
40 Ways for Payers and Providers to Measure Information Quality Success
Introduction

How do you know if data governance is working? Organizations in all industries struggle to measure the value of data governance, and healthcare enterprises are no exception. Ironically, the rewards of a good data governance program can be found almost everywhere that data is found. The payoff for the right efforts directed at the right metrics is both tangible as well as measurable.

To discover these benefits, you could begin by polling stakeholders. Has data quality improved since the data governance program started? Are analysts working more efficiently? Have the expectations of sponsors been met? In short, is the data governance program delivering the goods?

The answers to these questions need to be supported with solid data points. Opinions on program success, while important, are simply not good enough. Survival of your data governance program is predicated on tagging, tracking and publishing the right metrics.

Types of Data Governance Metrics

We split data governance metrics into two camps – quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative metrics are gathered directly through the observation and measurement of data. Qualitative metrics are outcomes that improve indirectly as data quality improves, such as better customer satisfaction survey results, or increased industry standard data quality scores.

Quantitative metrics offer a direct correlation between action and outcome. Professionals who are analytical by nature are easily convinced of the value of data governance using quantitative metrics – fix the data, increase the score.

Quantitative characteristics consist of water cooler conversation for data profilers like completeness, consistency, timeliness, and uniqueness. The range of dimensions is limited only by the desire for thoroughness and the budget to support that scope.

Linkage to Business Value

Business value is the distance between revenue and cost that helps healthcare organizations fund operational improvements, quality patient care, and innovative member care. When executives say, “these reports don’t match,” “the numbers don’t add up,” or “why can’t we put this into a big database and solve the problem?” the disconnect between data and business value is apparent. Linking business value and data requires a management process for success – or in other words, data governance.
Baseline Quantitative Metrics

Metrics can be composed of directly-measured rules or more complex heuristics such as weighted averages of collected scores. An excellent starting point is using metrics from a business case or the ROI for the data governance program proposal.

The chart below lists **20 quantitative metrics** that healthcare organizations can use to measure data governance program effectiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>• % of time match-merge logic needs manual interventions&lt;br&gt;• % of returned mail due to incorrect address causing reshipments and lost business – is it going down after implementing DG program?&lt;br&gt;• % of Provider phone numbers that are wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Completeness</strong></td>
<td>• % of Provider addresses that are accurate and deliverable&lt;br&gt;• % of Member addresses that are filled with required data elements&lt;br&gt;• % of Providers with incomplete specialties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistency</strong></td>
<td>• % of time data conforms to business rules/policy&lt;br&gt;• % of data values that conforms to the code sets/domain values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>• % of Critical Data Elements (CDE) identified by the DG Council that are available to business users&lt;br&gt;• % of time sample queries completed within the SLA defined by DG Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uniqueness</strong></td>
<td>• % of records having a unique primary key&lt;br&gt;• % of records having duplicate member or provider records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compliance</strong></td>
<td>• Number of regulatory noncompliance data issues with HIPAA, PHI policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efficiency</strong></td>
<td>• Work effort benefit from the reduction of:&lt;br&gt;  o Resources needed to resolve pended claims&lt;br&gt;  o Resources needed to perform COB&lt;br&gt;  o Resources needed to resolve wrongly paid claims&lt;br&gt;• Improved financial, procedural or clinical outcomes within a member segment or group&lt;br&gt;• Improvement in the number of self-service tiered-service events&lt;br&gt;• Number of new products and services in a targeted demographic&lt;br&gt;• % of operational costs reduced after implementing the DG program&lt;br&gt;• Number of data quality issues taken up the DG Council&lt;br&gt;• Number of data quality issues resolved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discover Qualitative Metrics

Qualitative metrics offer an indirect correlation between action and outcome. The points of data capture for qualitative metrics can rest at two or more degrees of separation from the data. That is, a data governance project may find and fix the quality of the data, but the measure of success is not the data that was remediated, but some other indirect outcome like a lift in compliance.

