, etc.) are properly identified and confirmed for inclusion in terms of time and services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The DMC-ODS Plan avoids or eliminates all double-counted members or numerator events.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any nonstandard codes used in determining the numerator are mapped to a standard coding scheme in a manner that is consistent, complete, and reproducible, as evidenced by a review of the programming logic or a demonstration of the program.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If any time parameters are required by the specifications for the performance measure, they are followed (i.e., the measure event occurred during the period specified or defined in the specifications).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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## Appendix C. Performance Measure Results

Please see the attached rate templates for the final approved measure rates for MYs 2023 and 2024.