

# Alameda Alliance Wellness Measure Tip Sheet



## Medication Adherence (MA)

This tip sheet is part of the *Alliance Medicare Stars Guide: A Resource for Providers and Clinic Staff*. This tip sheet provides measure-specific guidance and strategies to help clinical teams improve performance on Part D pharmacy measures tied to Medicare Star Ratings.

For questions or more information, please email the Alliance Stars Team at [DeptStarsTeam@alamedaalliance.org](mailto:DeptStarsTeam@alamedaalliance.org).

**Measure Description:** The percentage of plan members who have a medication prescription for diabetes, hypertension, or cholesterol and who fill their prescription often enough to cover 80% or more of the time they are taking the medication.

Medication Adherence has three (3) measures:

- Medication adherence for diabetes medications,
- Medication adherence for hypertension (RAS antagonists), and
- Medication adherence for cholesterol (statins).

**Measure Compliance (numerator):** Members from the eligible population who maintained a proportion of days covered (PDC) of  $\geq 80\%$  to their prescribed medications within the therapeutic class during the measurement year.

**Measure Population (denominator):** Medicare Part D beneficiaries, 18 years of age and older with at least two (2) medication fills for diabetes, hypertension, or cholesterol, on unique dates of service during the measurement year.

**Exclusions:** The following members are excluded from the denominator if at any time during the measurement period:

- In hospice
- ESRD diagnosis or dialysis coverage dates
- One (1) or more prescriptions for insulin (for diabetes measure only)
- One (1) or more prescriptions for sacubitril/valsartan (for hypertension measure only)

## Overview of the Three (3) Adherence Measures

Measure	Description	Importance	Medication Class Included
<b>Medication Adherence for Diabetes Medications</b>	Evaluates the percentage of Medicare members who filled prescriptions for diabetes medications (e.g., metformin, SGLT2 inhibitors, etc.) and maintained at least 80% (measured by PDC) adherence during the measurement year.	Consistent use of diabetes medications is associated with improved glycemic control and a lower risk of complications.	Biguanides, sulfonylureas, thiazolidinediones, dipeptidyl peptidase (DPP)- 4 Inhibitors, GIP/GLP-1 receptor agonists, meglitinides, and sodium glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors.
<b>Medication Adherence for Hypertension (RAS Antagonists)</b>	Assesses the percentage of members taking medication in the renin-angiotensin system (RAS) antagonist class (e.g., ACE inhibitors, ARBs) who maintained a PDC of $\geq 80\%$ during the measurement year	Adherence to antihypertensives helps reduce the risk of stroke, heart attack, and kidney disease in patients with high blood pressure.	Angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor (ACEI), angiotensin receptor blocker (ARB), or direct renin inhibitor medications.
<b>Medication Adherence for Cholesterol (Statins)</b>	Measure the percentage of members prescribed statins who achieved $\geq 80\%$ PDC during the measurement year.	Statins are essential in managing cardiovascular risk, particularly in patients with diabetes or atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease.	Statins

### What is Proportion of Days Covered (PDC)?

PDC is the percentage of days a member had their medication available over the course of a year. A PDC of 80% or greater is considered adherent.

#### PDC accounts for:

- Overlapping fills
- Switching between drugs in the same therapeutic class
- Total days supplied (PDC is a day-level adherence measure – not just a count of how many times a member filled their medication)

## How to Improve Your Stars Performance

- Prescribe 90-day supplies whenever clinically appropriate to reduce refill gaps.
- Align refill dates for patients on multiple chronic medications.
- Encourage mail-order pharmacy for reliable, timely delivery.
- Simplify regimens (e.g., once-daily dosing) to reduce complexity.
- Assess barriers at each visit (cost, side effects, transportation, forgetfulness).
- Pill boxes or blister/bubble packs for easier organization.
- Pharmacy or mobile reminder alerts for timely doses.
- Use automatic refill programs to prevent missed fills.
- Review and address side effects promptly.
- Screen for and address Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) barriers.