

## Summer 2015 HOS E-Newsletter Volume 4, Issue 2



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Welcome to the latest edition (Summer 2015) of the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) e-Newsletter. Over 700 individuals now receive this newsletter. As always, we encourage all Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs) and other stakeholders to send suggestions and ideas for future editions to [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org). Please let us know what information would be helpful to you. We also invite and welcome any best practices that your organization would like to share. This issue and previous issues of the HOS e-Newsletter are also available on the HOS

website ([www.hosonline.org](http://www.hosonline.org)).

### What's New

#### Fielding of the HOS Version 3.0

The HOS Version 3.0 was implemented in Spring 2015 with a new two-column layout format. Other modifications to the HOS 3.0 questionnaire, as compared with the HOS 2.5 questionnaire, include the following changes:

- Revised leakage of urine questions
  - Q42 reworded to focus on leakage of urine rather than urinary incontinence
  - Q43 asks specifically now about the effect of leakage of urine on daily activities or sleep
  - Q44 asks if the beneficiary ever talked with any healthcare provider, not just the current provider
  - Q45 asks if the beneficiary ever discussed treatment options with a healthcare provider rather than received treatment
- Added sleep questions
  - Q53 asks about average amount of sleep at night
  - Q54 asks to rate quality of sleep
- Revised primary language question
  - Q60 reworded to ask what is the main language spoken at home

The sleep questions are based on research that suggests inadequate sleep may contribute to health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, depression, falls, accidents, impaired cognition, and poor quality of life.<sup>1</sup> The goals of Healthy People 2020 include increasing public awareness of the importance of adequate sleep and awareness that the treatment of sleep disorders can improve quality of life.<sup>2</sup> With better sleep health education, beneficiaries may not have to accept sleeplessness and sleep disruption as an inevitable part of aging.

<sup>1</sup> Smyth C. The Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI). *Try This: Best Practices in Nursing Care to Older Adults*. 2007; 6.1. Available at <http://www.wsna.org/assets/entry-assets/Nursing-Practice/Fatigue/PSQI.pdf>. Accessed June 9, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Healthy People 2020. Available at <http://www.HealthyPeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/sleep-health?topicid=38>. Accessed June 9, 2015.

All versions of the HOS are available on the "Survey Instrument" section of the HOS website ([www.hosonline.org](http://www.hosonline.org)).

### **New Veterans RAND 12-Item Health Survey (VR-12) Website**

Information about the VR-36, VR-12, and VR-6D instruments is now available on the Boston University School of Public Health website. The new website offers details on development, applications, and references for the VR-12, which is the core health outcomes measure in the Medicare HOS and HOS-Modified (HOS-M). For information about the instruments and to request permission to use the documentation and scoring algorithms, go to: [www.bu.edu/sph/research/research-landing-page/vr-36-vr-12-and-vr-6d](http://www.bu.edu/sph/research/research-landing-page/vr-36-vr-12-and-vr-6d).

### **CMS Approved Survey Vendors**

The "Approved Survey Vendors" section on the HOS website ([www.hosonline.org](http://www.hosonline.org)) provides a list of CMS-approved survey vendors. Currently, there are eight survey vendors approved to administer the HOS.

### **Participating MAOs**

Beginning in 2015, the full list of participating MAOs included in the *Cohort 15 Performance Measurement* analysis is available on the "Survey Results" section of the HOS website ([www.hosonline.org](http://www.hosonline.org)).

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## **HOS Timelines**



### **HOS 2015 Administration Cycle**

Fielding of the 2015 HOS Administration for the Medicare HOS and HOS-M recently ended. Information about the 2015 HOS Administration protocols, questionnaires, and survey vendor notifications is available in the *HEDIS® 2015, Volume 6: Medicare Health Outcome Survey* in the "Publications" section on the HOS website ([www.hosonline.org/Content/Publications.aspx](http://www.hosonline.org/Content/Publications.aspx)).

*HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).*

### **New HOS Reports Now Available**

- *2014 Cohort 17 HOS Baseline Reports*
- *2012–2014 Cohort 15 HOS Performance Measurement Reports*
- *2014 HOS-M Reports*

Registered Health Plan Management System (HPMS) users should have access to these reports through the HPMS. If you require assistance about accessing reports in the HPMS, please contact CMS via email at [hpms\\_access@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:hpms_access@cms.hhs.gov).

## HOS Data Sets Now Available

- Data sets and accompanying Data User's Guides (DUGs) for HOS *Cohorts 1–14* and HOS-M data sets for 2007–2014
- The HOS *Cohort 15* data are scheduled to be released by November of this year
- Contact the HOS Team at [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org) to request data for your MAO or Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Organization.

## Medicare Star Ratings and HOS

The 2015 Medicare Part C Star Ratings include results from five contract level HOS measures: two measures of functional health and three HEDIS Effectiveness of Care measures. The HEDIS Effectiveness of Care measure *Improving Bladder Control* will not be reported in the 2016 or 2017 Medicare Star Ratings due to revisions to the measure; therefore, only four HOS measures will be included for these years. The first plan preview period for the 2016 Medicare Star Ratings is in August 2015, and the second preview period is expected to occur in September 2015; the exact dates will be announced in upcoming HPMS memos. The 2016 Medicare Star Ratings are scheduled to go live on the Medicare Plan Finder ([www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan](http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan)) in early October 2015. Information about the 2016 Medicare Star Ratings is published on the CMS website at <http://go.cms.gov/partcanddstarratings>.

Measures Used for Star Ratings	Type	Data Collection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Improving or Maintaining Physical Health</i></li><li>• <i>Improving or Maintaining Mental Health</i></li></ul>	Functional Health (Outcome Measures)	Longitudinal: obtained from the baseline and two-year follow up surveys from the same cohort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Monitoring Physical Activity</i></li><li>• <i>Reducing the Risk of Falling</i></li></ul>	Effectiveness of Care (Process Measures)	Round: combined data for the baseline cohort and a different follow up cohort from the same measurement year

The 2015 Medicare Star Ratings will be used to set the 2016 quality bonus payments. The green highlighted sections of the table below depict the relationship between these data collection and reporting periods. The 2016 Medicare Star Ratings will be used to set the 2017 quality bonus payments as indicated in the yellow highlighted sections of the table. The 2016 Medicare Star Ratings data are from the *Cohort 15 Improving or Maintaining Physical and Mental Health* outcome measures and the HEDIS Effectiveness of Care measures that were collected in 2014.

## Medicare HOS Survey Administration and Star Ratings Timeline

	Data Collection		HOS Reports		Medicare Part C Star Ratings			Quality Bonus
	Base-line	Follow Up	Base-line	Follow Up	2-yr PCS/MCS Change	HEDIS Measures*	Rating Year	Payment Year
2017	Cohort 20	Cohort 18	Cohort 19	Cohort 17	2013-2015 Cohort 16	2015 Cohort 18 Baseline & 2015 Cohort 16 Follow Up	2017	2017
2016	Cohort 19	Cohort 17	Cohort 18	Cohort 16	2012-2014 Cohort 15	2014 Cohort 17 Baseline & 2014 Cohort 15 Follow Up	2016	2016
2015	Cohort 18	Cohort 16	Cohort 17	Cohort 15	2011-2013 Cohort 14	2013 Cohort 16 Baseline & 2013 Cohort 14 Follow Up	2015	2015
2014	Cohort 17	Cohort 15	Cohort 16	Cohort 14	2010-2012 Cohort 13	2012 Cohort 15 Baseline & 2012 Cohort 13 Follow Up	2014	2014
2013	Cohort 16	Cohort 14	Cohort 15	Cohort 13	2009-2011 Cohort 12	2011 Cohort 14 Baseline & 2011 Cohort 12 Follow Up	2013	2013

\* The HEDIS Effectiveness of Care Measures collected by the HOS are calculated from the combined round of baseline and follow up data by measurement year.

