

EXHIBIT A

RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITAL QUALITY REPORTING PROGRAM (0938-1454) CY 2026 OPPS/ASC FINAL RULE CHANGE CROSSWALK

REGULATIONS	CHANGES TO REGULATIONS/GUIDANCE	EXPLANATION
-------------	---------------------------------	-------------

§419.95 Requirements under the Rural Emergency Hospital Quality Reporting (REHQR) Program.

(g) Exception. CMS may grant an exception to one or more data submission deadlines and requirements in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the hospital, such as when an act of nature affects an entire region or locale or a systemic problem with one of CMS' data collection systems directly or indirectly affects data submission. CMS may grant an exception as follows:

- (1) Upon request by the REH. Specific requirements for submission of a request for an exception are available on a CMS website.
- (2) At the discretion of CMS. CMS may grant exceptions to REHs that have not requested them when CMS determines that an extraordinary circumstance has occurred.

§419.95 Requirements under the Rural Emergency Hospital Quality Reporting (REHQR) Program.

(g) Extraordinary circumstance exception (ECE).

- (1) General rule. CMS may grant an ECE with respect to the reporting requirements under this section in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the REH. For purposes of this paragraph (g), an extraordinary circumstance is an event beyond the control of an REH (for example, a natural or man-made disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, terrorist attack, or bombing) that affected the ability of the REH to comply with one or more applicable reporting requirements with respect to a calendar year.
- (2) Process for requesting an ECE.
 - (i) An REH may request an ECE within 60 calendar days of the date that the extraordinary circumstance occurred by submitting the information specified by CMS at QualityNet or a successor website.
 - (ii) CMS notifies the REH of its decision on the request, in writing, via email. In the event that CMS grants an ECE to the REH, the written decision specifies whether the REH is exempted from one or more reporting requirements or whether CMS has granted the REH an extension of time to comply with one or more reporting requirements.
- (3) Authority to Grant an ECE. CMS may grant an ECE to one or more REHs that have not requested an ECE if CMS determines that—
 - (i) A systemic problem with a CMS data collection system directly impacted the ability of the REH to comply with a quality data reporting requirement; or
 - (ii) An extraordinary circumstance has affected an entire region or locale. Any ECE granted under this paragraph (g)(3) specifies whether the affected REHs are exempted from one or more reporting requirements or whether CMS has granted the REHs an extension of time to comply with one or more reporting requirements.

Updated the extraordinary circumstance exception policy to clarify that CMS has the discretion to grant an extension as a form of ECE relief (in addition to exceptions).

None.

§ 419.95 Requirements under the Rural Emergency Hospital Quality Reporting (REHQR) Program.

(h) Requirements for submission of electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs) under the REHQR Program.

When reporting eCQMs under the REHQR Program, REHs must adhere to the following requirements:

(1) REHs must utilize technology certified to the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology's (ONC's) health information technology (IT) certification criteria, as adopted and updated in 45 CFR 170.315, for reporting eCQMs under the REHQR Program.

(2) REHs must use health IT certified to all eCQMs that are available to report under the REHQR Program.

(3) REHs must use the most recent version of the eCQM electronic measure specifications for the applicable reporting period available on the Electronic Clinical Quality Improvement Resource Center website at <https://ecqi.healthit.gov/>, or another website as designated by CMS.

(4) The requirements set forth in paragraphs (h)(1) through (3) of this section apply only where an REH opts to report an eCQM.

Added due to proposed introduction of eCQMs to the REHQR program.