

2021 Catalyst for Payment Reform **Health Plan User Group (HPUG) User Guide and Toolkit**

TOOLS & SUPPORT

**March 2021**

A User Guide and Toolkit to Help Host Organizations Partner with Purchasers and Health Plans to Drive Value-Oriented Payment and Other High-Value Strategies



With support from:

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# Introduction from CPR’s Executive Director

Dear Colleagues:

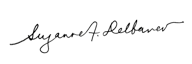
Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR) is an independent non-profit organization, working to catalyze employers, public purchasers, and others to implement strategies that produce higher value health care and improve the functioning of the health care marketplace. Since 2012, CPR’s Health Plan User Groups (HPUGs) have brought together health plan representatives, CPR members and others to provide a forum for a two-way dialogue on topics of mutual interest with CPR as moderator. Historically, topics have included the expansion of health care payment reform, new benefit and network design strategies, price and quality transparency, and other emerging strategies. The HPUGs allow purchasers to align and express their expectations and offer the health plans an efficient means to deliver information to CPR members and regional coalition partners. CPR purchasers have successfully used this model, working with the nation’s largest health plans, to achieve real progress on payment reform and other strategies.

CPR is giving others the opportunity to replicate this successful approach by providing this Toolkit to those interested in hosting their own health plan user groups for health care purchasers and other stakeholders. We hope these host organizations will find this Toolkit helpful in working with health plans to catalyze effective payment reform and other high-value health care strategies.

If you are going to use this Toolkit, we ask that you review the end user agreement at the beginning.

If you have questions, feedback, or want to learn more about how to use this Toolkit, contact us at [connect@catalyze.org](mailto:connect@catalyze.org) to schedule an orientation.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Delbanco, PhD

Executive Director

Catalyst for Payment Reform

# Introduction to the HPUG Toolkit Contents

The HPUG Toolkit provides host organizations with the information they need to convene and manage the User Group process. All documents are in Microsoft Word and can be easily customized. The following pages contain:

* HPUG Toolkit End User Agreement
* Steps Required to Launch HPUG
* HPUG Preparation Timeline
* HPUG Purchaser Invitation Template
* HPUG Purchaser Presentation Template
* HPUG Plan Invitation Template
* HPUG Plan Presentation Template
* HPUG Purchaser Preparation Meeting Agenda Template
* Inaugural HPUG Meeting Presentation and Discussion Guide
* HPUG Meeting Agenda Templates
* 2021 CPR HPUG Progress Report
* Introduction to the HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide
* HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide Template

The **HPUG Toolkit End User Agreement** stipulates you are licensed to use the tools contained herein pursuant to certain terms and conditions.

The **Steps Required to Launch HPUG** outlines the User Group process and provides instructions on how to use the Toolkit. It also addresses the expectations of host organizations, purchasers, and plans who choose to participate.

The **HPUG Preparation Timeline** provides a template for the User Group planning process. The timeline provides a suggested schedule for sending invitations and reminders along with other key steps to prepare for ongoing User Group meetings.

The **HPUG** **Purchaser Invitation Template** can be used to invite purchasers to participate in the User Group meetings. Purchaser participation is critical to the process. The User Group meetings are most valuable when a significant number of the health plan’s customers and prospective customers attend and actively contribute. Adequate participation generates a collective voice asking for progress and change.

The **HPUG Purchaser Presentation Template** is a PowerPoint template that you can leverage to educate purchasers about the User Group and its goals, and secure purchaser interest in participation.

The **HPUG** **Plan Invitation Template** can be used to invite relevant health plans to participate in the User Group meetings. The template introduces the User Group process and outlines the specific commitments required, initiating communication with each health plan, and helping them determine which staff to assign to the User Group.

The **HPUG Plan Presentation Template** is a PowerPoint template that you can leverage to educate plans about your organization, the User Group format, its intended goals, and to secure plan participation.

The **HPUG Purchaser Preparation Meeting Agenda Template** provides an outline for a preparation meeting with purchasers in advance of the inaugural User Group.

