Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical Specifications Version 2.4 July 2020 Update

The following table outlines updates made to the 2020 *Medicare HOS Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical Specifications V2.4* (QAG), <u>effective immediately</u>. Please note that all revisions and clarifications presented supersede the previous specifications in the HOS QAG. Please contact the HOS Project Team at <u>hos@ncqa.org</u> if you have any questions.

HOS QAG Section	Update	
Communications and Technical Support, Information and Technical Assistance Revised (page 17)	For additional information and technical assistance related to the availability of HOS data and reports , contact the <u>HOS Project Team at HSAG</u> (hos@HCQIS.org hos@hsag.com) or 888-880-0077.	
Data Collection Protocol, Overview Revised (page 19)	The mixed mode protocols for both cohorts are the are fielded on the same timeline. All Baseline and must follow the designated mail out dates and sur Baseline and Follow-Up telephone interviews dur windows.	l Follow-Up survey mailings vey vendors conduct all
Data Collection Protocol, 2020 Data Collection Schedule	Updated Table 1. Pre-Data Collection Tasks and Table 2. Data Collection Tasks to reflect new dates for 2020 survey administration. <u>See new Table 1 and</u> <u>Table 2 below</u> .	
Revised (pages 19-21)		
Data Collection Protocol, Telephone Protocol Revised (page 38)	Virtual telephone interviewers (i.e., telephone interviewers conducting calls outside of the survey vendor's or subcontractor's physical location) are not permitted unless approved by CMS . All telephone interviewing operations must occur within the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, or U.S. Territories.	
Data Collection Protocol, Timing of MAOs' Data Collection Efforts Revised (page 49)	To avoid over-burdening sampled members, contracts and survey vendors are strongly discouraged from fielding other surveys to their members four weeks prior to, during, or after the 2020 HOS administration (anytime from February July through August November 2020), except for other CMS sponsored surveys, such as the Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plan (MA & PDP) CAHPS® Survey.	
Data Coding, Survey	Table 14. Survey Round Rules Based on Surve	y Completion Date
Completion and	Survey Completion Date	Survey Round
Coding Guidelines	MMDDYYYY	M1, M2, T1, T2, T3,
Revised (page 63)	March 30 July 27, 2020	T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9,
	August 17 – November 9, 2020 Where "MM" is the month, "DD" is the day, and "YYYY" is the year.	MT, TN
	99999999	NC

HOS QAG Section	Update		
Data Coding, Survey	Table 18. Survey Completion Date Rules Based on Disposition Code		
Completion and	Disposition Code	Date Survey Was Completed	
Coding Guidelines	M10, T10, M11, T11, M31, T31	MMDDYYYY	
Revised (page 67)		<mark>March 30 July 27, 2020</mark>	
		August 17 – November 9, 2020	
	M20, T20, M21, T21, M23, T23,	99999999	
	T24, M25, M26, M32, T32, M33,		
	T33, M34, T34, M35, T35, M36, T36		
Data Submission,	At the conclusion of the data collection p		
Preparation for Data		cleaning and editing routines and assess	
Submission	the integrity of collected data prior to the	e final data submission deadline.	
Revised (page 71)			
Data Submission, Data	Interim Data Files: Survey vendors sub		
Submission Process		20. All survey data received up to three 2020 to the interim data submission	
Revised (page 72)	business days prior (June 22 October 5, 2020) to the interim data submission due date must be processed and included in the interim data files. Submitting		
	interim data files will provide survey vendors an opportunity to test the data		
	submission process and correct any data file errors before submitting the final		
	data files.		
	Survey vendors may begin to submit interim data on June 23 October 6, 2020. All		
	interim data files must be submitted by June 25 October 8, 2020.		
Data Submission, Data	Final Data Files: Survey vendors submit final HOS data files by 11:59 p.m.		
Submission Process	Eastern Time on August 10 November 16, 2020. Data files not submitted by the		
Revised (page 72)	deadline are not included in the publicly-reported HOS results.		
Data Submission, Data	All HOS final data files must be marked "final" by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on		
Validation Checks	August 10 November 16, 2020. Data files not submitted by the deadline are not		
Revised (page 73)	included in the publicly-reported HOS results.		
Data Analysis and	Survey vendors may refer MAOs to the Data - Dissemination of HOS Results to		
Public Reporting,	MAOs page on the <u>HOS website</u> (https://www.hosonline.org) for information		
Analysis of HOS Data and Reporting of HOS	about the timeline for receiving reports or instruct them to contact the <u>HSAG</u> <u>HOS Project Team</u> (hos@HCQIS.org hos@hsag.com).		
Data to MAOs		<u>Stensag</u> , com).	
Revised (page 77)			
Quality Oversight,	Updated Table 22. Quality Oversight S	chedule to reflect new dates for 2020	
Quality Oversight	survey administration. See new Table 22 below.		
Activities			
Revised (pages 78-79)			

