RESULTS

The number of patients in the OPERA sample for each performance year ranged from a low of 23,008 for NQF #2079 to a high of 96,248 for NQF #2079 in 2016. Median age in the OPERA sample across all performance years and measures was 47-48 years with 10-15% of patients 65 years or older. Non-Hispanic and Hispanic patients were described as of January 1st of each performance year, whereas otherwise noted. Ethical review of patient characteristics can be found in the Detailed Methods. The raw data are available from the OPERA data stewards via an agreement to use for research purposes only.

Seven of the nine NQF measures are based on data collected across a single six-month period, whereas two measures required a full calendar year of data, and one measure required a 24-month performance period. For measure 2079 where a 24-month performance period was required, the year shown was the last six months of that year.

Within the OPERA database, 75,324 patients were seen at least once between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2016. There were 75,579 patients with HIV in the OPERA database through outpatient visits for patients living with HIV who were seen at least once between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2016, representing approximately 8% of the HIV patients diagnosed and linked to care in the U.S.

Four NQF Endorsed Quality Measures

- NQF measures (Table 1) were calculated for performance years 2014, 2015, and 2016. For measure 2079 where a 24-month performance period was required, the year shown was the period in which the last 12 months were measured.
- Patients also met both 2078 and 2080 in the same year were considered “Engaged” in care. Patients who met both measures were included in the analysis of measure 2079.

Table 1. NQF Quality Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure # and Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2079 ART prescription ratios</td>
<td>Percentage of HIV patients with ≥1 medical visit in each 6-month period of the 24-month measurement period. A 24-month performance period is required, unless otherwise noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2080 No Gap in HIV Visits</td>
<td>Percentage of HIV patients with a visit in the first six months, who had a visit in the last six months. No gap in visits within six months is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2081 HIV Viral Load Suppression</td>
<td>Percentage of patients with a viral load less than 200 copies/mL at the last HIV viral load test during the measurement year. The original NQF measure has been inverted in this analysis (no gap vs a gap).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2083 Prescription of ART</td>
<td>Percentage of HIV patients with at least one prescription for antiretroviral therapy at any point during the measurement year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

Keeping younger people engaged in care is of particular concern. While 70% of those aged 18-34 met the NQF measure for ART prescription, this rate declined as age increased, with only 33% of those aged 65-74 attaining the measure. These trends were observed across both the Southern US and another third received care in the West.

Keeping younger people engaged in care seems to be of particular concern, especially among patients aged 30-49 years of age. While the percentage of patients with ≥1 ART prescription rose above the 80% threshold in 2016, only 65% were still suppressed. Only half of these patients could be linked to care even six months while a quarter had a gap in their visit schedule. Future work should more formally assess the relationship between engagement and viral suppression in younger, ART-prescribed patients.

- Keeping younger people engaged in care was a key concern of the Doris Project Study.
  - The Doris Project Study selected from the Observational Pharmaco-Epidemiology Research and Study Population in Infectious disease.

Conclusion

In an evaluation of four NQF endorsed measures of quality care, there is greater engagement in care observed in younger populations. Keeping younger people engaged in care was a key concern of the Doris Project Study.

- Keeping younger people engaged in care was a key concern of the Doris Project Study.
  - The Doris Project Study selected from the Observational Pharmaco-Epidemiology Research and Study Population in Infectious disease.

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