The **Inaugural HPUG Meeting Presentation and Discussion Guide** outlines the topics that each health plan should cover in their presentation for the inaugural User Group meetings. The questions outlined in the guide help health plans prepare for meeting and create a framework for robust discussion. Plans should prepare a discussion document or presentation to respond to the issues outlined in the Guide in the first meeting with purchasers.

The **Inaugural HPUG Meeting Agenda Template** can be used to organize the inaugural User Group meeting.

The **HPUG Meeting Agenda Template** can be used to organize all subsequent User Group meetings. The agenda is structured around the Progress Report and special topics.

The **HPUG Progress Report** contains a defined set of metrics covering CPR’s priority areas: reducing plan-provider contract terms prohibiting transparency or steerage, guiding patients to high-value care, condition-specific care, and payment (e.g., maternity care and behavioral health care), and value-oriented payment. Aetna, Anthem, Blue Shield of California, Cigna, Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC) and UnitedHealthcare have reported on the Progress Report metrics as part of CPR’s User Group process. The Progress Report should be used in its entirety. Any customization should be limited to adding supplemental metrics only. If you are hosting multiple User Groups, CPR suggests using one consistent Progress Report for comparison across plans.

The **Introduction to the HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide** provides examples of special topics the host organization may want to choose for future User Group meetings. After the inaugural meeting, the host organization may ask health plans to report on a topic of interest to purchasers that is not significantly addressed in the Progress Report. This gives purchasers the chance to learn in depth about other initiatives and innovations.

The **HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide Template** provides a template of questions to ask the plan to address during their special topic presentation.

# HPUG Toolkit End User Agreement

The *HPUG Toolkit: End User Agreement* stipulates CPR is the author and owner of the HPUG Toolkit, among other provisions. By using the Toolkit, you are entering into an agreement and are licensed to use the tools contained herein pursuant to terms and conditions specified in the End User Agreement.



# Steps Required to Launch HPUG

The HPUG Toolkit provides the host organization with the timeline and tools necessary to convene and manage the User Group process.

**Step 1:** **Organize the customers**. The first step in convening a User Group is to gather an audience of purchasers. Having a minimum of 5-7 purchasers for a given plan is necessary to make the User Group process worthwhile. You can customize the [HPUG Purchaser Invitation Template](#HPUGPurchaserInvite) to invite purchasers to participate in your User Group. As you engage in discussions with purchaser prospects, you will want to use the HPUG Purchaser Presentation Templateto educate purchasers about the initiative.

**Step 2:** **Secure health plan participation**. Once you have secured a purchaser audience, the next step is to secure plan participation. You can customize the HPUG Plan Invitation Template to invite health plans. In the invitation, it is critical to mention the major purchasers participating in the User Group. You can use the invitation to set up an initial meeting with the plan representative(s) to go over the User Group process and prepare for the initial User Group meeting. For this initial meeting, you will want to use the [HPUG Plan Presentation Template](#HPUGPlanPresentationTemplate) to educate plans about the initiative.

**Step 3:** **Hold Initial meeting with plan.** Once a plan is willing to participate in the User Group, you should schedule an initial preparatory meeting to orient the plan to the User Group process and the [2021 CPR HPUG Progress Report](#CPRHPUGPrgsRpt). The first User Group meeting is when the plan will describe its activities in the major areas of the Progress Report and establish a baseline against which progress can be measured in subsequent meetings. During the meeting, it is important to provide the plan with a list of [definitions](https://www.catalyze.org/payment-reform-definitions/) for the terms in the Progress Report. A Inaugural HPUG Meeting Presentation and Discussion Guide is available to help plans prepare for the initial discussion.

**Step 4:** **Set User Group schedule**. You should set a schedule for the User Groups upon the initial commitment of the health plan. You should place the schedule on all participants’ calendars as soon as possible and manage the meeting invitations and calendar appointments, as necessary. For ease of communication, you should set up each meeting on a webinar platform to allow the host and plans to present material to the User Group. The [HPUG Preparation Timeline](#HPUGPreparationTimeline) will tell you when to send meeting invitations to secure participation.