HOS QAG Section	Update
Quality Oversight, Quality Oversight Activities Revised (pages 82-83)	Site/Remote Visit The HOS Project Team may conduct a site/remote visit during the survey administration period to review compliance with HOS requirements. Site/remote visits allow the HOS Project Team to review and verify procedures, facilities, resources, and documentation. The HOS Project Team assesses protocols based upon these <i>Medicare HOS Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical</i> <i>Specifications V2.4</i> . All materials relevant to survey administration are subject to review. The HOS Project Team coordinates with survey vendor staff to cover agenda items presented in advance to the survey vendor. The HOS Project Team may also review any additional information or facilities determined to be necessary to complete the site/remote visit, including work performed by subcontractors, if applicable. Survey vendors make their subcontractors available to participate in the site/remote visits as needed. Remote visits are conducted via web conference. During remote visits, vendors share and present all required systems, processes, and documentation using web conferencing.
Quality Oversight, Quality Oversight Activities Revised (page 83)	During the data collection period, survey vendors submit 148 progress reports to the HOS Project Team (hos@ncqa.org). These reports provide updates on data collection activities and interim statistics on responses rates and survey dispositions.
Quality Oversight, Quality Oversight Activities Revised (pages 84-86)	Updated Table 23. Reporting Requirements for Survey Vendor Progress Reports to reflect new reporting requirements for 2020 survey administration. <u>See new Table 23 below.</u>
Appendix A: HOS 2020 Minimum Business Requirements, Organizational Survey Capacity Revised (page A-3)	Commercial physical plant. All survey-related work, including mail survey administration activities and telephone interviewing, must be conducted at the survey vendor's or approved subcontractor/external partner's official business location. Home-based places of work (e.g., residences) and virtual organizations will not be considered or permitted without CMS approval.
Appendix A: HOS 2020 Minimum Business Requirements, HOS 2020 Rules of Participation Revised (page A-11)	14. Acknowledge that the use of virtual telephone interviewers is prohibited unless approved by CMS.

HOS QAG Section	Update				
Appendix D: HOS 2020 Sample File Layout and Survey File	Field Description	Field Position Start	Field Position End	Field Length	Valid Values
Record Layout, Survey File Record Layout Revised (page D-16)	Survey Completion Date Date when survey vendor received the mail survey or date when survey vendor conducted the telephone interview.	288	295	8	MMDDYYYY March 30 July 27, 2020 August 17 – November 9, 2020 99999999 = Not applicable
Appendix H: HOS 2020 Master Calendar Revised	Updated Appendix I updated Appendix F		new 2020	survey admi	nistration dates. <mark>See</mark>

Updated Tables

The tables listed below replace the corresponding tables in the QAG in their entirety.

