

# Removal of HHS’s Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Clearinghouse Websites

Content Change Report  
July 12, 2018 (Updated: March 8, 2019)

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[See WIP’s Report Production Protocol for details of our review process](#)

## Classification of Web content alterations and changes in access to Web resources:

Classification	Changed in this report?
1. Altering or removing text and non-text content	
2. Altering or removing links	
3. Moving an entire webpage or collection of webpages or establishing redirects	
4. Altering or removing an entire pertinent section of a webpage or collection of webpages	
5. Removing an entire webpage or document	
6. Overhauling or removing an entire website	Yes
7. Altering or removing search engines and open data platforms	Yes
8. Altering, removing, or deleting datasets	Yes

**Note:** *This table was completed prior to the removal of the websites referenced in this report, and will be updated if removals are not carried out as HHS has planned. The removals themselves are not detailed in this report; it instead focuses on documenting the addition of the notice of the forthcoming removals.*

The Sunlight Foundation’s Web Integrity Project does not intend to assess any government agency’s intentions in presenting the changes to webpages or other Web content that appear in this report.

# Notice of Removal on HHS's Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Clearinghouse Websites

## Overview

Between April and May 2018, HHS's Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) added a notice of removal on its National Guideline Clearinghouse and National Quality Measures Clearinghouse websites, stating that the websites "will not be available after July 16, 2018." AHRQ's archives for the National Guideline Clearinghouse website, hosted at "guideline.gov," are incomplete and interactive features such as search do not function; the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse website, hosted at "qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov," does not appear to have a corresponding archive.

**Update March 8, 2019:** After July 16, 2018, AHRQ removed the National Guideline Clearinghouse and National Quality Measures Clearinghouse websites. All URLs from guideline.gov and qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov redirect to a "Guidelines and Measures" page on the AHRQ website ([Report Update](#)).

## Background

Agency details: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) [mission](#) is to "produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable." AHRQ has been operating both the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse and the National Guideline Clearinghouse websites.

Communications about changes: The agency has proactively announced the removal of its clearinghouse websites (See [Webpage 1](#) and [Webpage 2](#)).

Known archives: Some, but not all, "guideline.gov" content can be found within the [AHRQ archive](#), which only preserves webpages, but not interactive features. The "qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov" website does not appear to have a corresponding archive.

## Description of Most Notable Changes

1. A notice was posted on the National Guideline Clearinghouse website between [April 13, 2018](#) and [May 18, 2018](#) at the URL [www.guideline.gov](http://www.guideline.gov).
  - a. The notice stated: "This Web site, AHRQ's National Guideline Clearinghouse, will not be available after July 16, 2018. Federal funding through AHRQ will no longer be available to support the NGC as of that date. For additional information, read our [full announcement](#). We will continue to post summaries of new and updated evidence-based clinical practice guidelines until July 2, 2018. For any questions, please contact Mary Nix, [mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov)."
  - b. The [archive](#) for the "guideline.gov" website is significantly incomplete. Some pages are stored, but search functionality and interactive features are not preserved, making archived content much more difficult to access and, in many cases, completely unavailable. A comprehensive assessment has not been conducted cross-referencing this archive and the live website.

2. A notice was posted on the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse website between [April 13, 2018](#) and [May 1, 2018](#) at the URL <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/>.
  - a. The notice is the same as the one for “guideline.gov,” but with this website’s name substituted in.
  - b. No archive has been identified for the “qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov” website.

## Table of Contents

<b>Report Section</b>	<b>Webpage Title</b>	<b>URL</b>
<a href="#">Webpage 1</a>	National Guideline Clearinghouse	<a href="https://www.guideline.gov/">https://www.guideline.gov/</a>
<a href="#">Webpage 2</a>	National Quality Measures Clearinghouse	<a href="https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/">https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/</a>
<a href="#">Report Update</a>	Removal of HHS's Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Clearinghouse Websites	

## Detailed Description of Changes in Access

**Note:** Throughout the entire report, links to the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine's (IAWM) versions of corresponding pages are provided for reference. IAWM displays time in GMT.

### Webpage 1: National Guideline Clearinghouse

- URL: <https://www.guideline.gov/>
- Notice added between [April 13, 2018](#) and [May 18, 2018](#). **Note:** The large date range is due to sporadic captures of IAWM snapshots.
- The National Guideline Clearinghouse Archive: a version of the homepage from [April 13, 2018](#) is available in the archive.