**Step 5: Prepare purchasers**. Prior to the inaugural User Group meeting, it will be helpful to organize a preparation meeting to orient purchasers to the definitions and discussion guide that the plans will be using to shape their inaugural presentations. Reviewing the topics with purchasers in advance will help them develop questions for the health plan and goals regarding the health plan’s progress. If there are any areas of concern you would like purchasers to voice with the plan, the preparation meeting is an ideal platform to inform purchasers of these topics. See [HPUG Purchaser Preparation Meeting Agenda Template](#HPUGPrepCallAgendaPurchasers) to help guide your meeting.

**Step 6: Obtain meeting materials from plan and share agenda**. You should request that the plan provide its presentation and any other supporting materials one week prior to the meeting date. You should review the materials to ensure they adequately support the User Group discussion. In addition, share the meeting agenda with all prospective purchaser and plan attendees. You can use the [Inaugural HPUG Meeting Agenda Template](#InauguralHPUGCallAgenda).

**Step 7: Host inaugural User Group meeting**. The first User Group meeting will allow the plan to present its current efforts in the areas identified in the [Inaugural HPUG Meeting Presentation and Discussion Guide](#HPUGFirstMtgGuide)*.* You will facilitate this meeting, manage the participants and webinar, and ensure that there is adequate time for questions and discussion.

**Step 9: Prepare plan for next meeting.** After the baseline meeting, each User Group discussion will revisit the plan’s status on the metrics in the Progress Report. Two months prior to each User Group meeting, you should contact your plan representative with the results from the previous period’s Progress Report and request that they update the metrics for the current period and return the Progress Report to you at least one week prior to the next User Group meeting. Additionally, you and your participants may choose special topics for each subsequent meeting. These topics usually address additional health care reforms that are not stated in the Progress Report. Health plans will receive these topics either immediately after the previous User Group meeting or at the beginning of the year. Presentations on Special Topics will supplement the Progress Report, offering purchasers new detailed information about other health care reform efforts beyond the topics in the Progress Report. You will see example special topics and discussion questions in the [Introduction to the HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide](#IntroHPUGDiscussionGuide) and [HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide Template](#HPUGDiscussionGuideTemplate).

**Step 10: Prepare Purchasers for next meeting and share agenda.** Adequate purchaser participation is critical for each meeting. By updating the calendar appointment with an agenda for the meeting three days prior, you can remind purchasers about the upcoming User Group meeting (see [Subsequent HPUG Meeting Agenda Template](#SubsequentHPUGCallAgenda)).

**Step 11: Conduct next User Group meeting.** The host will again facilitate the next meeting and focus, initially, on the Progress Report. The plans will report on each metric allowing for purchaser questions and discussion. Subsequently, the plans will report on the Special Topic chosen for that particular User Group meeting. You should ensure sufficient time for questions and discussion.

**Step 12: Repeat steps 9-11.** Once the host organization onboards plans, meetings usually occur 2-4 times per year.

# HPUG Preparation Timeline

Use the following timeline **to prepare for and execute** **your first User Group meeting**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Schedule** | **Activity** |
| **Q1** | **January:** Secure interest from a group of purchasers  **February:** Send CPR a request for the current Progress Report and Discussion Guide (usually updated by January) |
| **Q2** | **March:** Identify health plans of interest  **April:** Orient plans to HPUG format  **April:** Provide Progress Report and Discussion Guide to health plans  **May:** Secure health plan participation |
| **Q3** | **June:** Schedule initial HPUG meeting  **July:** Schedule and hold check-in meeting to offer updates and answer questions before meeting  **August:** Share agenda with purchaser participants  **August:** Review health plan materials and pre-empt questions  **September:** Host inaugural HPUG meeting |
| **Q4** | **October:** Debrief with purchasers, as applicable  **October:** Debrief with health plans, as applicable  **November-December:** Prepare for next year’s HPUG meetings |

