PQS

Summary of 2023 Medicare Part C and D Star Ratings Technical Notes

Threshold Update

Summary of 2023 Medicare Part C and D Star Ratings Technical Notes

On October 6th, CMS released the Medicare 2023 Part C & D Star Ratings Technical Notes. This update documents the trends and high-level summary of performance associated with key Part C & D measures.

The 2023 Star Ratings for Medicare Part C & D plans are displayed on the Medicare Plan Finder found at www.medicare.gov. Medicare beneficiaries, starting on October 15th, will be able to view these 2023 Star Ratings when selecting their MAPD or PDP plan for the 2023 benefit year as part of the open enrollment period which will continue through December 7th.

Effective with the November EQUIPP® performance refresh, Pharmacy Quality Solutions (PQS) will display the updated 2023 Star Rating thresholds in EQUIPP® for the 3-, 4-, and 5-Star MAPD thresholds within the Goal Set drop down menu on the Performance Measures Dashboard. However, most plans,

PBMs, and associated programs will continue to maintain customized, programmatic goals which would be detailed in the Quality Improvement Program (QIP) table in addition to any applicable "My Programs" displays.

As partners for improving quality, PQS has provided key highlights from the 2023 Part C & D Star Ratings Technical Notes that impact pharmacy-based quality measures. The complete version of the CMS Technical Notes can be found here.

Note: See Appendix I for the 2023 MAPD and PDP thresholds and Appendix II for average performance trends from 2014-2023.

General Points and Highlights from the Medicare 2023 Part C & D Star Ratings Technical Notes

- Medicare Advantage with prescription drug (Part D) coverage (MAPD) contracts are rated on up to 38 unique quality and performance measures.
    - MA-only contracts (without prescription drug coverage, or Part D) are rated on up to 28 measures.
    - Stand-alone Part D (PDP) contracts are rated on up to 12 measures.
- The recently revised Controlling Blood Pressure (Part C) measure transitioned off the display page and into the 2023 Star Ratings as a new measure. This measure has a weight of 1 for 2023 and will increase to a triple weighted measure for 2024.
- Statin Use in Persons with Diabetes (Part D) measure updates have been implemented which will change this measure from a triple-weighted intermediate outcome measure to a process measure with a weight of 1.
- Guardrails for the 2023 Star Ratings for all measures that have been in Part C and D will restrict upward and downward movement of a measure's cut points for the current year's measure-level Star Ratings compared to the prior year's measure-threshold specific cut points.
- Measure-level adjustments for the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) are only offered for three Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measures derived from the 2021 Health Outcomes Survey (HOS).

Among the most significant performance improvements for MAPD and PDP was with the Statin Use in Persons with Diabetes measure.
- MAPD Plan average score increased by 1.98%.
- PDP Plan average score increased by 1.91%.

- Average overall MAPD Star Ratings decreased to 4.15 stars, down 0.22 stars, which was the largest decline from the previous three years. The average PDP Star Ratings also decreased significantly from 3.70 stars in 2022 to 3.25 in 2023. This is the first decline in average stars for PDP plans in over three years.
- 5-star MAPD health plans for 2023 will decrease significantly to 57 individual contracts compared to 74 contracts in 2022.
- 5-star PDP health plans for 2023 will also decrease from 10 individual plans down to only 2 contracts in 2023.

Focused Updates for Medication-related Part D Measures from the Medicare 2023 Part C & D Stars

Medication Adherence Measures

Average Star Rating

The average MAPD Star Ratings decreased for all three adherence (PDC) measures in 2023

- RASA PDC: 3.4 stars, down from 3.9 stars in 2022
- Statin PDC: 3.1 stars down from 3.6 stars in 2022
- Diabetes PDC: 3.0 stars, down from 3.7 stars in 2022

Key Takeaways

- Diabetes and Cholesterol PDC for MAPD plans decreased on average in 2023, -0.28% and -0.19% respectively.
- RASA PDC for MAPD plans increased 0.16% in 2023 from an average of 87.04% to 87.20%.
- The average PDP Star Ratings also decreased for all three PDC measures, Most for Diabetes PDC.
  - RASA PDC: 2.7 stars, down from 3.5 stars in 2023
  - Statin PDC: 3.1 stars, down from 3.6 stars in 2022
  - Diabetes PDC: 2.9 stars, down from 3.9 stars in 2022
- PDP average scores for Cholesterol PDC and RASA PDC increase in 2023, 0.16% and 0.23% respectively. Diabetes PDC for PDP plans decreases in average score 0.27% down to 86.41%.

