Medicare Health Outcomes Survey
2022 Survey Vendor Update Training

May 24, 2022
Welcome and Introduction
## 2022 Survey Vendor Update Training Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time (p.m., ET)</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:10 – 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>HOS CMS Update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 – 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>HOS 2022 Administration Updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 – 2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>HOS 2021 Survey Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 – 2:35 p.m.</td>
<td>Survey Material Updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:35 – 2:55 p.m.</td>
<td>Data Coding and Data Submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:55 – 3:05 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:05 – 3:35 p.m.</td>
<td>Data Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:35 – 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Quality Oversight and Project Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 – 4:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Questions and Closing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:10 – 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Post-Training Test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOS CMS Update
Overview

- Introduction to the HOS
- HOS Primary Goals
- Other HOS Data Uses
- Public Reporting
- Data Integrity
- Star Ratings Update
- Data Use Agreements (DUA)
Introduction to the HOS

- Monitors quality of care provided to Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs) by measuring self-reported health status, physical and mental functioning, and outcomes of care.

- Participants: Medicare beneficiaries at least 18 years of age who are currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage (MA) contract and reside in the U.S. or its territories.
  - Baseline: No continuous enrollment requirement.
  - Follow-Up: Members resurveyed after two years.
HOS Primary Goals

• Gather valid, reliable, and meaningful data that are used to:
  – Monitor health plan performance
  – Reward top-performing MA contracts
  – Estimate frailty and adjust payments for Fully Integrated Dual Eligible (FIDE) Special Needs Plans (SNP) and Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)
  – Provide metrics that allow plans to monitor the health of their members and target quality improvement activities
  – Provide information to Medicare beneficiaries that can help them to make more informed enrollment decisions
Other HOS Data Uses

• Assess frailty, health disparities, and quality of life in the Medicare Advantage population
• Advance the science of functional health outcomes measurement
• Support research by CMS, other federal agencies, and external researchers
  – Public Use Files (PUF)
  – Limited Data Sets (LDS)
  – Research Identifiable Files (RIF)
  – SEER-MHOS data resource provides information about elderly MA enrollees with cancer (NIH/NCI)
Public Reporting of HOS Data

• Star Ratings measures derived from HOS results are publicly reported by CMS for each participating contract
• Medicare Plan Finder, a consumer-friendly online tool on www.medicare.gov that allows users to compare quality, cost, and coverage options
• Additional information can be found at http://go.cms.gov/partcanddstarratings
Star Ratings: Impact

• Public Reporting
  – HOS data are used in the Star Ratings to help people with Medicare to compare plans prior to the annual Medicare Open Enrollment period

• Marketing/Enrollment
  – CMS makes special enrollment provisions for high performing contracts

• Financial
  – The Affordable Care Act established CMS’s Star Ratings as the basis of Quality Bonus Payments
Data integrity is critical to Star Ratings
CMS continues to monitor and identify risks for inaccurate or unreliable Star Ratings data
   – A contract’s rating is reduced to 1 star if biased or erroneous data are identified
Survey vendors must attest to:
   – Validity of HOS data submitted
   – Conformance with HOS protocols
   – Prompt reporting of any discrepancies
MAOs and HOS Vendors MAY NOT:

- Attempt to influence beneficiaries’ responses to HOS survey questions in any way
- Imply that positive feedback from members will reward or benefit the MAO
- Offer incentives of any kind
- Show or provide the HOS questionnaire or cover letters to members prior to and during administration
Star Ratings: Integrity (Cont’d)

• MAOs and HOS Vendors MAY:
  – Notify all members of a contract that they may be asked to participate in the 2022 HOS

• Encouraging participation without biasing the results is tricky
  – Please consult with the HOS Project Team rather than jeopardizing your clients’ results by having them labeled as biased
CMS highlights outlier performance in the Star Ratings in two ways:

- The 5-star icon
- Consistently Low Performer Indicator (LPI) icon
Percentage of MA enrollees in contracts with 4 or more stars, 2012-2022
Star Ratings: Measures

• 5 HOS measures are used in Star Ratings
  – Functional Health (Outcome) measures
    • Improving or Maintaining Physical Health
    • Improving or Maintaining Mental Health
  – HEDIS® Effectiveness of Care measures
    • Monitoring Physical Activity
    • Improving Bladder Control
    • Reducing the Risk of Falling

® Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).
2023 Star Ratings: Data Sources

• HOS data sources for 2023 Star Ratings
  – Effectiveness of Care measures: Cohort 22 Follow-Up (2021) and Cohort 24 Baseline data (2021)

• 2023 Star Ratings release date: Fall 2022
Data Use Agreement (DUA) Terms and Restrictions

- Notify the HOS Project Team immediately of any changes in key personnel or subcontractors after submission of the initial DUA
- **NEW:** A DUA update request must be submitted in Enterprise Privacy Policy Engine (EPPE) within three (3) business days of any change in key personnel or subcontractors that occurs after the initial DUA is submitted to the HOS Project Team
- **NEW:** Submit updated DUAs to the HOS Project Team after DUA Management Team certification
Annual DUA Process

• CMS-approved HOS survey vendors must execute the following steps in EPPE:
  – Verify all current staff and subcontractors are listed
  – Submit signed DUA Addendums for contract changes
  – Submit an update request to add 2022 HOS data by June 3, 2022

• Submit fully executed DUA to the HOS Project Team by June 10, 2022
CMS DUA Management team will not process DUA requests for any entity with an expired DUA for any CMS projects

- Survey vendors should proactively manage DUA renewals and extensions
- All DUAs for the organization will expire if one DUA from that organization expires. No actions on existing DUAs held by the organization will be processed until the expired DUA is extended or closed.
Overview

• HOS Instrument Updates
• Data Collection Overview
• Data Collection Timeline
• HEDIS Volume 6 Updates
• Fielding Non-CMS Surveys
**NEW:** CMS implemented the following changes to the HOS instrument for 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 28 (Arthritis of Hip/Knee)</td>
<td>Question removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 29 (Arthritis of Hand/Wrist)</td>
<td>Question removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 31 (Sciatica)</td>
<td>Question removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 41 (Smoking)</td>
<td>Question removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 67 (Income)</td>
<td>Question removed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection Protocol

• Mixed mode data collection
• Longitudinal to assess health over time
  – Sample member at Baseline, then two years later (at Follow-Up)
• English, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian
  – Russian protocol: mail only
Standardized Data Collection

• Survey vendors must use the standardized data collection protocol outlined in Medicare HOS Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical Specifications V2.6 (QAG)

• Standardized data collection ensures survey data collected across the CMS-approved HOS survey vendors are comparable

• Survey vendors may not change the wording or order of the survey questions, mailing materials, or telephone script
Mail Protocol

• Standardized mailing materials and questionnaire
  – Prenotification letter
  – Two survey mailings containing survey cover letter, questionnaire, and business reply envelope
  – Reminder/thank-you postcard
    • Two reminder/thank-you postcards for Russian mailing materials
Mail Protocol (Cont’d)

• Survey vendors send mailing materials as assigned by the member’s protocol path
• Survey vendors may **not** send materials to a member that differ from the member’s assigned protocol path
Telephone Protocol

• Members in telephone phase:
  – Did not respond to mail questionnaire
  – Returned a blank or partially complete questionnaire

• Standardized telephone interviewing script and specifications

• Must have enough interviewers to support data collection timeline
NEW: Minimum of five telephone attempts to reach nonrespondents; for each nonrespondent, maximum of five telephone attempts to a single number, and no more than nine total attempts across all numbers

- After five attempts to a single number, no further attempts are made to that number
- If a second or third number is available, survey vendors should dial these numbers
Telephone attempts must occur on
  – Different times of day
  – Different days of the week
    – NEW: Different weeks (at least three calendar weeks)
  – 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. call window (member local time)

NEW: The first call attempt must occur within the first 10 calendar days of dialing

NEW: The fifth attempt must occur no sooner than 21 calendar days after the first call attempt

Interviewers may not leave voicemail messages
Telephone Protocol (Cont’d)

• Survey vendors are responsible for properly implementing the telephone protocol
  – Including proper training of interviewers, following CATI script verbatim, making calls in a quiet environment, properly programming telephone specifications

• Interviewers must be trained on how to address technical issues (e.g., system failure) during a telephone interview
  – Established processes must be documented in the survey vendor’s Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)
Determining Language Preferences