Use the following timeline **to maintain the User Group process throughout the year**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Schedule** | **Activity** |
| **Beginning of the year** | Establish Special Topics for each User Group meeting and send to health plans for advanced notice |
| **4 weeks prior to next HPUG** | If there are any prospective purchaser participants, invite them to join the User Group |
| **2 weeks prior** | Check in with plan on status of Progress Report and Special Topic |
| **1 week prior** | * Update electronic calendar appointments with agenda and completed Progress Report * Hold preparation meeting with purchasers as needed |
| **2 days prior** | Send reminder emails stating the meeting takes place in two days |
| **1 day prior** | If there is a delay in plan submission of the Progress Report and Special Topic, update calendar appointment with attachments |
| **Day of HPUG** | Hold User Group |

# HPUG Purchaser Invitation Template

Dear [Purchaser],

I am writing to inform you about an opportunity to join forces with our organization and others to collaborate with [plan name(s)] to drive health care payment reform and other high-value health care strategies. As you know, health care costs continue to rise. Changing how we pay for health care is critical to driving both better quality and containing costs.

[Insert information about host]. We are excited to share that [host] will be launching a Health Plan User Group with [plan name(s)] in [year] and we hope you will participate.

The [plan name(s)] user group(s) will be built on a successful model that Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR) has used with Aetna, Anthem, Blue Shield of California, Cigna, Health Care Service Corporation, and UnitedHealthcare. Under this model, CPR and its leading large health care purchaser members meet regularly with plan leaders to chart progress on payment reform and other high-value strategies using CPR’s Health Plan User Group Progress Report (attached). The Progress Report mirrors CPR’s agenda by measuring advancement in the areas of reducing plan-provider contract terms prohibiting transparency or steerage, guiding patients to high-value care, condition-specific care, and payment (e.g., maternity care and behavioral health care), and value-oriented payment. Special Topics on high-value health care strategies will be chosen by [host] for each meeting, as well.

Purchaser participation is critical to the success of this User Group. There is strength in numbers and your participation, combined with others’, will build the business case [plan name(s)] need(s) to focus on the strategies that matter most to us. If you would like to participate or want more detailed information, please email [contact name and email address].

I am hopeful we can join forces to work with [plan name(s)] to get better value for our health care dollars.

Sincerely,

[Host]

# HPUG Purchaser Presentation Template

Purchasers that you invite to participate in the User Group may have questions before committing to participate or will want to offer their perspectives in structuring the User Group. The HPUG Purchaser Presentation Template can help you discuss the strategy and tactics with prospective purchasers, including educating them about your organization and its goals, introducing the HPUG concept, communicating the importance of plan and purchaser engagement, walking through the HPUG Progress Report and Special Topics Discussion Guide, and reviewing the timeline for when the HPUG will launch.

During this meeting, you should be able to answer most of the purchaser’s questions and consider their feedback as you finalize the HPUG structure. Below is the HPUG Purchaser Presentation Template to guide this important discussion.



# HPUG Plan Invitation Template

Dear [plan],

The employers and other health care purchasers with [host] would like to launch a Health Plan User Group with [plan]. The User Group would focus on how [plan] and its customers can work together to make progress on payment reform and other high-value strategies. [Purchaser companies] are keenly interested in working with you in this endeavor.

The Health Plan User Group, modeled on a process designed and used by Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR), would center around a set of standardized and strategic metrics (outlined in the attached Progress Report template) to help purchasers track [plan]’s progress on pursuing high-value health care strategies that improve the functioning of the health care marketplace. These include initiatives in reducing plan-provider contract terms prohibiting transparency or steerage, guiding patients to high-value care, condition-specific care, and payment (e.g., maternity care and behavioral health care), and value-oriented payment. Additional Special Topics on high-value health care strategies will be chosen by [host] for each meeting, as well.

Catalyst for Payment Reform currently hosts User Groups with Aetna, Anthem, Blue Shield of California, Health Care Service Corporation, and UnitedHealthcare. Since 2012, plans have appointed a staff member to lead the process and bring subject matter experts to participate as appropriate. The process has been so successful that CPR has shared it with us and we are eager to replicate it with [plan].

Assuming you are willing to collaborate with us in [year], we will assemble at least [#] of your customers to make these discussions worth your while. If you have any suggestions for which customers would be most interested in participating, please let us know.