Table 1. I I C Data Concentri Lasks	Table 1.	Pre-Data	Collection	Tasks
-------------------------------------	----------	----------	------------	-------

Task	2020 Dates	Timeframe
MAOs notify the HOS Project Team of contractual	By Friday, January 10	-220 Days
arrangements.		
Survey vendors develop mailing materials and program	Beginning Thursday,	-193 Days
telephone systems.	February 6	
HOS Project Team provides sample files to survey	Wednesday, July 22	-26 Days
vendors.		
Survey vendors obtain telephone numbers from MAOs via	Beginning Wednesday,	-26 Days
the SUPPLEMENTAL files provided with the sample files.	July 22	
Survey vendors do not send the sample files to MAOs.		
(Obtaining addresses and language preference flags is		
optional.)		
Survey vendors obtain "second source" telephone numbers	Beginning Wednesday,	-26 Days
for members eligible for electronic telephone interviewing.	July 22	
Survey vendors test external functionality of customer	By Monday, August 17	Day 0
support telephone numbers and email addresses prior to		
the prenotification letter mailing.		

Table 2. Data Collection Tasks

Task	2020 Dates	Timeframe
Mail Baseline and Follow-Up prenotification letter.	Monday, August 17	Day 0
Open customer support services (telephone and email).		
Open electronic telephone interviewing for inbound		
member requests to complete survey by telephone.		
Mail Baseline and Follow-Up first questionnaire.	Monday, August 24	Day 7
Mail Baseline and Follow-Up reminder/thank-you	Monday, August 31	Day 14
postcard.		
Mail Baseline and Follow-Up second questionnaire.	Monday, September 14	Day 28
Mail Baseline second reminder/thank-you postcard (as	Monday, September 21	Day 35
applicable, Russian only).		
Conduct Baseline and Follow-Up outbound electronic	Monday, September 28	Days 42 – 84
telephone interviewing call attempts for nonrespondents.	– Monday, November 9	
• Call attempts must be scheduled at different times of		
the day, on different days of the week, and in different		
weeks.		
• Minimum of six attempts and maximum of nine		
attempts.		
• English, Spanish, and Chinese only.		

Task	2020 Dates	Timeframe
 Submit interim data files to the HOS Project Team. Survey vendors may begin to submit data on October 6 but must submit all interim data files by October 8 via the HOS Data Submission System. All survey data received up to three business days prior to the interim data submission due date must be processed and included in the interim data files. 	Tuesday, October 6 – Thursday, October 8	Days 50 – 52
 End Baseline and Follow-Up data collection. End all data entry/scanning of returned mail surveys. End all telephone interviews. Close customer support services (telephone and email). 	Monday, November 9	Day 84
Prepare and submit final data files.	Tuesday, November 10 – Monday, November 16	Days 85 – 91
 Submit final data files to the HOS Project Team. Final data files are due four business days after close of data collection via the HOS Data Submission System. No files are accepted after the submission deadline of November 16. 	Monday, November 16	Day 91

Table 22. Quality Oversight Schedule

Quality Oversight Activities	2020 Dates
HOS Survey Vendor Training.	Thursday, February 6
Survey vendors submit printed materials to the HOS Project Team to	Friday, February 21
obtain written approval prior to volume printing.	
HOS Project Team provides response to survey vendors after review of	Friday, March 6
printed materials.	
Survey vendors finalize all mail materials (any revisions made after	Monday, March 16
approval must be submitted to the HOS Project Team). Survey vendors submit electronic telephone interviewing screenshots to	Friday, March 6
the HOS Project Team to obtain written approval prior to telephone	Filday, March 0
protocol.	
Survey vendor project report #1 (QAP) due.	Friday, March 13
HOS Project Team responds to survey vendors after reviewing telephone	Wednesday, July 22
screenshots.	
Survey vendors submit updates to report #1 (QAP), if applicable.	Friday, August 7
Survey vendor QAP conference calls.	Wednesday, August 12 –
	Friday, August 14
Survey vendors finalize all telephone screenshots (any revisions made	Monday, August 17
after approval must be submitted to the HOS Project Team).	
Survey vendor project report #2 due.	Friday, August 28
Survey vendor project report #3 due.	Friday, September 11
Survey vendor project report #4 due.	Friday, September 25
Survey vendor project report #5 due.	Friday, October 9
Survey vendor project report #6 due.	Friday, October 23
Survey vendor project report #7 due.	Friday, November 6