- Survey vendors work with MAOs to determine language preferences for the Baseline survey.
- Survey vendors **must** use the Protocol Identifier Flag to determine which language to contact the member or proxy for the Follow-Up protocol unless the member or proxy requests otherwise.
Russian Survey Administration

• Russian is a mail-only protocol
  – Two standardized mailing materials and questionnaires, and two reminder/thank-you postcards (one after each mailing)
  – If a member received a mail survey in Russian but would like to take the survey over the phone in English, Spanish, or Chinese (if applicable), the survey vendor must allow this
Customer Support Services

- Survey vendors must institute processes to accommodate English and Spanish incoming calls and email correspondence.
- Survey vendors who field Chinese and Russian must institute processes to respond to calls and email correspondence in Chinese and Russian.
Member Confidentiality

- Sampling procedures are designed so MAOs cannot identify members selected to participate in the survey
- Maintain confidentiality of sampled members and do NOT provide MAOs with member names or other member-identifying information
  - The only file that can be shared with the MAO is the Supplemental File
- Only provide minimum data necessary to subcontractors to perform activities
Subcontractors

• The following tasks may be subcontracted to another organization:
  – Customer support services
  – Printing, sorting, and mailing HOS materials
  – Data entry
  – Telephone interviewing

• Document all subcontractors in the survey vendor QAP and DUA
Subcontractor Oversight

• Electronic images, files, and recordings must be kept on the survey vendor's systems and retained per QAG record storage requirements

• Conduct onsite and remote quality checks and monitoring

• Ensure that subcontractors participate in quality oversight activities conducted by the HOS Project Team
• Survey vendors who use telephone subcontractors must participate in telephone monitoring in addition to its subcontractor’s monitoring
  – Survey vendors must conduct a sufficient percentage of telephone interviewer monitoring to identify issues with interviews completed by its subcontractors
  – Survey vendors must monitor at least 10 percent of telephone interviews by its internal telephone interviewers and 10 percent of telephone interviews by subcontractors (if applicable)
Sharing Data with Clients

- Limit data reported to MAOs to the data elements in biweekly summary status reports
- Do not share any sample file variables
- Do not report any calculations or results of HOS measures to MAOs
## Data Collection Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date (2022)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Send sample files to vendors</td>
<td>June 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail <strong>Baseline</strong> and <strong>Follow-Up</strong> prenotification letter</td>
<td>July 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open survey vendor customer support telephone and email</td>
<td>July 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open inbound electronic telephone interviewing</td>
<td>July 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail <strong>Baseline</strong> and <strong>Follow-Up</strong> first questionnaire</td>
<td>July 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Data Collection Timeline (Cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date (2022)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mail <strong>Baseline</strong> and <strong>Follow-Up</strong> reminder/thank-you postcard</td>
<td>August 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail <strong>Baseline</strong> and <strong>Follow-Up</strong> second questionnaire</td>
<td>August 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail <strong>Baseline</strong> and <strong>Follow-Up</strong> second reminder/thank-you postcard <em>(Russian only)</em></td>
<td>September 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct <strong>Baseline</strong> and <strong>Follow-Up</strong> outbound telephone interviewing</td>
<td>September 19 – October 31</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Data Collection Timeline (Cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date (2022)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit interim data files</td>
<td>October 4 – October 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End Baseline and Follow-Up data collection</strong></td>
<td>October 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare and submit final data files</td>
<td>November 1 – November 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final data files due</strong></td>
<td>November 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Retention

• Retain all data files (electronic or paper) for a minimum of **three years** onsite at the survey vendor’s facilities
  – Paper Questionnaires: Retain through **December 31 of the following survey administration year**; may destroy paper surveys following electronic imagining and QA
  – Telephone Data: Retain all telephone survey data and recordings in all fielded languages, onsite, including subcontractor telephone interview recordings

• Establish a process for data destruction after **three years** and complete an attestation of data destruction
HEDIS Volume 6 Updates
Summary of Changes

- **NEW:** Removed five questions from the questionnaire and revised question numbers
- **NEW:** Revised CMS HOS-M survey vendor program section to reflect HOS-M is a multivendor program
- **NEW:** Updated telephone attempt guidance
- **NEW:** Updated letters for the second questionnaire mailing
Fielding Non-CMS Surveys with HOS Questions
NCQA prohibits survey vendors from fielding additional surveys containing HOS questions eight weeks prior to and during the official HOS (May through November).