MAPD 5-Star Thresholds

- Diabetes: 92% (+1%)
- Hypertension: 91% (+1%)
- Cholesterol: 92% (+1%)

PDP 5-Star Thresholds

- Diabetes: 90% (0%)
- Hypertension: 96% (+5%)
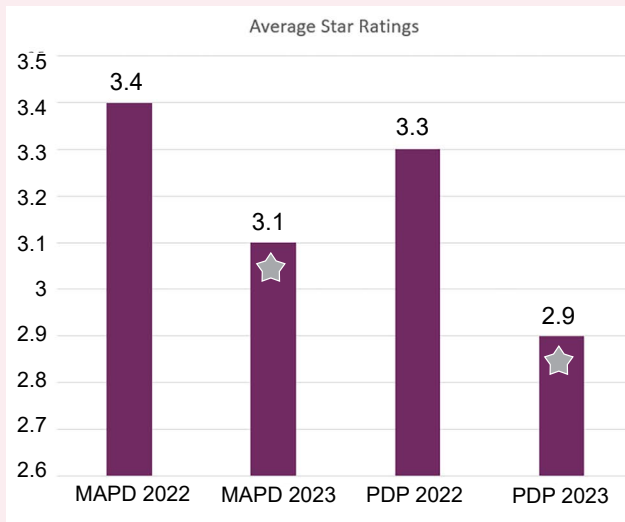- Cholesterol: 90% (0%)

Measure Details

- Measures the percentage of eligible members with a proportion of days covered (PDC) rate at 80% or over for the specific drug classes (e.g., diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol medications)
- Patients with one or more claims for sacubitril/valsartan are excluded from the hypertension/RASA adherence measure
- Patients with one or more prescriptions for insulin are excluded from the Diabetes PDC measure
- End-stage renal disease (ESRD) exclusions have been applied to measure results according to the most recent specifications from the measure steward. Additionally, patients indicating hospice enrollment during the treatment period are also excluded from the adherence measures.

Statin Use in Persons with Diabetes (SUPD)

Key Takeaways

Average Star Ratings

3.5
3.4
3.3
3.2
3.1
3
2.9
2.8
2.7
2.6

MAPD 2022 — 3.4
MAPD 2023 — 3.1
PDP 2022 — 3.3
PDP 2023 — 2.9

Average Star Ratings

- The average Star Ratings for MAPD plans is down from 3.4 stars to 3.1 stars in 2023 and for PDPs is also down from 3.3 stars to 2.9 stars.

SUPD 5 Star Thresholds

- MAPD SUPD: 90% (+2%)
- PDP SUPD: 86% (+2%)

Measure Details

- Measures the percentage of beneficiaries 40-75 years old who were dispensed at least two diabetes medication fills who received a statin medication fill at any point during the measurement period.
- Exclusions include members with ESRD or who are enrolled in hospice.

Statin Therapy for Patients with Cardiovascular Disease (SPC) - PART C

Key Takeaways

Average Star Ratings

- The average Star Ratings for MAPD plans remains at 3.5 Stars for 2023.
- The average performance for SPC Measure was up 1.18% from an unadjusted 83.32% to 84.5%.