#### **Webpage 1 Details:**

1. Notice was added on the [www.guideline.gov](http://www.guideline.gov) page between [April 13, 2018](#) and [May 18, 2018](#), stating: "TAKE NOTICE: This Web site, AHRQ's National Guideline Clearinghouse, will not be available after July 16, 2018. Federal funding through AHRQ will no longer be available to support the NGC as of that date. For additional information, read our [full announcement](#). We will continue to post summaries of new and updated evidence-based clinical practice guidelines until July 2, 2018. For any questions, please contact Mary Nix, [mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov)."
  - a. "Full announcement" text links to URL <https://www.guideline.gov/home/announcements> ([May 18, 2018](#))
  - b. A similar notice, as seen [here](#), was added to other pages throughout the website
2. The "guideline.gov" archive is incomplete and interactive features do not function, making archived content much more difficult to access and, in many cases, completely unavailable. Below is a sample assessment, which is not comprehensive, based on the [April 13, 2018 archive](#):
  - a. Stored content:
    - i. "[Guideline Synthesis](#)" page is stored
    - ii. Search term "[Cardiology](#)," linked from the home page, is stored.
  - b. Missing content or features not functioning:
    - i. Search from the [homepage](#) does not function.
    - ii. Search term "[Psychiatry](#)," linked from the homepage, does not load.
    - iii. "[Matrix Tool](#)" interactive features do not load.

**Screenshot 1.1:** Homepage of the “guideline.gov” website as captured on [July 11, 2018](#) by the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine.

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HHS.gov  
AHRQ.gov

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NATIONAL GUIDELINE CLEARINGHOUSE

Search SEARCH TIPS

Log into My NGC

HOME NEW THIS WEEK GUIDELINE SUMMARIES GUIDELINE SYNTHESISSES EXPERT COMMENTARIES MATRIX TOOL SUBMIT GUIDELINES HELP & ABOUT

**TAKE NOTICE: This Web site, AHRQ’s National Guideline Clearinghouse, will not be available after July 16, 2018.**

Federal funding through AHRQ will no longer be available to support the NGC as of that date. For additional information, read our full announcement.

We will continue to post summaries of new and updated evidence-based clinical practice guidelines until July 2, 2018. For any questions, please contact Mary Nix, [mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov).

Find Guideline Summaries and more...

### Guideline Summaries

Guidelines are organized by clinical specialty.

- Cardiology
- Critical Care
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Practice
- Geriatrics
- Infectious Diseases
- Internal Medicine
- Nursing
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Oncology
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Psychiatry
- Surgery

### Guideline Syntheses

Systematic comparisons of areas of agreement and disagreement among selected guidelines addressing similar topics. [View All >](#)

### Expert Commentaries

Expert insight on guidelines and other relevant issues. [View All >](#)

## Webpage 2: National Quality Measures Clearinghouse

- URL: <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/>
- Changes occurred between [April 13, 2018](#) and [May 1, 2018](#).
- No archive has been identified.

### **Webpage 2 Details:**

1. Notice was added on the <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/> page between [April 13, 2018](#) and [May 1, 2018](#), stating: “TAKE NOTICE: This Web site, AHRQ’s National Quality Measures Clearinghouse, will not be available after July 16, 2018. Federal funding through AHRQ will no longer be available to support the NQMC as of that date. For additional information, read our [full announcement](#). For any questions, please contact Mary Nix, [mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov).”
  - a. “Full announcement” text links to URL <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/home/announcements> ([May 1, 2018](#))
  - b. A similar notice, as seen [here](#), was added to other pages throughout the website

**Screenshot 2.1:** Homepage of the “qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov” website as captured on [July 11, 2018](#) by the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine.

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**NQMC NATIONAL QUALITY MEASURES CLEARINGHOUSE**  SEARCH TIPS » Log into My NQMC

HOME NEW THIS WEEK MEASURE SUMMARIES EXPERT COMMENTARIES MATRIX TOOL SUBMIT MEASURES HELP & ABOUT

**TAKE NOTICE: This Web site, AHRQ’s National Quality Measures Clearinghouse, will not be available after July 16, 2018.**

Federal funding through AHRQ will no longer be available to support the NQMC as of that date. For additional information, read our full announcement.  
For any questions, please contact Mary Nix, [mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:mary.nix@ahrq.hhs.gov).