Fielding surveys similar to the HOS, even in the off-season, may negatively impact HOS response rates.

- If the HOS response rate is too low, the contract risks not having enough data to calculate outcome measures or Star Ratings, which may impact the contract’s quality bonus payments.
Fielding Non-CMS Surveys with HOS Questions (Cont’d)

- The HOS and HOS-M questionnaires and HEDIS Volume 6 are no longer available on the HOS website.
- To download the HOS and HOS-M questionnaires and HEDIS Volume 6, visit NCQA’s HOS webpage.
- Survey vendors fielding off-cycle, non-CMS sponsored surveys using the HOS or HOS-M instruments or questions must complete an HOS Survey Use Application and acknowledge and sign the HOS Terms of Use.
- HEDIS Volume 6 is accessible from the NCQA Store.
HOS 2021 Survey Results
Overview

• HOS 2021 Survey Administration
• Response Rate Trends
• Survey Response Rates
  – Cohort 24 Baseline
  – Cohort 22 Follow-Up
• Survey Disposition Components
  – Cohort 24 Baseline
  – Cohort 22 Follow-Up
• Key Points
• Four survey vendors administered the HOS
• For this presentation, survey vendors were randomly assigned a letter (A-C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Number of Contracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Unique Contracts</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 24 Baseline</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 22 Follow-Up</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Response Rate Trends


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration Year</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>27.7</td>
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</table>
Survey Response Rates
Cohort 24 Baseline
Overall Response Rates Trend
Cohorts 22-24 Baseline Surveys: 2019-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration Year</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Completed Surveys by Mode

Cohorts 22-24 Baseline Surveys: 2019-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration Year</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
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</table>
Completed Mail Survey Rates by Vendor

Cohorts 23-24 Baseline Surveys: 2020-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Vendor</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>84.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Completed Telephone Survey Rates by Vendor
Cohorts 23-24 Baseline Surveys: 2020-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Vendor</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variability of Completed Survey Rates by Vendor

Cohort 24 Baseline Survey: 2021

Response Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Vendor</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020 Vendor RR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021 Vendor RR</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
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</table>
Percent of Sample Responding by Mail
Cohort 24 Baseline Survey: 2021

Survey Vendor
- A: 1st Mailing: 20.1%, 2nd Mailing: 7.4%
- B: 1st Mailing: 19.2%, 2nd Mailing: 7.5%
- C: 1st Mailing: 18.5%, 2nd Mailing: 8.0%
Percent of Sample Responding by Telephone

Cohort 24 Baseline Survey: 2021

Survey vendor

Telephone Attempt

T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6 T7 T8
Survey Response Rates

Cohort 22 Follow-Up
Overall Response Rates Trend
Cohorts 20-22 Follow-Up Surveys: 2019–2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration Year</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
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</table>
Completed Surveys by Mode

Cohorts 20-22 Follow-Up Surveys: 2019-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration Year</th>
<th>Mail</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent
Completed Mail Survey Rates by Vendor
Cohorts 21-22 Follow-Up Surveys: 2020-2021

Survey Vendor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Completed Telephone Survey Rates by Vendor
Cohorts 21-22 Follow-Up Surveys: 2020-2021

Survey Vendors

- A: 9.5% (2020), 8.6% (2021)
- B: 10.4% (2020), 8.3% (2021)
- C: 8.7% (2020), 5.7% (2021)
Variability of Completed Survey Rates by Vendor

Cohort 22 Follow-Up Survey: 2021
Percent of Sample Responding by Mail
Cohort 22 Follow-Up Survey: 2021

Survey Vendor

1st Mailing 2nd Mailing

A 48.5 10.1
B 46.5 10.3
C 43.7 11.7
Percent of Sample Responding by Telephone

*Cohort 22 Follow-Up Survey: 2021*
Survey Disposition Components
Cohort 24 Baseline and Cohort 22 Follow-Up
Mail Nonresponse
After Max Attempts: M36

Baseline

Follow-Up

Survey Vendor

2021 Vendor %  2020 Vendor %
Telephone Nonresponse
After Max Attempts: T36

Baseline and Follow-Up Comparison:

Survey Vendor

- **A**: 2021 Vendor % = 37.4%, 2020 Vendor % = 30.2%
- **B**: 2021 Vendor % = 53.6%, 2020 Vendor % = 42.3%
- **C**: 2021 Vendor % = 64.1%, 2020 Vendor % = 46.3%