Measure Details

- Measures the percentage of males 21–75 years of age and females 40–75 years of age during the measurement year, who were identified as having clinical atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) and were dispensed at least one high or moderate-intensity statin medication during the measurement year.
- Several exclusions exist with other conditions including ESRD and hospice.
- Key differences from the Part D SUPD measure:
  - The use of medical data to identify patients with ASCVD
  - The intensity of the statin is relevant to the measure
  - For SPC, only moderate- to high-intensity statins qualify patients for numerator status.
 - SPC has a one-year look back period to identify the qualifying population.

Key Takeaways

Average Star Ratings

The average Star Ratings for MAPD plans decreased slightly in 2023 to 3.9 stars from 4.0 stars. For PDP plans, the average Star Rating decreased more significantly from 3.7 stars to 3.1 in 2023.

Star Rating

Plan	Rating
MAPD 2022	4
MAPD 2023	3.9
PDP 2022	3.7
PDP 2023	3.1
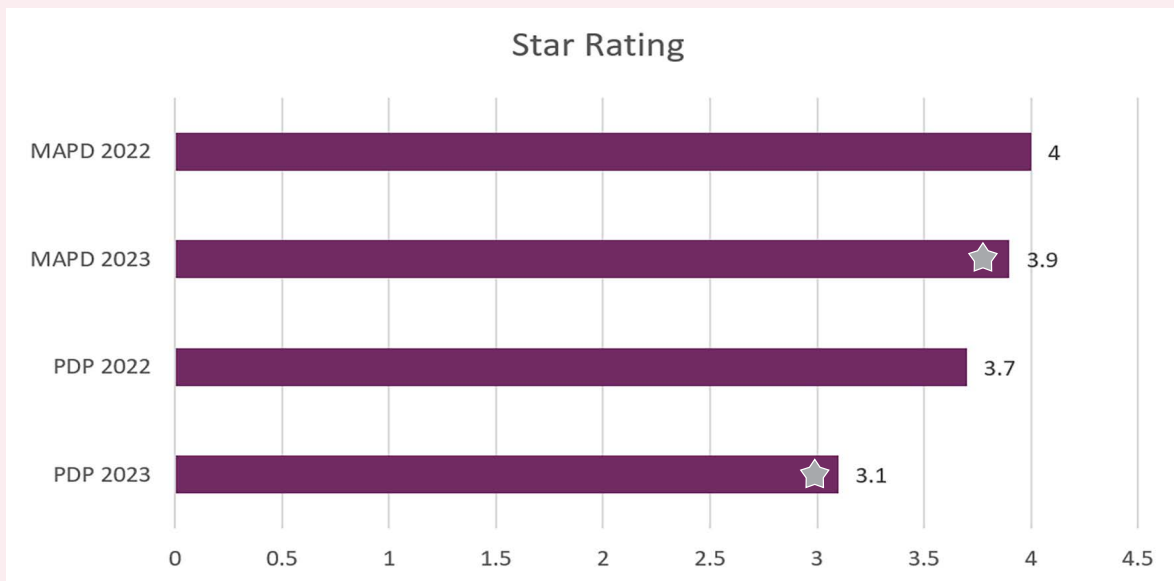
Along with the average Star Ratings decrease, scores also declined in 2023
- MAPD fell from an average of 83.35% to 82.64%
- PDP fell slightly from 53.74% to 53.47%

Measure Details

- This measures the percent of MTM eligible members that have received a CMR during the measurement period.
- Special logic is applied to members enrolled for fewer than 60 days:
    - Members enrolled for fewer than 60 days who received a CMR will be included in the numerator and denominator for the measure
    - Members enrolled for fewer than 60 days who did not receive a CMR will be excluded from the measure.

NEW! Controlling Blood Pressure- Part C measure

Key Takeaways

Average Star Ratings

A revised version of the Controlling Blood Pressure (CBP) quality measure is one of the 38 quality measures included in Medicare Part C Stars. For 2023, this measure will be a single weighted measure and moving quickly to a triple weighted measure in 2024.

The 2023 average Star Rating for CBP is 3.5 stars.