Please inform us when it would be convenient to schedule a meeting with our staff to discuss this in more detail. In the meantime, please email [contact and email address] if you would like additional information. Our goal is to host the first [plan] User Group discussion in [month, year].

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to your participation.

Sincerely,

[Host]

# HPUG Plan Presentation Template

You have secured many of the purchasers necessary to launch the User Group and with their support, have the momentum necessary to engage the plan(s). Like the purchasers, the plans may have questions before committing to participate. The HPUG Plan Presentation Template can help you discuss the strategy and tactics with prospective plans and contains similar contents to the HPUG Purchaser Presentation Template but adjusted to adequately deliver the message to the plans. You will want to educate the plans about your organization and its goals, introduce the HPUG concept, communicate the importance of plan and purchaser engagement, walk through the HPUG Progress Report and Special Topics Discussion Guide, and review the timeline for the HPUG launch.

During this meeting, you should be able to answer most of the plan’s questions and consider their feedback as you finalize the HPUG structure. For example, the plan(s) may have concerns about who has access to the information they present, their ability to adequately address all topics, who to include in the upcoming meetings, and have logistical questions about the upcoming meeting, e.g., will the presentation be on video, will the meeting be recorded, etc. Below is the HPUG Plan Presentation Template for your use as part of this important discussion.



# HPUG Purchaser Preparation Meeting Agenda Template

Use this Template for your ***first*** preparation meeting with purchasers.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Agenda – Health Plan User Group (HPUG) Preparation Meeting | | |
| Objective | To prepare for the first HPUG meeting with [plan] scheduled for [date, year] at [time]. The preparation discussion will cover the overarching goals and anticipated structure of the meetings, and the agenda of the first meeting. | |
| Meeting Date |  | |
| Time |  | |
| Dial-in Number |  | |
| Webinar Address |  | |
| Passcode(s) |  | |
| Convener |  | |
| Time (Est.) | **Agenda Items** | **Discussion Leader** |
| 10 min | Introductions and Purpose of Meeting |  |
| 10 min | Outline Meetings for [year]   * Overarching goals * Anticipated structure |  |
| 40 min | Walk through Health Plan Presentation and Discussion Guide   * Key elements * Baseline discussion * Questions/discussion |  |
| The next HPUG Meeting with [plan] is scheduled for [month, day, year] at [time]. | | |

# Inaugural HPUG Meeting Presentation and Discussion Guide

To guide the discussion of the first Health Plan User Group meeting between purchasers and [plan, host] has prepared a list of questions. Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR), an independent, nonprofit corporation working to catalyze employers, public purchasers, and others to implement strategies that produce higher-value care and improve the functioning of the health care marketplace, developed and vetted these questions with three of the largest national health plans (Aetna, Anthem, and UnitedHealthcare) and two regional health plans (Blue Shield of California and Health Care Service Corporation). The questions are intended to help health plans prepare for the meeting and create a framework for a valuable and robust discussion.

[Host] will use [plan]’s responses to these questions to establish the baseline for the 2021 CPR HPUG Progress Report. The Progress Report will provide the structure for our ongoing conversations during subsequent User Group meetings. The Progress Report contains a standardized and strategic set of metrics to help assess [plan]’s progression toward value-oriented payment and other high-value strategies.

Please prepare a presentation based on the questions below and any other information you would like to discuss at the inaugural Health Plan User Group meeting. Please return this information to [contact and email address] no later than [date, year].

|  |
| --- |
| **Section A: Hospital & Health System Anti-Transparency, Anti-Tiering, & Anti-Steering** |

Certain health systems command enough market power to limit or prohibit health plans from publishing price or quality information to purchasers/consumers and/or negotiate anti-tiering and anti-steering contractual provisions with health plans.

* Does [plan] have contracts in place with health systems or hospitals that limit or prohibit publishing price or quality information?
* Does [plan] have contracts in place with health systems or hospitals that require those providers being placed in-network in narrow network plans or in the top tier in tiered network plans regardless of whether they meet health plan's criteria for such placement?
* If [plan] responds ‘Yes’ to either of the above questions, complete Section A of the Progress Report.

|  |
| --- |
| **Section B: Guiding Patients to High-Value Care** |

Price and quality of care varies significantly among providers. Most health plans have developed Centers of Excellence to guide members to higher-value specialty care, and use transparency, education, and benefit tiering as tools to direct members to these designated providers.