Qualitative metrics fit into a number of general categories, including compliance, industry ratings, member outcomes and satisfaction measures, and business opportunities. Governance programs with an instinct for self-preservation identify metrics meaningful to sponsors and executive leadership. Think along these five key categories:

1. **Compliance** – Data governance programs are well-positioned to support data-related compliance efforts. Data governance guides the implementation of controls to document, institute and monitor compliance with data-related regulations. Cross-functional teams established by data governance can look for opportunities to drive cost out of compliance efforts. These regulations include Sarbanes-Oxley, Basel I, Basel II, and, HIPAA. Compliance requires formal business and management processes to govern the impacted data subject areas that the Data Governance Council can help manage.

2. **Industry ratings** – Data governance can help improve industry ratings such as HEDIS and NCQA scores. HEDIS enables clients to notify members and providers of the need to obtain necessary services through multiple pathways. Proactive identification of HEDIS care gaps can be directed to DG participants for discussion and targeted improvements. NCQA scores depend in large part on the availability and customer satisfaction with clinical services. The data governance team can help address core data that feeds HEDIS and NCQA scores to help drive a lift in overall patient experiences.

3. **Customer satisfaction levels** – Payers and Providers devote huge amounts of resources to track, measure, socialize and lift member satisfaction levels. Collection of these metrics can be costly and complex, but need to be considered essential for survival. Commonly used sources include classic data like phone surveys, customer comment cards, and focus groups, to more recent entrants like blogs, Facebook and Twitter. Collection and analysis of these metrics over a period of time will help gather knowledge of exactly how consumers feel about your products and services and can be linked to improvements wrought by data governance efforts. Higher member satisfaction levels lead to increased member tenure and lower costs.

4. **Business opportunities** – The policies and controls implemented by data governance help organizations identify direct and indirect business opportunities. Correct and current data drives significant and direct impact to the business. Proposals that carry assumptions based on poor data quality will be at high risk of under or over-bidding. Common themes among the external regulations center on the need to manage risk. The risks can be financial
misstatements, inadvertent release of sensitive data, or poor data quality required to drive key decision making.

5. **Sample qualitative metrics** – Some of the qualitative measures are easier to substantiate than others. For example, you may find it challenging to quantify increased collaboration between teams. You may struggle to link new control standards and policies to increases in customer satisfaction scores. Stay the course! Each data governance team needs to define and measure some indirect or qualitative metrics that indicate program success. Brainstorm on the categories in the table below as a starting point for discussion.

**Baseline Qualitative Metrics**

There is no standard body of qualitative metrics. Each organization creates their own metrics based on needs, culture, industry, data availability, and so forth. The chart below lists **20 qualitative metrics** to measure data governance program success for healthcare organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>• % of users with access to PHI data. Access to PHI must be restricted to employees with business needs that support their job function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of times data within business critical systems changed or erased in an unauthorized manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Decrease in risk or cost of regulatory fines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Decrease in latency associated with delivery of compliance data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry Ratings</td>
<td>• Contributions to improvement in NCQA report cards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improved capture-ability of HEDIS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase in industry standard scorecards that result in additional Medicare auto-enrollments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Outcomes and Satisfaction Measures</td>
<td>• Improved member outcomes from better detection, tracking and sourcing of quality data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Survey results showing greater collaboration between internal departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % increase or decrease in customer satisfaction survey index</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration / Improved Productivity</td>
<td>• Reduction of resources needed to synchronize multiple provider (or member or product, etc.) data systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduction in work effort required to resolve ongoing data issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % of times DG Council detected and eliminated redundant intra- or inter-departmental projects / initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of projects that adopted the enterprise logical data model without creating one from scratch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Number of redundant systems eliminated to create a single definition of customer, product, or other widely shared master data

| Business Opportunity / Risk | • Business opportunities gained due to better data quality  
• Business opportunities lost or misaligned due to questionable data quality  
• Increase in precision of analytics and forecasting gains from improved data quality  
• Increase in competitive analytics due to data availability and data quality improvements  
• MLR optimization from data quality improvements |

What Defines a Good Data Governance Metric?

The acid test is whether a metric is clearly defined, capable of measurement, and directly relevant to improving program effectiveness. ‘SMART’ guidelines offer a familiar framework that can be leveraged to validate the usefulness of each metric:

- **Specific** – Does the metric help assess specific data governance objectives?
- **Measurable** – Is the metric clearly defined, simple to understand and easy to measure?
- **Actionable** – Is the metric easy to capture and actionable?
- **Relevant** – Does the metric have business relevance? That is, does it tie directly or indirectly to a desired improvement?
- **Timely** – Can the metric be observed within a concise window of time?

