



IMPROVING HEALTH CARE QUALITY

Disease-Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drug Therapy for Rheumatoid Arthritis

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) collects quality data from our providers to measure and improve the quality of care our members receive. Disease-modifying Anti-rheumatic Drug Therapy for Rheumatoid Arthritis (ART) is one aspect of care we measure in our quality programs. Quality measures evaluate a prior calendar year performance.

What We Measure

We capture the percentage of members ages 18 or older who were diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and were dispensed at least one ambulatory prescription for a disease-modifying, anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD) during the measurement year.

ART is a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measure. See the [National Committee for Quality Assurance \(NCQA\) website](#) for more details.

Why It Matters

RA is a chronic, progressive inflammatory disease in which the immune system attacks healthy joints. It causes inflammation and destruction of joints and can also damage organs. **Early intervention** with DMARDs can help **preserve function** and **prevent further damage to joints**. Learn more from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).



Eligible Population

Members ages 18 and older during the measurement year with a diagnosis of RA are included in this measure.

Exclusions: Members are excluded from the measure who meet any of the following criteria:

- Had a diagnosis of HIV anytime before or during the measurement year
- Had a diagnosis of pregnancy during the measurement year
- Received hospice care during the measurement year

Tips to Consider

- Review charts before office visits to develop plans for managing members' condition and medications.
- Educate members on DMARD benefits, including how it can improve functional status.
- Work with nurses and pharmacists to engage members in care.

How to Document

Document the prescribing of a DMARD in the measurement year. Include the member's name, prescription name and date dispensed. Documentation can include a photograph of the prescription bottle, a pharmacy label or a medication administration record from an infusion suite.

For more information, see [NCQA's HEDIS Measures and Technical Resources](#).



Questions?

Contact your BCBSTX Network Representative.



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