* Does [plan] designate Centers of Excellence?
* If so, for which specialties does [plan] designate COEs?
* If [plan] designates COEs, complete Section B of the Progress Report.

|  |
| --- |
| **Section C: Condition-Specific Care** |

Maternal health in the U.S., and specifically maternal mortality, is worse than other developed countries (and some developing countries).

Additionally, the shortage of mental health providers and long wait times to see a provider are challenges for patients seeking care. The opioid epidemic poses an additional serious challenge for purchasers and plan members.

* Describe any [plan] maternity programs that include incentives to adhere to clinical guidelines that would reduce unnecessary elective medical intervention.
* Describe any [plan] efforts to increase access to mental health providers.
* Describe any [plan] efforts to increase network providers who have a waiver to prescribe medication assisted treatment (MAT).
* Complete Section C of the Progress Report.

|  |
| --- |
| **Section D: Value-Oriented Payment** |

CPR has been tracking the shift toward value-oriented payment since we launched the health plan user groups in 2012.

* Describe [plan]’s efforts to shift from legacy fee-for-service payment to value-oriented payment models.
* Complete Section D of the Progress Report. *Note: If payment reform programs offer multiple payment arrangements, list the payment reform program in the most dominant payment category. Here are CPR’s* [*definitions*](https://www.catalyze.org/payment-reform-definitions/) *of various payment terms.*

|  |
| --- |
| **Section E: Other Initiatives (Voluntary)** |

* Does [plan] have a plan-specific goal or program they would like to feature during the Health Plan User Groups? If yes, please describe the program and suggest specific progress tracking metrics.

# Inaugural HPUG Meeting Agenda Template

Use this Template for your ***first*** User Group meeting.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Agenda – Health Plan User Group (HPUG) Inaugural Meeting | | |
| Objective | To provide a regular forum for purchasers and the plans with whom they work to discuss progress on payment reform and other high-value health care strategies and to track progress. | |
| Date |  | |
| Time |  | |
| Dial-in-Number |  | |
| Webinar Address |  | |
| Passcode(s) |  | |
| Convener |  | |
| Time (Est.) | **Agenda Items** | **Discussion Leader** |
| 15 min | Introductions   * Introduction to HPUGs * Upcoming HPUG meetings |  |
| 60 min | Walk through [plan] Presentation and Discussion Guide |  |
| 15 min | Questions/Discussion |  |
| The next HPUG meeting with [plan] is scheduled for [month, day, year] at [time]. | | |

# Subsequent HPUG Meeting Agenda Template

Use this Template for all ***subsequent*** User Group meetings.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Agenda – Health Plan User Group (HPUG) Meeting | | |
| Objective | To provide a regular forum for purchasers and **[plan]** to discuss payment reform and other high-value strategies and to track progress. | |
| Date |  | |
| Time |  | |
| Dial-in-Number |  | |
| Webinar Address |  | |
| Passcode(s) |  | |
| Convener |  | |
| Time (Est.) | **Agenda Items** | **Discussion Leader** |
| 10 min | Introductions and Purpose of the User Group Meetings |  |
| 5 min | Review of Meeting Schedule |  |
| 30 min | Walk through [plan] Progress Report   * Questions/discussion |  |
| 45 min | [Plan] presents on Specialty Topic chosen by [host]   * Questions/discussion |  |
| Next HPUG meeting with [plan] scheduled for [month, day, year] at [time]. | | |

# 2021 CPR HPUG Progress Report

The purpose of this Progress Report is to facilitate a robust conversation between purchasers and health plans during Health Plan User Group meetings. The Progress Report puts forth a standardized and strategic set of metrics to help assess a health plan’s progression with payment reform and related efforts and provides a structure for the discussions and ensures that purchaser expectations are both clear and tracked.

As host, you should communicate the following information to the participating plans.

