

National Quality Forum  
1030 15th Street NW, Suite 800  
Washington DC 20005

RE: Comments on the Fixed-dose Combination of Hydralazine and Isosorbide Dinitrate (F-ISDN/HYN) Therapy for Self-identified Black or African American Patients with Heart Failure and Left Ventricular Ejection Fraction (LVEF) <40% on Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme Inhibitors (ACEIs) and Beta Blocker Therapy

The Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC) is writing to express its support for the National Minority Quality Forum's (NMQF) heart failure performance measure, MUC 16-74.

HLC, a coalition of chief executives from all disciplines within American healthcare, is the exclusive forum for the nation's healthcare leaders to jointly develop policies, plans, and programs to achieve their vision of a 21st century system that makes affordable, high-quality care accessible to all Americans. Members of HLC – hospitals, academic health centers, health plans, pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, biotech firms, health product distributors, pharmacies, and information technology companies – envision a quality-driven system that fosters innovation. HLC members advocate measures to increase the quality and efficiency of American healthcare by emphasizing wellness and prevention, care coordination, and the use of evidence-based medicine, while utilizing consumer choice and competition to elevate value.

HLC strongly believes that F-ISDN/HYN accomplishes these goals. In African Americans with heart failure, this therapy is proven to reduce mortality by 43% and first-time hospitalizations for heart failure by 38%, while improving quality of life. However, only 7% of African Americans who are clinically eligible for the combination therapy are receiving it. Unfortunately, this has resulted in the annual deaths of more than 6,000 African Americans. NMQF's quality measure would save lives by strongly encouraging healthcare providers to ensure that eligible African American patients with heart disease receive the proper treatment.

Given the benefits of the treatment, HLC strongly urges the NQF not to require that the quality measure be refined and resubmitted. This requirement would cause an additional delay in the review and approval of the measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue. HLC feels there is tremendous potential for the healthcare industry as a whole to encourage collaboration and quality improvement in order to achieve our shared goal of improving the value of healthcare delivery for all.