For more specific information regarding the HEDIS/HOS measures, please refer to the *HEDIS 2015, Volume 6: Specifications for the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey* available at [www.hosonline.org/Content/Publications.aspx](http://www.hosonline.org/Content/Publications.aspx). For questions related to Medicare Part C and D Star Ratings, you may send an email inquiry directly to [PartCandDStarRatings@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:PartCandDStarRatings@cms.hhs.gov). Please be sure to include your contract number in the email.

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### Of Note



#### Asian American and Pacific Islanders

On October 14, 2009, the President re-established the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The Initiative works to improve the quality of life and opportunities for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by facilitating increased access to and participation in federal programs where they remain underserved.<sup>1, 2</sup>

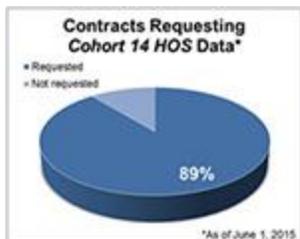
As part of this initiative, the CMS Office of Minority Health (OMH) recently produced two data briefs highlighting the HOS as a unique source of information about Asian Americans (Asians), and Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI). Since April 2013, the HOS has collected measures of race, ethnicity, sex, primary language, and disability status in accordance with the standards established by the Affordable Care Act §4302. These newly expanded demographic measures, combined with the self-reported health status measures captured by the HOS, provide a rich source of data that may be useful for research on Asian American and Pacific Islander populations. In the *2014 Cohort 17 Baseline* survey, there were 8,445 Asian and 1,048 NHOPI respondents. The data briefs are available at [www.hosonline.org/Content/Publications.aspx](http://www.hosonline.org/Content/Publications.aspx).

<sup>1</sup> Executive Order No. 13515, 74 FR 53635, (2009). Accessed on June 1, 2015 at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/executive-order-asian-american-and-pacific-islander-community>.

<sup>2</sup> Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. About the White House Initiative on Asian

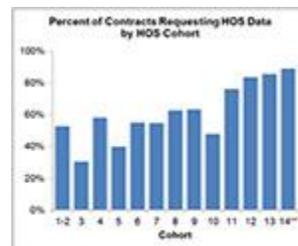
Americans and Pacific Islanders. Accessed on June 1, 2015 at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/aapi/about>.

## HOS Data Requests Continue to Increase



The number and percentage of MAOs requesting their HOS data has continued to steadily increase. Approximately 89% of contracts have asked for their most recent HOS data. The availability of the latest cohort data is announced in an HPMS memo each fall. If you are the designated recipient for your plan, contact the HOS Team at [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org) to receive your data.

To avoid requests from multiple individuals for the same data sets, each plan should coordinate so that only the designated recipient submits the request.



A Data User's Guide (DUG) is included with each data set and provides detailed documentation about file construction and contents for the data set. In the DUG, you will find information on HOS methodology and design, the HOS instrument, data file characteristics, data file layout by position, and annotated baseline and follow up survey forms.

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## HOS Applications



### Commonly Asked Questions

Some recent questions received by our Medicare HOS Information and Technical Support site include:

#### **How will I know when the HOS (or HOS-Modified) reports are available?**

The HPMS users at your MAO or PACE Organization will receive an announcement of the availability of the reports. An HPMS User ID and password are required to access the HPMS. If further assistance is required regarding HPMS access, you may contact CMS via email at [athpms\\_access@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:athpms_access@cms.hhs.gov).