Q

**Measure Summaries**

**Measure Domain**


- Access
- Outcome
- Patient Experience
- Process
- Structure

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**Measurement Setting**

- Ambulatory Procedure/Imaging Center
- Ambulatory/Office-based Care
- Community Health Care
- Hospital Inpatient
- Hospital Outpatient

[+ Browse All Measurement Settings](#)

  
**HHS Measures Inventory**

A repository of measures separate from NQMC that are in use or in development by the agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for quality measurement, improvement, and reporting. [Visit the HHS Measures Inventory >](#)



# Report Update: Removal of HHS’s Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Clearinghouse Websites

On July 16, 2018, AHRQ removed the National Guideline Clearinghouse website, hosted at guideline.gov, and the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse website, hosted at qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov. All URLs from the guideline.gov domain and the qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov domain redirect to the “Guidelines and Measures” page on the AHRQ website.

## **Webpage 1:** National Guideline Clearinghouse

1. URL: <https://www.guideline.gov/>
2. Changes occurred between [July 16, 2018 12:09 PM ET](#) and [July 16, 2018 7:46 PM ET](#).
3. **Removed** the “National Guideline Clearinghouse” website hosted at <https://www.guideline.gov/>.
  - a. The homepage, <https://www.guideline.gov/>, was removed on [July 16, 2018](#).
  - b. According to the notice previously posted on the National Guideline Clearinghouse website ([Screenshot 1.1](#)), all subpages within the <https://www.guideline.gov> domain were likely removed on July 16, 2018 at the same time as the homepage.
  - c. All pages within the <https://www.guideline.gov/> domain redirect to the “Guidelines and Measures” page on the AHRQ website at the URL <https://www.ahrq.gov/gam/index.html> ([Screenshot A1](#)), which links to pages with information about the National Guideline Clearinghouse and its removal.

## **Webpage 2:** National Quality Measures Clearinghouse

1. URL: <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/>
2. Changes occurred between [July 16, 2018 1:24 AM EDT](#) and [July 20, 2018 7:30 PM EDT](#).
3. **Removed** the “National Quality Measures Clearinghouse” website hosted at <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/>.
  - a. The homepage, <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/>, was removed by [July 20, 2018](#).
  - b. According to the notice posted on the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse website ([Screenshot 2.1](#)), the homepage and all subpages within the <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/> domain were likely removed on or soon after July 16, 2018.
  - c. All pages within the <https://qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/> domain redirect to the “Guidelines and Measures” page on the AHRQ website at the URL <https://www.ahrq.gov/gam/index.html> ([Screenshot A1](#)), which links to pages

providing information on the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse and its removal.

**Additional Webpage:** Guidelines and Measures

1. URL: <https://www.ahrq.gov/gam/index.html>
2. The page was live as early as [July 16, 2018, 6:43 PM EDT](#)
3. **Added** the “Guidelines and Measures” page website hosted at <https://www.ahrq.gov/gam/index.html>.
  - a. The page contains links to pages providing information about the status of the National Guideline Clearinghouse website, the domain framework used to classify guidelines, and the criteria for inclusion into the two clearinghouses ([Screenshot A1](#)).
  - b. The page was first captured by IAWM on [July 16, 2018, 6:43 PM EDT](#).
  - c. All URLs from the guideline.gov domain and the qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov domain redirect to this page.

**Screenshot A1:** The [July 16, 2018, 6:43 PM EDT](https://www.ahrq.gov/gam/index.html) version of the “Guidelines and Measures” page at URL <https://www.ahrq.gov/gam/index.html> captured by the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine. All URLs from the guideline.gov domain and the qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov domain redirect to this page.

**Internet Archive**  
Wayback Machine

262 captures  
16 Jul 2018 - 23 Jun 2019

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

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Home

**Guidelines and Measures**

**Statement about NGC**  
Funding for the National Guideline Clearinghouse (NGC) has ended. Learn more about the status of the site.

**Inclusion Criteria**  
View the criteria guidelines and measures had to meet to be included in NGC and NQMG, respectively.

**Domain Framework**  
Learn how measures were classified according to the domain framework.

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