- **A**: 2021 Vendor % = 25.5%, 2020 Vendor % = 15.5%
- **B**: 2021 Vendor % = 50.0%, 2020 Vendor % = 22.3%
- **C**: 2021 Vendor % = 56.0%, 2020 Vendor % = 28.0%
Mail Refusal: M32

Baseline

Survey Vendor

A

B

C

Follow-Up

0%

1%

2%

A

B

C

2021 Vendor % 2020 Vendor %

0.6 0.3

0.1 0.1

0.0 0.0

0.0 0.0

0.2

0.8

2.0

0.9

0.1

0.0

0.0

0.1

0.2

0.2
Telephone Refusal: T32

Baseline and Follow-Up Survey Vendor 2021 Vendor % vs. 2020 Vendor %

Survey Vendor:
- A
- B
- C

Baseline:
- Vendor A: 11.8%
- Vendor B: 12.7%
- Vendor C: 8.8%

Follow-Up:
- Vendor A: 9.8%
- Vendor B: 12.3%
- Vendor C: 7.4%
• Both Baseline and Follow-Up response rates continued to decrease in 2021
• Over 80% of surveys are completed by mail
• The first mailing captures a larger number of respondents than the second
• Similarly, the first telephone attempt obtains the most responses while subsequent attempts have a trend for decreased success
• Wide ranges in response rates across contracts were evident for some survey vendors
Survey Material Updates
Overview

- Mailing Material Updates
- Instrument Updates
- Telephone Specification Updates
- Customer Support and FAQ Updates
Mailing Materials Updates

Cover Letters

• **NEW**: Revised the Second Questionnaire Cover Letter for Follow-Up

Dear [MEMBER FIRST NAME] [MEMBER LAST NAME]:

We recently mailed you the “Medicare Health Outcomes Survey.” If you already returned this survey, thank you, and you don’t need to do anything else.
Survey Tagline for VR-12 Items

• **NEW:** Removed "Items 1-9: the VR-12 Health Survey item content was developed and modified from a 36-item health survey."

Removed Questions and Updated Question Numbers

• **NEW:** Removed Question 28 (Arthritis of Hip/Knee), Question 29 (Arthritis of Hand/Wrist), Question 31 (Sciatica), Question 41 (Smoking) and Question 67 (Income) and updated question numbers accordingly
Chinese Font Requirements

- NEW: Revised guidance to specify that survey vendors must print Chinese materials in PMingLiu, SimSun, or another readable font

Response Option Shapes

- NEW: Survey vendors are permitted to use ovals or circles instead of boxes for response items; survey vendors may not reduce the size of the response item ovals, circles, or boxes
NEW: Added Inbound introduction language for use when a member or proxy initiates contact to complete the survey

>INTRO-IN<
Thank you for calling [SURVEY VENDOR NAME]. [SURVEY VENDORS THAT NEED TO INCLUDE THIS DISCLAIMER, INSERT HERE]: This call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes.

<1> RESPONDENT READY TO START [Q61]
<2> NEED PROXY [PROXY]
NEW: Specified Outbound introduction language for outbound telephone attempts

>INTRO-OUT<
Hello, I’m calling on behalf of Medicare. [SURVEY VENDORS THAT NEED TO INCLUDE THIS DISCLAIMER, INSERT HERE:] This call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes. We’re doing an important survey about the health of people in Medicare health plans. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Recently, we sent you a letter and questionnaire in the mail. We’re trying to finish the study, so I’d like to interview you now over the phone.

{IF R ASKS IF YOU ARE CALLING FROM MEDICARE, SAY: I am calling from [SURVEY VENDOR NAME]. Medicare has asked our organization to help conduct this study.}

<1> RESPONDENT READY TO START
<2> NEED PROXY

[Q61]
[PROXY]
NEW: Removed Question 28 (Arthritis of Hip/Knee), Question 29 (Arthritis of Hand/Wrist), Question 31 (Sciatica), Question 41 (Smoking) and Question 67 (Income) and updated question numbers accordingly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 60</th>
<th>Is the house or apartment you currently live in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owned or being bought by you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owned or being bought by someone in your family other than you,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rented for money,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not owned and one in which you live without payment of rent, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>None of these?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>NOT ASCERTAINED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 60</th>
<th>Is the house or apartment [he/she] currently lives in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owned or being bought by [him/her].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owned or being bought by someone in [his/her] family other than [him/her],</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rented for money,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not owned and one in which [he/she] lives without payment of rent, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>None of these?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>NOT ASCERTAINED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[TERM] Interviewer Note: If the respondent selects an option before all the options are read, code that option and move to the end of the survey.