Measure Details

- This measures the percent of members 18-85 years of age who had a diagnosis of hypertension and whose blood pressure was adequately controlled (<140-90mm Hg).
    - Members that are enrolled in institutional special needs plans (I-SNP) along with those living in a long-term institution are excluded from the measure.
    - Additionally, members diagnosed with frailty, receiving palliative care, and those dispensed medications for dementia are excluded.

MAPD - 2023					
Measure Name	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
CBP	<48%	48%	63%	73%	80%

NEW! CBP Performance Improvement Program

- Data collection for this measure is viable through the pharmacy channel with this revised CBP measure. To support performance improvement strategies in this quality measure, PQS has created the comprehensive Controlling High Blood Pressure (CBP) Outcomes-Based Program to work with community pharmacies to collect blood pressure readings and help manage the patient population's health outcomes.
- This program:
    - Highlights the pharmacy-member relationship to capture blood pressure readings and address gaps in care while managing the patient's hypertension disease state.
    - Utilizes EQUIPP®, accessible by ~95% of all community pharmacies, to host patient lists and enable documentation.
    - Provides a HEDIS® supplemental data file to payers with data that can be incorporated into their performance scores for the CBP quality measure.
    - Incentivizes pharmacies to complete blood pressure screenings at the point of care and counsel patients whose readings are not considered under control.
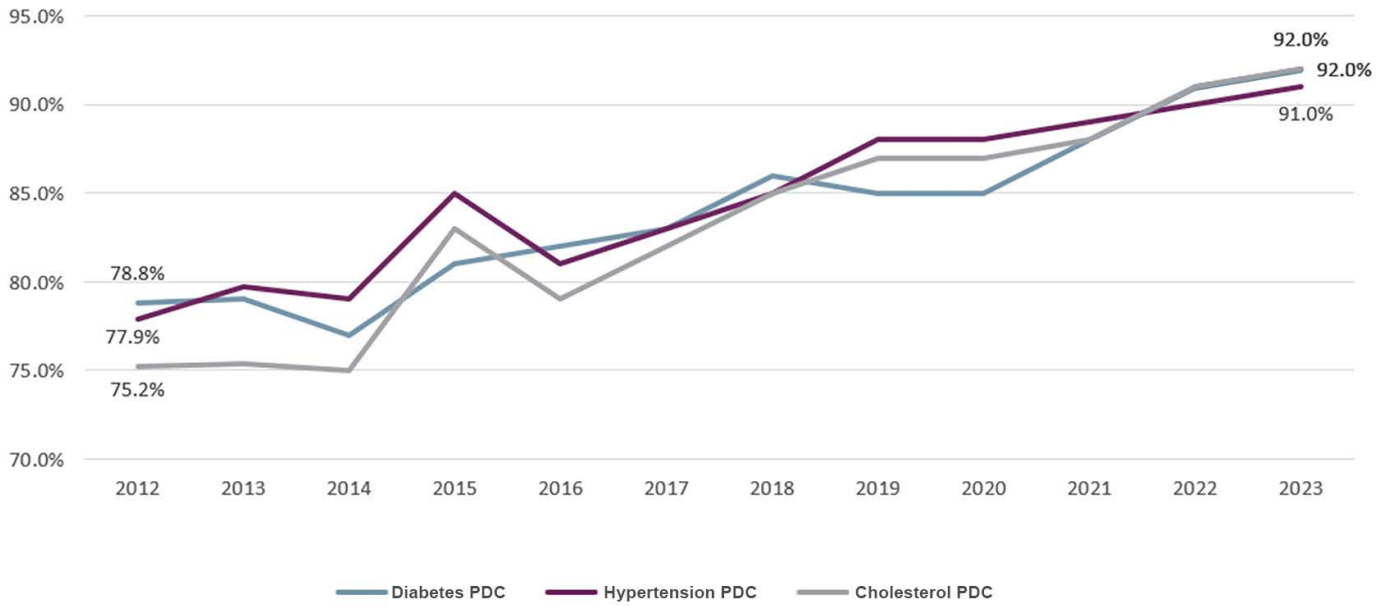
Appendix I: 2023 MAPD & PDP Thresholds

| MAPD - 2023					
Measure Name	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
PDC Diabetes	<79%	79%	85%	88%	92%
PDC Hypertension	<78%	78%	86%	89%	91%
PDC Cholesterol	<81%	81%	85%	88%	92%
CMR Completion Rate	<47%	47%	67%	82%	89%
Statin Use in Persons with Diabetes	<80%	80%	84%	86%	90%
Statin Therapy for Patients with Cardiovascular Disease	<75%	75%	81%	85%	89%

