Nutrition is one of the cornerstones of healthy aging and poor nutrition is associated with decreased immune health and can lead to increased infection rates and immune suppression. Further, poor nutrition or malnutrition is a critical predictor of adverse health outcomes because it is associated with increased 30-day readmissions, lengths of stay, complications, and mortality. Up to one of two older adults is malnourished or at risk for malnutrition and rising food insecurity has further increased their risk by limiting access to good nutrition.

Poor nutrition remains a common but often overlooked factor related to health disparities and one way to advance health equity is to measure hospital malnutrition care. In 2021, the National Quality Forum endorsed a measure for malnutrition in the hospital—the Global Malnutrition Composite Score. The Composite Measure uses data collected as part of routine care and is an electronic clinical quality measure that supports a more streamlined process of measuring and reporting through the EHR.

This spring as the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) considers measures to include in its FY 2023 Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System proposed rule, recommendation of the Composite Measure would help improve patient health outcomes and provide an opportunity to advance CMS health equity priorities.