* How frequently you are requesting completion of the Progress Report. CPR requests completion of the Progress Report in 2021.
* The due date for plan submission of the Progress Report. CPR asks plans to submit the completed Progress Report one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
* Whether data should offer a time-to-time comparison. CPR asks plans to submit data for the Current Year, comprising the most recent 12 months of data available vs. Prior Year, comprising 12 months preceding Current Year timeframe.



# Introduction to the HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide

After the inaugural Health Plan User Group meeting, the host can request that the plan address a new and unique Special Topic for ongoing meetings. These topics offer the purchaser audience an opportunity to address specific challenges or provide an additional view of innovations the plan(s) are implementing in health care payment reform and other high-value health care strategies. Special topics are supplemental and do not replace the Progress Report. Special topics can be decided at the beginning of the year or directly after the previous Health Plan User Group meeting.

Below are examples of special topics of interest to CPR and its members. On the next page there is a template Discussion Guide the host organization can provide to plans.

|  |
| --- |
| **Prices, Payment, and Delivery Reform** |

* ACO provider performance
* Implementation of bundled payment
* High and rising provider prices
* Primary care payment models
* Moving providers to risk sharing payment arrangements

|  |
| --- |
| **Benefit and Network Design** |

* ACO products
* Benefit designs that recognize the needs of employees with low wages
* Centers of excellence
* Consumer-directed health plans
* Narrow and tiered network products
* Reference-based pricing
* Value-based insurance design

|  |
| --- |
| **Population Health, Disparities, and Care Improvement** |

* Clinical management models
* Health equity / eliminating health care disparities / social determinants of health
* Maternity payment models and maternity outcomes
* Mental health / behavioral health / substance use disorder
* Musculoskeletal programs
* Specialty pharmacy

|  |
| --- |
| **Participation, Collaboration, and Reporting** |

* Completion of CPR reporting templates, e.g., Standard Plan ACO Report for Customers (SPARC), Reform Evaluation Frameworks (REFs), etc.
* Health plan polices regarding sharing data with customers and customers’ other vendors

# HPUG Special Topics Discussion Guide Template

In preparation for each [year] Health Plan User Group meeting, we hope to have an in-depth discussion about [plan]’s efforts regarding [list Special Topics for year]. Please assemble a document/presentation that will address the questions below. Submit the completed presentation to [contact name and email address] no later than one week prior to the specific Health Plan User Group meeting.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Meeting** | **Date** | **Timing** | **Progress Report** | **Special Topic** |
| 1 | [First Meeting Date] | [x] minutes | Complete responses to new [year] Progress Report. | [First Meeting Special Topic] |
| 2 | [Second Meeting Date] | [x] minutes | Update the Progress Report since last meeting. | [Second Meeting Special Topic] |
|  | [Add other meetings as applicable] |  |  |  |

**[Special Topic 1]:**

[Host’s introduction about why this topic is important to its members]

1. Describe [plan]’s payment strategy or reform regarding [Special Topic]. Report on the components of the program as well as the program’s strategy and goals.
2. Describe the depth and breadth of the program, including:
   1. How many providers are participating?
   2. How many and in which markets is the program available?
   3. What is the percentage of plan members participating in the program?
   4. Is the initiative limited to certain segments of an employer’s population?
3. Describe the payment model(s) you have established for your payment strategy or reform regarding [Special Topic].
4. Has [plan]’s payment strategy or reform regarding [Special Topic] lowered health care expenditures for [plan] customers?
5. Describe any benefit and/or provider network design features that create member incentives or disincentives to support the payment reform program.
6. How is health plan measuring quality? Has [plan]’s payment strategy or reform regarding [Special Topic] improved the quality of care for [plan] customers?
7. Describe the evaluation process of the payment strategy or reform regarding [Special Topic] (e.g., are there benchmarks, what are they, are they reported on, how often are they reported on, how often are they updated, etc.)
8. Has [plan] seen any results with the program? If so, please report.
9. Describe the availability of the payment strategy or reform to interested employers.
10. What is the implementation timeline required to begin the innovation?
11. What type of reporting will be available to employers and on what frequency?

[Customize as needed for each Special Topic.]