



Surgical Care Improvement Project (SCIP) Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Surgical Care Improvement Project (SCIP)?

SCIP is a national quality partnership of organizations focused on improving surgical care by significantly reducing surgical complications through the reduction of postoperative complications. The SCIP goal is to reduce the incidence of surgical complications nationally. Although some surgical complications are unavoidable, surgical care can be improved through better adherence to evidence-based practice recommendations and by giving more attention to designing systems of care with safeguards.

What are targeted measures for SCIP?

The targeted process and outcome measures listed below were developed by expert panels from various quality organizations and medical societies.

Infection Related

- Prophylactic antibiotic received within one hour prior to surgical incision
- Prophylactic antibiotic selection for surgical patients
- Prophylactic antibiotics discontinued within 24 hours after surgery end
- Cardiac surgery patients with controlled 6 a.m. postoperative blood glucose
- Surgery patients with appropriate hair removal
- Colorectal surgery patients with immediate postoperative normothermia
- Surgery patients with immediate postoperative normothermia

Venous Thromboembolism

- Surgery patients with recommended venous thromboembolism prophylaxis ordered
- Surgery patients who received appropriate venous thromboembolism prophylaxis within 24 hours prior to surgery to 24 hours after surgery

Who developed SCIP?

National quality organizations are partners in the development and continued improvement of the SCIP program. These organizations include the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, American College of Surgeons, American Hospital Association, American Society of Anesthesiologists, Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Institute for Healthcare Improvement, The Joint Commission, and Veterans Health Administrations.

What is the purpose of the SCIP project for physicians?

The purpose of this component of the Quality and Transparency Program is to better align physician performance with hospital performance and to increase the overall quality of care for surgical patients.

How will physicians be tied to hospital performance?

A physician will be tied to a hospital when performing at least five SCIP eligible procedures at a hospital. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama will use the Surgical Episodes data to determine volume.

What are the surgeries that SCIP data is based on?

SCIP uses eight surgical categories:

- Coronary Artery Bypass Graft
- Knee Arthroplasty
- Hip Arthroplasty
- Other Cardiac Surgery, such as valve replacement
- Colon Surgery
- Abdominal Hysterectomy
- Vaginal Hysterectomy
- Vascular Surgery

What are surgical episodes?

Surgical Episodes are the average cost, volume, length of stay and burden of illness for an entire episode of care associated with a certain procedure. The patient data is based solely on Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama PPO patients only. These figures do not include data for other patients, such as Medicare or Medicaid, which may comprise a significant portion of a provider's practice.

To find out more about your Surgical Episode data, go to **www.bcbsal.com** and select "Find a Doctor." Surgical Episodes information is located under the "Surgeries and Procedures" tab.

Which Surgical Episodes are linked to SCIP?

We currently profile over 40 Surgical Episode procedures on the Blue Cross web site. Eleven of these are directly linked to a SCIP procedure:

- Hip Arthroplasty, Single Procedure
- Knee Arthroplasty
- Coronary Artery Bypass
- Cardiac Valve Replacement
- Hysterectomy
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repairs (Vascular Surgeries)
- Thromboendarterectomy (Vascular Surgeries)

Do you have to perform a certain volume of surgeries to have hospital performance show on your Doctor Finder information?

Yes, for hospital performance to show on a physician's page, the physician would have to perform more than five SCIP eligible surgical procedures.

I have admitting privileges at a certain facility but almost never practice there or perform surgeries there. Will that hospital's information show under my quality information?

SCIP information will only be shown for hospital's where you performed at least five SCIP eligible surgical procedures.

Questions and Concerns

Where can I find the hospital scores for SCIP?

SCIP Hospital Information can be accessed through www.bcbsal.com. Select "Find a Doctor," then search for a general acute care hospital. After selecting a hospital, select the "Quality" tab to learn more about a hospital's SCIP performance.

Where can I find more information about the SCIP program?

Please visit www.qualitynet.org, select the "MedQIC" tab, then Hospital, and then "Surgical Care Improvement Project." If you are viewing the Frequently Asked Questions on-line, you can click [here](#).

Who should I contact at Blue Cross with questions regarding SCIP and the Physician Quality and Transparency Program?

Please submit questions and concerns to ProviderQuality@bcbsal.org. The dedicated customer service number is 877-854-8430. These e-mails will be reviewed daily, and issues, questions, and concerns will be addressed promptly. Program information can be obtained on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama web site, www.bcbsal.com, and through your physician Network Services Representative. This Frequently Asked Question document will be updated on a regular basis and is available on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama web site. We welcome your continued review and input.