Quality Oversight Activities	2020 Dates
Survey vendor project report #8 (Final Report) due.	Friday, November 20
Report of HOS Records Stored and Facility Standards for Records Storage Facilities Inspection Checklist.	Friday, December 4

Table 23. Reporting Requirements for Survey Vendor Progress Reports

Reporting Requirements	2020 Due Dates
REPORT #1	Friday, March 13
Survey Vendor QAP: Survey vendors submit a QAP to the HOS Project Team	11100, 111011 15
that addresses all required elements as described throughout the <i>Medicare HOS</i>	
<i>Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical Specifications V2.4</i> and in	
Appendix B.	
REPORT #1 Update	Friday, August 7
Survey vendors submit an updated QAP to the HOS Project Team that reflects	
any changes in operations.	
REPORT #2	Friday, August 28
Narrative Report:	
• Overview of Baseline and Follow-Up prenotification letter and first	
questionnaire mailing printing and fulfillment processes.	
• Verification of mail out date of Baseline and Follow-Up	
prenotification letter and first questionnaire mailing (e.g., USPS	
generated report).	
• Status of staff training and SMS development.	
• Confirmation of customer support functionality and testing.	
Outstanding issues or concerns.	
Other Deliverable: Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	
REPORT #3	Friday, September 11
Summary Status Report: (template provided by the HOS Project Team)	
Baseline Cohort.	
Follow-Up Cohort.	
Narrative Report:	
• Overview of Baseline and Follow-Up reminder/thank-you postcard.	
• Verification of mail out date of Baseline and Follow-Up	
reminder/thank-you postcard mailing (e.g., USPS generated report).	
Outstanding issues or concerns.	
Other Deliverable: Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	

Reporting Requirements	2020 Due Dates
REPORT #4	Friday, September 25
Summary Status Report:	
Baseline Cohort.	
• Follow-Up Cohort.	
Narrative Report:	
• Overview of Baseline and Follow-Up second questionnaire mailing.	
 Verification of mail out dates of Baseline and Follow-Up second 	
questionnaire mailing and second reminder/thank-you postcard	
mailing (e.g., USPS generated report).	
• Overview of progress with protocol to date.	
• Detail problems or issues to date.	
• Provide high-level summary statistics on respondent calls to customer	
support line or email (summarize FAQ) and number of requests for	
Spanish version of the instrument.	
• Outstanding issues or concerns.	
Other Deliverable:	
• Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	
• Submit a sample of the interim/progress report that is provided to	
HOS clients.	_
REPORT #5	Friday, October 9
Summary Status Report:	
Baseline Cohort.	
• Follow-Up Cohort.	
Narrative Report:	
• Overview of progress with protocol to date.	
• Detail problems or issues to date.	
• Describe process of converting partially completed surveys to	
complete, and progress.	
• Describe telephone protocol and training.	
• Report on progress of Baseline and Follow-Up electronic telephone	
interviewing implementation.	
• Report on experience with submitting interim data files.	
Other Deliverable: Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	
REPORT #6	Friday, October 23
Summary Status Report:	
Baseline Cohort.	
• Follow-Up Cohort.	
Narrative Report:	
• Overview of progress with protocol to date.	
• Detail problems or issues to date.	
• Report on progress of Baseline and Follow-Up electronic telephone	
interviewing implementation.	
Other Deliverable: Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	Ender Mart 1
REPORT #7	Friday, November 6
Summary Status Report:	
Baseline Cohort.	
Follow-Up Cohort.	
Other Deliverable: Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Medicare HOS Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical Specifications V2.4

Reporting Requirements	2020 Due Dates
REPORT #8	Friday, November 20
Final Detailed Status Report	
• See guidelines below.	
Other Deliverable: Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.	
Report of HOS Records Stored	Friday, December 4
• Number of HOS records stored on site and off site.	
• The HOS Project Team provides the report template prior to the due	
date.	

