

Sampled Project and Organizational Support Function Characterizations

Requirements for Reporting Sampled Project and OSF Characterizations to CMMI Institute

In the current version of the CMMI method, Appraisal Team Leaders (ATLs) are required to submit to CMMI Institute the Required Appraisal Outputs as part of the Appraisal Results Package per section *3.2.1 Submit Appraisal Results Package* of the CMMI Appraisal Method Definition Document (MDD). However, some recent clarifications to the latest version of the MDD have caused some challenges during appraisal quality reviews, particularly concerning the requirement for ATLs to submit sampled project and organizational support function (OSF) characterization data in a level of detail not previously required in prior versions. This Quality Tip is being issued to clarify the required data to be submitted to CMMI Institute and to provide guidance on commonly received feedback from ATLs during appraisal quality reviews related to this requirement.

Required Reporting Information

Table 15: Required Appraisal Results Package of the MDD details the information required to be submitted to CMMI Institute. This includes the requirement that all sampled project and OSF practice characterizations are included as well as any resulting findings, i.e., weaknesses, strengths, improvement opportunities for those sampled projects and OSFs. Additionally, ATLs must also be prepared to provide OE contextual summary information upon request by Quality Management during appraisal reviews or audits. CMMI Institute has found that many ATLs are providing high-level practice characterization information without listing the associated findings used to derive characterizations. Some ATLs are also unwilling to provide OE contextual summary information when requested. Both issues are violations of the MDD.

CMMI Institute does not require a specific template or tool to report this information. As noted in the MDD, the “CMMI Appraisal Tool, from MDD Toolkit, or equivalent worksheets or characterization tracking tool, that minimally includes” the information detailed in MDD Table 15 must be submitted. For ATLs who wish to use their own tool, CMMI Institute encourages cross-referencing this tool against the current version of the CMMI Appraisal Tool in the MDD Toolkit to ensure that equivalent fields are included to cover the required submission data. Failure to include required information will lead to flags and discussion during appraisal reviews.

Common Characterization Reporting Issue Themes

CMMI Institute **cannot accept tools that do not contain required information:** Many ATLs are insistent that their tools are sufficient when only high-level details such as project names and characterizations are included. The level of detail required in the current version of the MDD includes tying these characterizations to findings at the project/OSF level. CMMI

Institute will not accept tools work worksheets which require CMMI Institute to make assumptions and/or inferences between the tool and final findings presentation, number of projects in the OU, OE information listed in other CAS sections, etc. The tool must include all Table 15 required information in a clear and consistent manner. CMMI Institute recommends referring to the Appraisal Tool template in the MDD Toolkit for any confusion on the required level of detail and for an example of how this data can be displayed.

Sanitized confidentiality and non-attribution data: It is the responsibility of the ATL, and a requirement of the MDD, for all appraisal data to be sanitized appropriately following confidentiality and non-attribution.

Providing characterization information to CMMI Institute will not require significant effort or burden for ATLs: This data is integral to the operation of an appraisal and should be readily available to all ATLs. While there may be some initial effort to update existing reporting tools and processes ATLs may have created, this information should not be overly burdensome for ATLs to collect and provide when reporting appraisal results to CMMI Institute as this data is required throughout an appraisal.

Summary

Quality Management will continue to work with ATLs to ensure the proper information is provided to CMMI Institute per MDD requirements during this period of change. However, refusal or unwillingness to provide required MDD information during appraisal reviews may result in longer turnaround times, and CMMI Institute is unable to process appraisal results until all MDD obligations are fulfilled by the ATL. Additionally, open refusal to provide required MDD information such as the level of detail required for project and OSF characterization information in the current MDD represents a violation of the CMMI Code of Professional Conduct (COPC), and CMMI Institute may issue corrective action per the [Corrective Action Policy](#) accordingly for ATLs who neglect to cooperate with CMMI Institute.

Questions regarding this Quality Tip can be sent to partner@cmmiinstitute.com.