

Winter 2015–2016 HOS E-Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 1



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Welcome to the latest edition (Winter 2015–2016) of our Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) e-Newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide general updates about the HOS Program. This newsletter is shared with approximately 800 individuals from Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs), researchers, and other stakeholders. The newsletter is also posted on the HOS website.

As always, we encourage readers to send ideas for future editions to hos@HCQIS.org. 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. All issues of the HOS e-Newsletter are available on the HOS website (<http://www.hosonline.org>).

What's New

HOS Website Refresh in Progress

To improve access, usability, and function, the [HOS website](#) was recently migrated to a new web content management platform, and over the next few months, site design enhancements will be implemented.

The HOS website is a resource that provides:

- Historical overview of the project
- Updates on project activities

- Reports of ongoing research efforts
- Access to public use files and supporting documentation
- Clearinghouse of electronic information about journal articles, bibliographies, and technical reports relating to the HOS
- Links to project partners

Average monthly unique page views have continued to increase in the past five years. Feedback and ideas for the website can be emailed to hos@HCQIS.org.

Survey Administration Resources Now Available

As part of the HOS website redesign and to better serve MAOs and survey vendors needing information, a new [section](#) has been developed that includes relevant documents related to survey administration. The Survey Administration page (<http://www.hosonline.org/en/survey-administration/>) includes the [HOS 2016 Survey Administration Plan Memo](#) outlining the survey vendor selection process; MAO reporting requirements; optional reporting; and contains a list of MAOs that are required to participate in HOS during the upcoming survey year. It also includes similar information about the [HOS-M plan reporting requirements](#).

Web content has been reorganized into categories for easier navigation. For example, the new Program page (<http://www.hosonline.org/en/program-overview/>) includes sub-pages describing an overview of the program, the program timeline, information about survey vendors, and survey administration content. The HOS website is maintained throughout the year with up-to-date information about the project as it becomes available.

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HOS Timeline



HOS 2016 Administration Cycle

The fielding phase of the 2016 HOS begins at the end of March and continues into July. Go to the new Program page (<http://www.hosonline.org/en/program-overview/>) to navigate to the 2016 Survey Vendor List (Survey Vendors sub-page) and 2016 Survey Administration Memos (Survey Administration sub-page).

HOS Reports Now Available

The most recent HOS reports available are:

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

Your CMS Quality Point-of-Contact and HPMS users should have access to these reports through the HPMS. If assistance is required regarding HPMS access to the reports, please contact CMS via email at hpms_access@cms.hhs.gov. Sample reports are available on the HOS website at <http://hosonline.org/en/overview/>.

HOS Data Sets Now Available

The most recent HOS data sets available are:

- Data sets and accompanying Data Users Guides (DUGs) for *Cohorts 1-15*
- Data sets and accompanying DUGs for HOS-M data sets for 2007-2014

The DUG included with each data set provides detailed documentation about file construction and contents for the data set. In the DUG, you will find information on methodology and design, the survey instrument, data file characteristics, data file layout by position, annotated baseline surveys, and follow up surveys, when applicable. Contact the HOS Team at hos@HCQIS.org to request data for your MAO or Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Organization.

Trends in Requested HOS Data

More than 80% of MAOs have requested and received their data for the three most recent HOS cohorts. This is an increase in the percent of MAOs that requested their data, as interest in beneficiary-level data has grown over time. The increased interest seems likely to correspond in part to the Medicare Star Ratings, which CMS uses for quality bonus payments. In addition, MAOs report using their beneficiary-level HOS data to guide quality improvement efforts that address their performance across the Star Ratings measures.

Medicare Star Ratings and HOS

The 2016 Medicare Star Ratings are now available on the Medicare Plan Finder (<http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan>). The table below depicts the timeline for HOS data collection, report availability, and information about which HOS datasets contribute to a specific quality bonus payment year for the Medicare Star Ratings. The

2016 Medicare Star Ratings will be used to set the 2017 quality bonus payments (see the yellow highlighted section below).

