

Reference #: 2024-115-IP  
From: Inpatient and Outpatient Healthcare Quality Systems Development and Program Support Contractor  
Sent: August 16, 2024  
To: IQR, VBP, and PR ListServe Recipient List  
Subject: Blood Culture Media Bottles Disruptions in Availability

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is aware of disruptions in availability of BD BACTEC™ blood culture media bottles, which may impact clinical practices for health care providers and laboratories.

To maintain quality and safety of patient care, CMS encourages affected entities to review the [FDA recommendations](#) for prioritization and conservation strategies regarding the use of blood culture media bottles. We recognize that some providers may be concerned about the sensitivity of outcomes performance measurement based on the potential for fewer blood culture draws, using lower volumes of blood for testing, and other actions necessary for the conservation of supplies. We are also aware that some providers may be concerned about their ability to perform optimally on certain quality measures such as the Severe Sepsis and Septic Shock measure, and healthcare-associated infection measures, potentially affecting CMS Hospital Star Ratings and CMS' value-based programs.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), including CMS, CDC, and FDA, are monitoring this supply situation. CMS is committed to carefully analyzing the quality measure data as they become available to assess for potential reliability or validity issues or other data discrepancies. CDC will also continue to monitor data through the National Healthcare Safety Network. Based on this ongoing data analysis and with appreciation for the conservation strategies which may be in use, CMS will consider whether there is a need for future action with respect to the use of certain quality measures in the value-based programs for the relevant performance period(s). CMS will continue to coordinate with partner agencies and the hospital industry to monitor the disruption. HHS is exploring additional opportunities to better understand which providers are affected by this disruption and to what extent they are impacted, which will also inform future actions.

In addition to the FDA recommendations, the CDC issued a [Health Alert Network Health Advisory](#) with additional resources to mitigate the potential impact on patient care.