

# Indicator Development at a Glance

## Clinical Indicators

A number of steps were taken to determine which clinical indicators should be included in the initial stage of the project:

- Literature reviews identified
  - Existing indicators that are relevant to performance measurement and quality improvement for Canadian hospitals; and
  - Potential measures of clinical performance and conditions considered important by other sources in the field.
- A review of hospital performance frameworks and various dimensions of performance ensured that we were working toward a balanced set of measures across performance dimensions.
- An environmental scan looked at performance measurement organizations and projects.
- An information needs survey was disseminated to stakeholders to identify their needs.

From this, with input from experts in the field, potential indicators were selected according to specified criteria:

- **Feasibility:** Is the indicator precisely defined? Is the data needed to calculate it available? Is the data reliable?
- **Scientific soundness:** Are the results reliable? Can the results be risk-adjusted for differing influences and factors between hospitals? Is it comparable?
- **Relevance:** Does the indicator tell us something important and useful? Is it meaningful to hospitals? Can the information be used to inform positive change?

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### Our Vision

Better data. Better decisions.  
Healthier Canadians.

### Our Mandate

To lead the development and maintenance of comprehensive and integrated health information that enables sound policy and effective health system management that improve health and health care.

### Our Values

Respect, Integrity, Collaboration,  
Excellence, Innovation

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- **Actionable:** Can the information be used to inform process change? Can the information be used to increase understanding that will improve quality of care?

## Financial Indicators

A number of steps were taken to determine which financial indicators should be included in the initial project:

- An extensive literature review included more than 200 hospital performance ratios.
- The 48 most frequently used financial ratios were compiled and presented in a survey to a multidisciplinary panel of experts on and stakeholders in the financial health of Canadian hospitals.

Experts were asked to consider the indicators based on the following criteria:

- **Feasibility:** Can the indicator be accurately calculated? Are there significant reporting variations in the data elements used to calculate the indicator? Will there be confidence in the indicator?
- **Importance:** Will a change in the indicator be considered a material change in a hospital's financial performance and condition? Will hospitals pay attention to the indicator? Will poor performance on the indicator be of significant concern?
- **Usefulness:** Can benchmarks be developed for the indicator? Will the indicator be used to improve a hospital's financial performance and condition?

Indicators were chosen based on further discussion with internal and external experts in the financial performance of hospitals.

## Timeline

**August 2010:** Results from CHRP were released to participating jurisdictions in summer 2010 via an online eTool. Results reflected 2008–2009 data.

**June 2011:** Results from 2009–2010 were released through the eTool. Results reflected further refinements made to better capture the outcomes of interest and to accommodate changes in classification coding and grouping methodologies.

**November 2011:** Further refinements were made to the indicators, and results for 2010–2011 were released to participating jurisdictions via the CHRP eTool.

**November 2011:** Results for indicators including Quebec were updated and released through the eTool.

**December 2011:** Results for the 30-Day All-Cause Readmission indicators were released through the eTool.

**April 2012:** Results for 21 clinical and 6 financial indicators were released to the public through an interactive tool on CIHI's website.

**December 2012:** Updated results from CHRP were released to participating jurisdictions for preview through the eTool. Results reflected new 2010–2011 and 2011–2012 data.

**March 2013:** Updated results for 2010–2011 and 2011–2012 for the 21 clinical and 6 financial indicators were released to the public through the interactive tool on CIHI's website.

## Ongoing Indicator Development

Understanding hospital performance is a complex endeavour. While the current suite of indicators is a very good starting point, it is just that—which is why CIHI continues to work with internal and external experts to:

- Ensure that the indicators currently reported on continue to be relevant and methodologically sound;
- Identify gaps in information that CIHI may be able to address in the future; and
- Develop and share information and indicators to better reflect all aspects of hospital performance.