Medicare HOS Survey Administration and Star Ratings Timeline								
	Data Collection		HOS Reports		Medicare Part C Star Ratings			Quality Bonus
	Baseline	Follow Up	Baseline	Follow Up	2-yr PCS/MCS Change	HEDIS Measures	Rating Year	Payment Year
2018	Cohort 21	Cohort 19	Cohort 20	Cohort 18	2014-2016 Cohort 17	2016 Cohort 19 Baselines & 2016 Cohort 17 Follow Up	2018	2018
2017	Cohort 20	Cohort 18	Cohort 19	Cohort 17	2013-2015 Cohort 16	2015 Cohort 18 Baselines & 2015 Cohort 16 Follow-up	2017	2017
2016	Cohort 19	Cohort 17	Cohort 18	Cohort 16	2012-2014 Cohort 15	2014 Cohort 17 Baselines & 2014 Cohort 15 Follow Up	2016	2016
2015	Cohort 18	Cohort 16	Cohort 17	Cohort 15	2011-2013 Cohort 14	2013 Cohort 16 Baselines & 2013 Cohort 14 Follow Up	2015	2015
2014	Cohort 17	Cohort 15	Cohort 16	Cohort 14	2010-2012 Cohort 13	2012 Cohort 15 Baselines & 2012 Cohort 13 Follow Up	2014	2014
2013	Cohort 16	Cohort 14	Cohort 15	Cohort 13	2009-2011 Cohort 12	2011 Cohort 14 Baselines & 2011 Cohort 12 Follow Up	2013	2013

Four HEDIS® Effectiveness of Care Measures collected by HOS are calculated from the combined round of baseline and follow up data by reporting year: Management of Urinary Incontinence in Older Adults; Physical Activity in Older Adults; Fall Risk Management; and Osteoporosis Testing in Older Women. The Management of Urinary Incontinence in Older Adults Measure (used for the Star Ratings *Improving Bladder Control* measure) is currently under revision, and will not be included in the 2016 or 2017 Medicare Star Ratings. Beginning with the 2012 Medicare Star Ratings, the Osteoporosis Testing in Older Women measure has been moved to the display measures on the CMS website and is not part of the Star Ratings.

For more information on the Medicare Part C Star Ratings, go to the CMS website at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovGenIn/PerformanceData.html>. If you have further questions about the Medicare Part C and Part D Star Ratings, contact PartCandDStarRatings@cms.hhs.gov. Be sure to include your contract number in the email.

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Aging and Health Care Quality in America

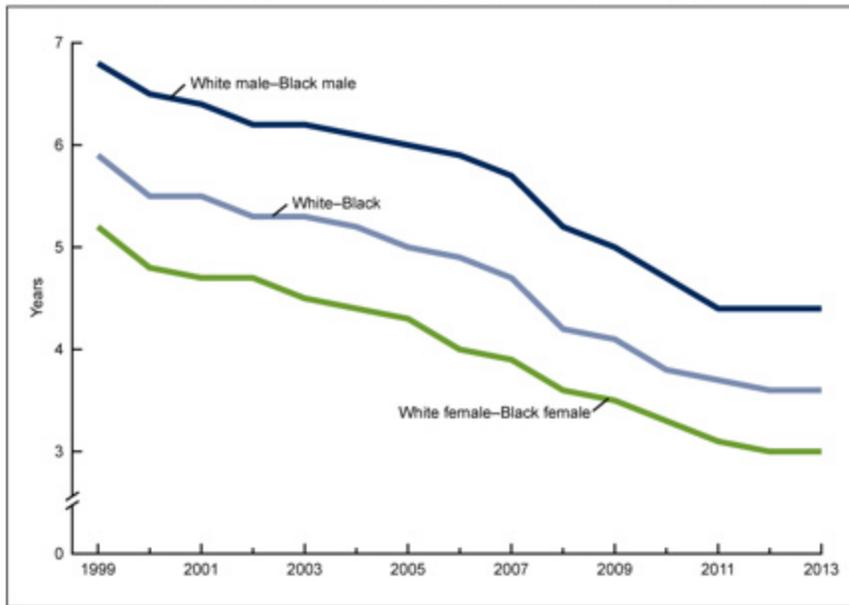
Healthy aging, particularly for the Medicare Advantage population, has been the focus of the Medicare HOS since its inception in 1998. The self-reported functional status outcomes measured by the HOS are useful to MAOs in monitoring beneficiary health status over time and the impact of MAO health interventions. One of the best ways for older adults to remain healthy and continue a desirable quality of life is to be physically active. Physical Activity Guidelines published by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion state that “Adults aged 65 years and older gain substantial health benefits from regular physical activity and these benefits continue to occur throughout their lives. Promoting physical activity for older adults is especially important because this population is the least physically active of any age group.”¹ Aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities are recommended for older adults, as well as balance training to reduce the risk of debilitating and life-threatening falls. Research continues to show that people who practice healthy behaviors such as getting regular physical activity and eating a healthy diet significantly reduce their chances of developing chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes.² A study of obesity in the HOS senior population found that obese beneficiaries have poorer health, functioning, and health related quality of life (HRQOL) than normal weight beneficiaries and have substantially higher outpatient care utilization.³