PDP - 2023					
Measure Name	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
PDC Diabetes	<84%	84%	86%	88%	90%
PDC Hypertension	<86%	86%	89%	91%	96%
PDC Cholesterol	<84%	84%	87%	88%	90%
CMR Completion Rate	<34%	34%	49%	62%	78%
SUPD	<80%	80%	82%	84%	86%

Appendix II: 2023 MAPD & PDP Performance Trends

MAPD 5 Star Threshold Trends
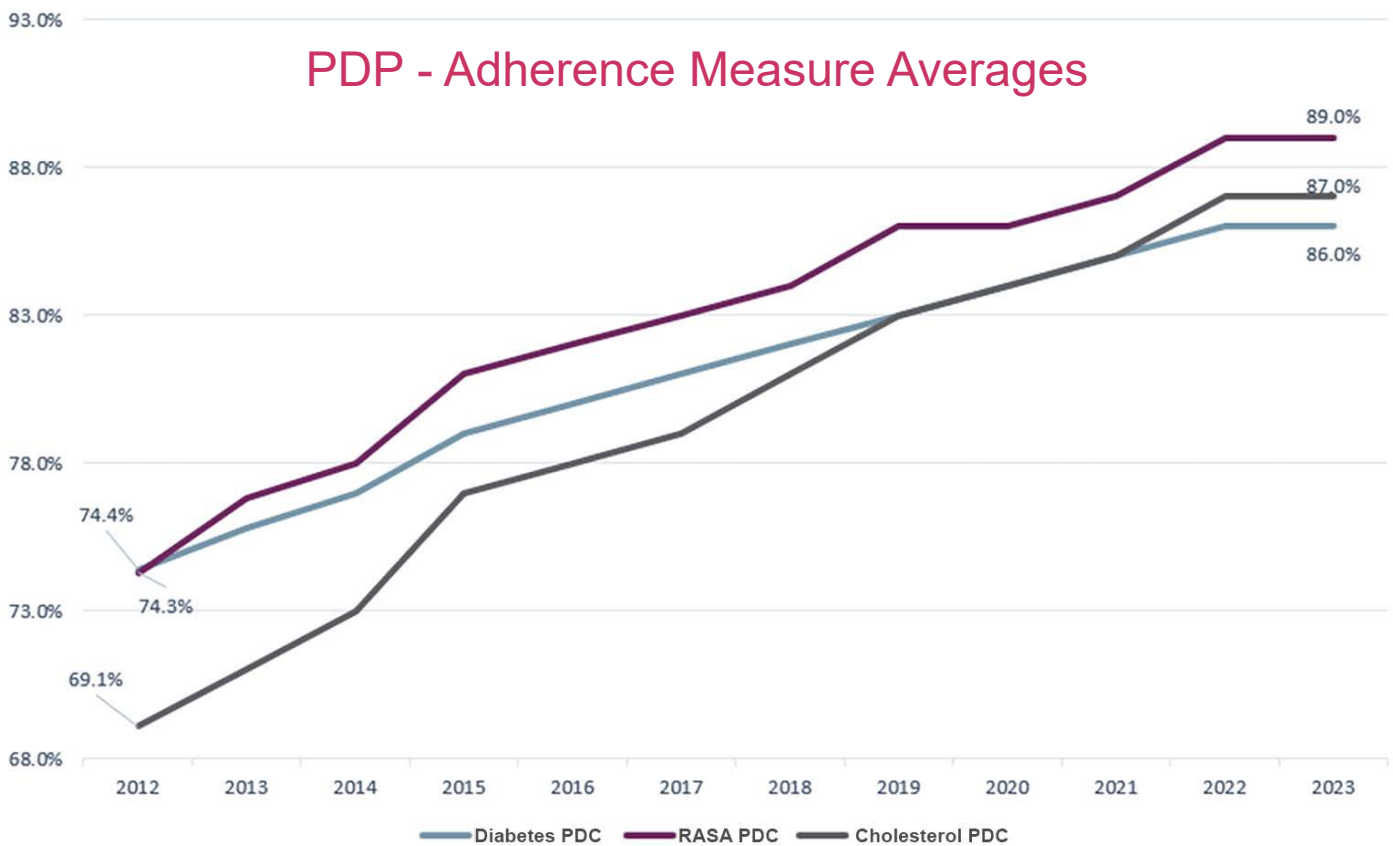

PDP 5 Star Threshold Trends
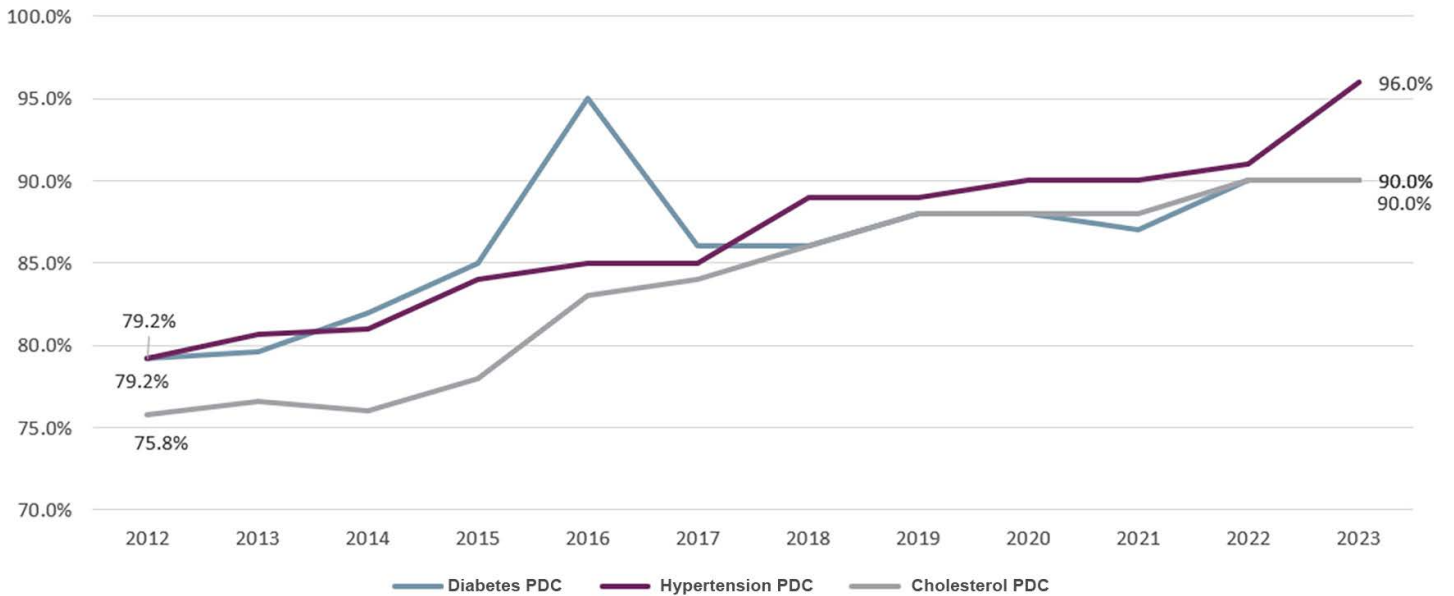
Appendix II: 2023 MAPD & PDP Performance Trends