Your Next Steps

Thankfully, there’s no shortage of data points to measure the impact and effectiveness of data governance. While program inception is the best time to define data governance metrics, don’t feel badly if you missed that initial window of opportunity. Just don’t let the opportunity continue to slip. *Every data governance program requires a data-centric barometer of success.* However defined, your metrics will continue to evolve as the data governance program gains traction and takes on more ambitious scope. Whatever the current state of your program, establish metrics that will prove the value of your data governance efforts.

So bring together data stewards and analysts with detailed knowledge of the data to generate ideas for quantitative and qualitative metrics. The SMEs can propose metrics for Data Governance Council review and approval. Baseline the approved list. Capture and track the metrics regularly to review progress against the baseline. The right combination of proven quantitative (direct) and qualitative (indirect) benefits can help seal the deal for continued executive support of your data governance program.
About Ajilitee

Ajilitee is a consulting and services firm specializing in business intelligence, information management, agile analytics, and cloud enablement. Our award-winning information experts create agile IT environments using cloud-based technologies and architectures for faster time-to-benefit with less cost and risk. We advise, build, and run programs that quickly and cost-efficiently drive immediate and measurable outcomes for healthcare organizations with strategic information needs. Ajilitee is a division of LaunchPoint, a provider of enterprise-class information-centric services and solutions. Learn more about us at www.ajilitee.com.

About the Authors

Dambaru Jena is a Senior Manager at Ajilitee. He specializes in information management and business intelligence strategy and implementation within the Healthcare and Life Science industry. He is attuned to the dynamics of different stakeholders and known for his ability to successfully execute projects. He has 20 years of IT and management consulting experience. His prior experience includes serving as a Senior Principal at HP and Knightsbridge Solutions (acquired by HP), as well as Director of Analytics at United Healthcare. He has an MBA from University of Notre Dame and MS in Computer Science from the National Institute of Technology in Warangal, India. He is a PMP certified project management professional.

Gregory Lampshire is a Partner and Founder of Ajilitee. Previously, Gregory led and grew HP’s Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Practices, and previously, served as Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Practice Leader for Knightsbridge Solutions (acquired by HP). Gregory also worked at PriceWaterhouseCoopers and Siemens, where he led the BI and Customer Relationship Management national practices. Gregory is known for process and technology expertise to solve complex business problems, leading to higher revenues and profit margins for the companies he works for and advises. He also has demonstrated thought leadership in business strategy, strategic marketing, customer management and management analytics. Gregory has presented on predictive analytics at industry conferences and has helped employers and clients earn prestigious industry awards.

Tina McCoppin is a Partner and Founder of Ajilitee. Tina has served as Engagement & Project Manager for Fortune 1000 companies throughout her tenure at leading IT services companies including HP, Knightsbridge, Forte, Seer, Pansophic and Accenture. With 25+ years of information technology integration experience, Tina has managed multiple delivery teams with 100+ members, coordinating and managing the efforts of client staff and consultants in locations both onshore and offshore. Tina’s business intelligence and data integration expertise includes: global “single customer view;” customer call center tracking; householding; campaign tracking and feedback; insurance cross-sell and up-sell data warehouse; data governance and stewardship framework. Tina also has led strategic analyses at multiple clients to define an enterprise master plan and multi-year roadmap for the implementation of cross-lines of business KPIs and requirements.

Jim Van de Water is a Manager at Ajilitee and PMP. Jim has 14 years of IT services accomplishments and a demonstrated expertise in business intelligence, data warehousing, application development, scalable delivery, and project leadership. Previously, Jim served as Senior Principal and Customer Program Manager at HP within the Business Intelligence Solutions Practice, where in 2009 he was nominated as one of Practice’s “Most Valuable People.” Prior to that, Jim served as a Senior Principal at Knightsbridge Solutions, a leading business intelligence consultancy that HP acquired in 2006, where he managed offshore and onshore business intelligence and data warehousing projects.
Main Contact
1701 Golf Road
Tower One, Suite 1100
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
Phone: 224.265.4570
Fax: 224.265.0401
www.ajilitee.com

Sales
Michael Pooley
Business Development Manager
Office: 402.932.1490
Mobile: 480.280.1222
Email: mpooley@ajilitee.com