Available on the HOS website is a literature review, “Functional Status in Older Adults: Intervention Strategies for Impacting Patient Outcomes,”⁴ that synthesizes selected articles about functional status outcomes in older adults. The review includes highly prevalent clinical issues that if managed effectively, could slow or reverse functional decline. These and other resources for MAOs and other interested parties are highlighted on the [Resources](#) page of the HOS website.

Health Disparities Decreasing

Data from the HOS also describe the health and health care of various sub-populations of older adults. The 2015 National Center for Health Statistics report on the change in disparity in life expectancy by gender and race shows that the gap is narrowing.⁵ As the figure below depicts, the **difference** between life expectancy for the white population and the black population (the middle light blue line) is decreasing.

Figure 2. Differences in life expectancy between white and black populations, by sex: United States, 1999–2013



SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

Table 23 in the HOS Baseline report and Table 24 in the Performance Measurement Results (sample reports available at <http://www.hosonline.org/en/data-dissemination> and individual reports available to MAOs) display the Physical Component Summary (PCS) Score and the Mental Component Summary (MCS) Score by various demographic categories, including race. These tables may be a valuable resource for MAOs in tracking health disparities among their beneficiary population.

HOS and Sleep

Finally, the HOS 3.0, fielded for the first time in 2015, now gathers data on sleep duration and quality. Preliminary cross-sectional data from the sleep measures recently added to the HOS indicate that there may also be an association between an optimal amount of sleep and overall health. These data are in line with findings from other researchers regarding the benefits of sleep and the effects of disordered sleep.⁶ Further research using data from the HOS will contribute to the science of sleep and health in an aging population.

¹ Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. *Physical Activity Guidelines*. 2013. Accessed February 3, 2016 at <http://health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/>.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The State of Aging and Health in America 2013*. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Department of Health and Human Services; 2013.

³ Malinoff RL, Elliott MN, Giordano LA, Grace SC and Burroughs JN. Obesity utilization and health-related quality of life in Medicare enrollees. *Journal of Ambulatory Care Management*. 2013 Jan; 36(1):61-71.

⁴Center for the Assessment of Pharmaceutical Practices (CAPP), Department of Health Policy and Management, Boston University School of Public Health. Functional Status in Older Adults: Intervention Strategies for Impacting Patient Outcomes. 2011. Accessed February 3, 2016 at http://www.hosonline.org/globalassets/hos-online/publications/functional_status_in_older_adults_2011.pdf.

⁵Kochanek KD, Arias E, Anderson RN. Leading causes of death contributing to decrease in life expectancy gap between black and white populations: United States, 1999. *NCHS Data Brief, No 218*. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2015.