MAPD - Adherence Measure Averages

Legend: Diabetes PDC — RASA PDC — Cholesterol PDC

PDP - Adherence Measure Averages

Legend: Diabetes PDC — RASA PDC — Cholesterol PDC
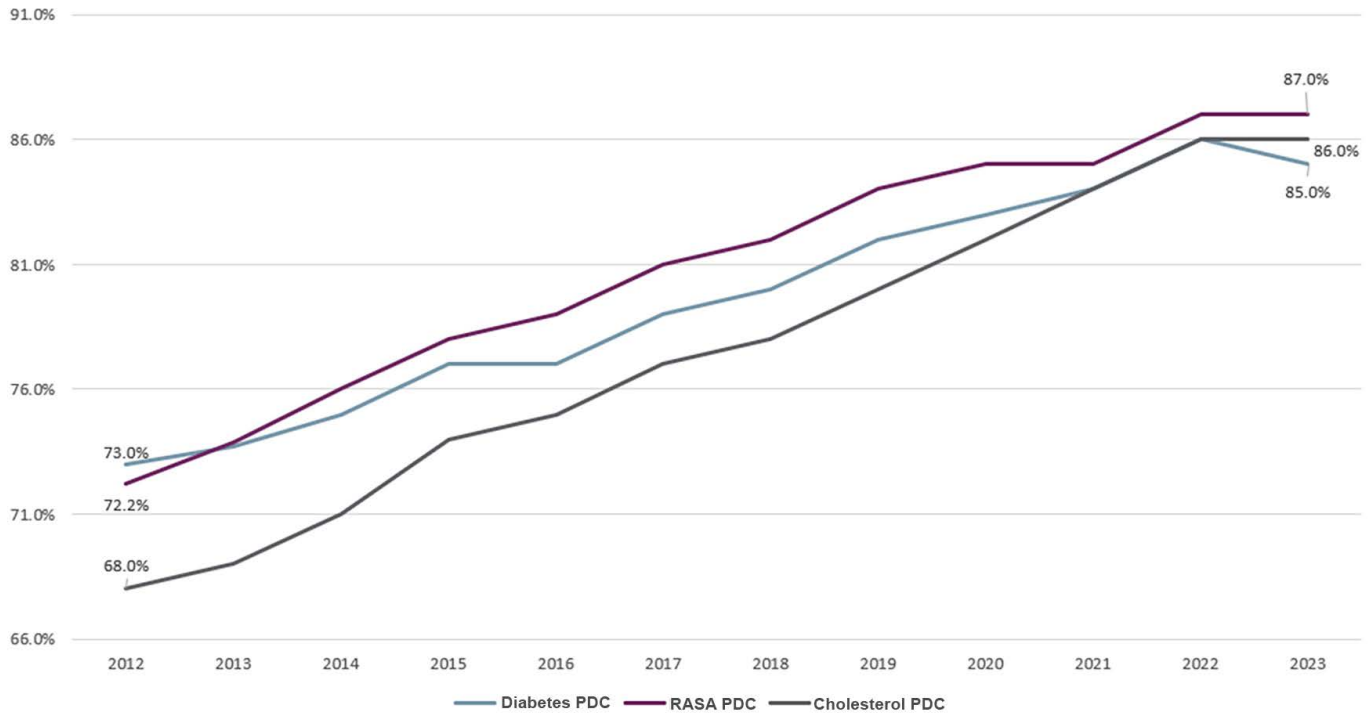
About Pharmacy Quality Solutions, Inc. (PQS)

PQS is a healthcare technology company aligning healthcare payers and pharmacies to achieve their shared goals of better patient outcomes and healthcare quality performance. As a neutral, trusted intermediary supporting the evolution of value-based care, PQS facilitates nationwide pharmacy-based care through our partners and the EQUIPP® platform. Utilizing deep clinical pharmacy knowledge and nearly a decade of performance management experience, we help clients develop strategies, implement effective programs, and optimize the quality of healthcare for their Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial populations.

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