#### **How do I obtain the HOS (or HOS-Modified) data sets?**

An announcement of the availability of the new data will be sent to HPMS users at your MAO or PACE Organization. Contact the HOS team via email at [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org) to request your data. Data sets will be formatted as Comma Separated Value (CSV) files that are accessible with MS Excel. The data will be sent on CD to the designated recipient (one per contract) approximately two to three weeks after the request is received. Documentation for the data file will be included on the CD. Data are encrypted in a self-extracting file using SecureZIP File Encryption Software. The recipient **must** call the HOS team after the CD arrives to get the encryption password (1.888.880.0077).

#### **Where can I find information regarding HOS measures in the Medicare Star Ratings?**

Details regarding the HOS measures included in the Medicare Star Ratings can be found in the following documents:

- Medicare Part C & D Star Ratings Technical Notes
- Medicare Part C & D Display Measure Technical Notes

Both documents may be downloaded from the CMS website at <http://go.cms.gov/partcanddstarratings>.

## Available Articles and Technical Reports

New HOS-related articles and technical reports are continuously added to the HOS website as they become available. We welcome the opportunity to post HOS-related, peer-reviewed articles written by MAOs. Please send published articles to [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org) for CMS review and approval. The following research reports were recently added.

- **Relationships Between Medicare Advantage Contract Characteristics and Quality-of-Care Ratings: An Observational Analysis of Medicare Advantage Star Ratings.**  
This was a retrospective study of MA Star Ratings in 2010 that used unadjusted and adjusted linear regression models to assess the relationship between 5 star rating summary scores and plan characteristics. The study found that in 2010, nonprofit MA contracts received significantly higher star ratings than for-profit contracts.
- **Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) in Older Adult Survivors of Selected Cancers: Data from the SEER-MHOS Linkage.**  
HRQOL was examined with the 36-Item Short Form Health Survey, version 1, and the Veterans RAND 12-Item Health Survey in patients with selected cancers and individuals without cancer on the basis of data linked from the SEER cancer registry system and the Medicare HOS. The following scores were adjusted for sociodemographic characteristics and other chronic conditions, then calculated: Scale scores; Physical Component Summary (PCS) and Mental Component Summary (MCS) scores; and a utility metric (Short Form 6D/Veterans RAND 6D). HRQOL surveillance efforts revealed poor health outcomes among many older adults and specifically among survivors of multiple myeloma and pancreatic cancer.
- **Coexistence of Urinary Incontinence and Major Depressive Disorder with Health-Related Quality of Life in Older Americans with and without Cancer.**  
This study evaluated the prevalence and factors associated with major depressive disorder (MDD) in a population of cancer survivors and the impact of co-occurring MDD and urinary incontinence (UI) on HRQOL. The coexistence of both UI and MDD was associated with a decrease across HRQOL subscales; including 40 points on role-emotional (RE) score. Cancer survivors reporting co-occurrence of UI and MDD experienced significant decrements in HRQOL.

For a full listing of HOS-related articles in the literature and technical reports, please visit the "Publications" section of the HOS website ([www.hosonline.org](http://www.hosonline.org)).

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## HOS Training



### Self-Paced Training Webinar

As a reminder, webinars about the HOS and how to use HOS results, including a tutorial titled *Understanding the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) Performance Results Used in the MA Plan Ratings* are available at [www.hosonline.org](http://www.hosonline.org). The webinars are designed to help MAOs

understand how the performance measurement results are calculated, how the HOS results are used in the Medicare Star Ratings, and how to use the HOS reports in performance improvement activities.

[Click here](#) to view the webinars.

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## Medicare HOS Contacts

### General Questions about the Medicare HOS:

Contact Medicare HOS Information and Technical Support

Telephone: 1-888-880-0077

Email: [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org).

### Questions about the HOS Program or Policy:

Contact the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services at [hos@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:hos@cms.hhs.gov).

### Medicare HOS website:

<http://www.hosonline.org>

**We welcome your feedback! Please email [hos@HCQIS.org](mailto:hos@HCQIS.org) and let us know what you think!**

To view past issues, visit <http://www.hosonline.org>.

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