⁶Rodriguez JC, Dzierzewski JM, Alessi CA. Sleep problems in the elderly. *Med Clin North Am*. 2015 Mar; 99(2):431-9. doi: [10.1016/j.mcna.2014.11.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mcna.2014.11.013). Epub 2014 Dec 30.

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HOS Applications



Recently Asked Questions

The HOS website maintains a list of Frequently Asked Questions, with answers provided. A link to this list (<http://www.hosonline.org/en/faqs/>) is provided at the bottom of every page. Recent questions received by our Medicare HOS Information and Technical Support site include:

Where can I find information about obtaining reports for my MAO?

To obtain reports for your MAO, you must first have access to HPMS, which requires a User ID that CMS assigns, and a secure password: <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Computer-Data-and-Systems/HPMS/UserIDProcess.html>. If you do not have an HPMS User ID, you may inquire within your organization for the person who is the CMS Quality Point of Contact for your MAO. This person should have access to the reports. Otherwise you may contact CMS via e-mail at hpms_access@cms.hhs.gov for assistance.

How are reports for my MAO distributed?

All HOS report distribution occurs electronically to participating MAOs through the Health Plan Management System (HPMS). CMS notifies HPMS users when new HOS Reports are posted. The HOS Baseline and Performance Measurement Reports,

as well as aggregate results tables such as the HOS Star Ratings Validation table, are available for MAOs through the HPMS. From the opening screen in HPMS, select “Quality & Performance” then “HOS” from the green bar at the top, and either “Baseline Reports” or “Performance Measurement Reports” under **Documentation** in the dropdown box on the right. Clicking on either option takes you to a form where you may select the “Cohort,” and “Contract” from the “Filter by” box, then select your contract number from the “Contract Number/Name” box, and select the “Submit” button. From the next page you will be able to access the report via the contract number. You may also filter by “State” and “Parent Organization.”

You may access the Star Ratings Validation and Aggregate Score Analysis Tables under **Survey Response** from the dropdown box. Select the “Cohort,” “Type” of Report, and “Contract” from the “Filter by” box, then select your contract number and submit. The table will display on the next page. The Types of Reports from the Star Ratings Validation include Star Ratings Measures, Improving or Maintaining Mental Health (MCS), and Improving or Maintaining Physical Health (PCS). You may also filter by “State,” “Region,” and “Parent Organization.”

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HOS Training



Resources Highlight

The HOS website maintains a library of resources (<http://www.hosonline.org/en/publications/>) to help MAOs develop and apply strategies that address the HOS items used in the CMS Medicare Part C Star Ratings. These resources include a series of tutorials on how to use HOS data and a focused literature review synthesizing articles about interventions that could impact functional status outcomes in older adults. The library also includes lists of research findings derived from HOS data including publications, webinars, conference presentations, and technical briefs, all of which target a variety of audiences including MAOs, survey vendors, researchers, and policymakers. Recent publications made available in the resource library are:

Revisiting the Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results Cancer Registry and Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (SEER-MHOS) Linked Data Resource for Patient-Reported Outcomes Research in Older Adults with Cancer.

Kent EE, Malinoff R, Rozjabek HM, Ambs A, Clauser SB, Topor MA, Yuan G, Burroughs J, Rodgers AB, and DeMichele K.

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. 2016; 64(1):186-92. Abstract available

online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jgs.13888>.

Relationships Between Medicare Advantage Contract Characteristics and Quality-of-Care Ratings: An Observational Analysis of Medicare Advantage Star Ratings.

Xu P, Burgess JF, Cabral H, Soria-Saucedo R, and Kazis LE.

Annals of Internal Medicine. 2015; 162(5):353-358. Article available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.7326/M14-0332>.

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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.

Questions about the HOS Program or Policy:

Contact the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services at hos@cms.hhs.gov.

Medicare HOS website:

<http://www.hosonline.org>

We welcome your feedback! Please email hos@HCQIS.org and let us know what you think!

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

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