Task Type	Task	Date
Pre-Data Collection	MAOs notify the HOS Project Team of contractual arrangements.	By Friday, January 10
Training	HOS Survey Vendor Training.	Thursday, February 6
Pre-Data Collection	Survey vendors develop mailing materials and program telephone systems.	Beginning Thursday, February 6
Pre-Data Collection	Survey vendors develop mailing materials and program telephone systems.	Beginning Thursday, February 6
Quality Oversight	Survey vendors submit printed materials to the HOS Project Team to obtain written approval prior to volume printing.	Friday, February 21
Quality Oversight	HOS Project Team provides response to survey vendors after review of printed materials.	Friday, March 6
Quality Oversight	Survey vendors submit electronic telephone interviewing screenshots to the HOS Project Team to obtain written approval prior to telephone protocol.	Friday, March 6
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #1 (QAP) due.	Friday, March 13
Quality Oversight	Survey vendors finalize all mail materials (any revisions made after approval must be submitted to the HOS Project Team).	Monday, March 16
Quality Oversight	HOS Project Team responds to survey vendors after reviewing telephone screenshots.	Wednesday, July 22
Pre-Data Collection	HOS Project Team provides sample files to survey vendors.	Wednesday, July 22
Pre-Data Collection	Survey vendors obtain telephone numbers from MAOs via the <i>SUPPLEMENTAL</i> files provided with the sample files. Survey vendors do not send the sample files to MAOs. (Obtaining addresses and language preference flags is optional.)	Beginning Wednesday, July 22
Pre-Data Collection	Survey vendors obtain "second source" telephone numbers for members eligible for electronic telephone interviewing.	Beginning Wednesday, July 22
Quality Oversight	Survey vendors submit updated QAP to the HOS Project Team that reflects any changes in operations.	Friday, August 7
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor QAP conference calls.	Wednesday, August 12 – Friday, August 14

U	ndated	Appen	dix H:	HOS	2020	Master	Calendar
U	Junicu	¹ uppen	UIA II.	1100	2020	master	Calchual

Task Type	Task	Date
Pre-Data Collection	Survey vendors test external functionality of customer support telephone numbers and email addresses prior to the prenotification letter mailing.	By Monday, August 17
Data Collection	Mail Baseline and Follow-Up prenotification letter.	Monday, August 17
Data Collection	Open customer support services (telephone and email).	Monday, August 17
Data Collection	Open electronic telephone interviewing for inbound member requests to complete survey by telephone.	Monday, August 17
Quality Oversight	Survey vendors finalize all telephone screenshots (any revisions made after approval must be submitted to the HOS Project Team).	Monday, August 17
Data Collection	Mail Baseline and Follow-Up first questionnaire.	Monday, August 24
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #2 due.	Friday, August 28
Data Collection	Mail Baseline and Follow-Up reminder/thank-you postcard.	Monday, August 31
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #3 due.	Friday, September 11
Data Collection	Mail Baseline and Follow-Up second questionnaire.	Monday, September 14
Data Collection	Mail Baseline second reminder/thank-you postcard (as applicable, Russian only).	Monday, September 21
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #4 due.	Friday, September 25
Data Collection	Conduct Baseline and Follow-Up outbound electronic telephone interviewing call attempts for nonrespondents.	Monday, September 28 – Monday, November 9
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #5 due.	Friday, October 9
Data Collection	Submit interim data files to the HOS Project Team.	Tuesday, October 6 – Thursday, October 8
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #6 due.	Friday, October 23
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #7 due.	Friday, November 6
Data Collection	End Baseline and Follow-Up data collection.	Monday, November 9
Data Collection	Prepare and submit final data files.	Tuesday, November 10 – Monday, November 16
Data Collection	Submit final data files to the HOS Project Team.	Monday, November 16
Quality Oversight	Survey vendor project report #8 (Final Report) due.	Friday, November 20

Task Type	Task	Date
Quality Oversight	Report of HOS Records Stored and Facility Standards for Records Storage Facilities Inspection Checklist.	Friday, December 4