>TERM< Those are all the questions I have. Thank you for taking part in this important interview.
FAQ Updates

• **NEW:** Added FAQ for members who do not wish to complete the survey but do not specify that they would like to be excluded from future surveys

27. **Refusal from Study:** I am not interested in completing this survey. I do not want to complete this survey.

Thank you for contacting the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey. We encourage you to reconsider participating. This is a very important survey sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the federal agency that runs Medicare. If you are still not interested in completing the survey, then please discard the mailing provided to you.
FAQ Updates (Cont'd)

- **NEW:** Revised FAQ to specify response to members who wish to be removed from the study and excluded from future surveys

28. Refusal/Removal from Study: Please remove me from the study. Please do not ever contact me again.
   Thank you for contacting the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey. Your contact information has been removed from our lists and you will not be contacted again.
Customer Support Updates

Toll-Free Customer Support Telephone

- **NEW**: Lines must have sufficient capacity so that 90 percent of incoming calls each day are answered “live”

After-Hours Greetings

- **NEW**: After-hours greeting must reference the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey, regular call hours, and that calls will be returned within 24 hours (or the next business day)
  - The after-hours greeting must be presented in English and Spanish (and Chinese and Russian, if applicable)
Overview

• File Specifications Review
• File Layout Changes
• Data Coding Guidelines
  – Decision Rules
  – Percent Complete
  – Disposition Codes
• Data Submission Process
  – Data Validation
  – Prepare and Submit Data Files
  – Data Submission
File Specifications Review

• Submit survey data in .txt file format
• One text file for each MA contract with record-level data for sampled members
• Sample file data included in data submission files must match original sample file data
  – No changes or modifications permitted
File Specifications Review (Cont’d)

• Two records
  – **Header Record**: Contract-level information
  – **Member-Level Record**: Member-level information
    • Sample File Layout
    • Survey File Record Layout
Survey File Record Layout

- **NEW:** Added Protocol Identifier Flag

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Description</th>
<th>Field Position</th>
<th>Field Length</th>
<th>Valid Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protocol Identifier Flag</td>
<td>Start 78</td>
<td>End 79</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 = English Follow-Up—No Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 = English Follow-Up—Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Baseline (all languages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = Spanish Follow-Up—No Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Spanish Follow-Up—Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 = Chinese Follow-Up—No Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 = Chinese Follow-Up—Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 = Russian Follow-Up—No Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11 = Russian Follow-Up—Proxy at Baseline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Survey File Record Layout

**NEW:** Updated Member Zip Code valid values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Description</th>
<th>Field Position</th>
<th>Field Length</th>
<th>Valid Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member Zip Code</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9-digit numeric variable (5-digit Zip code and 4-digit plus-four code)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey File Record Layout

• **NEW:** Removed five questions from 2022 survey
  – Q28 (Arthritis of Hip/Knee)
  – Q29 (Arthritis of Hand/Wrist)
  – Q31 (Sciatica)
  – Q41 (Smoking)
  – Q67 (Income)

• Updated question numbers and field positions accordingly beginning at field position 120
Survey File Record Layout

**NEW:** Survey Completion Date valid values

- Updated valid values to align with 2022 survey administration dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Description</th>
<th>Field Position Start</th>
<th>Field Position End</th>
<th>Field Length</th>
<th>Valid Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Completion Date</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>MMDDYYYY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>07182022 – 10312022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>July 18, 2022 – October 31, 2022</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9999999999 = Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open-ended Questions

• Q55b (Primary Language – Please Specify)
  – Code response exactly as provided, regardless of appropriateness

• Q62a and Q62b (Proxy First and Last Name)
  – Code response exactly as provided, regardless of appropriateness
  – Clean the data only in the following instances:
    • Separate Last Name and First Name into their own fields
    • Romanize Traditional Chinese or Cyrillic characters for interim and final data files
Decision Rules (Cont’d)

• Illegible data for Q55b and Q62
  – Record response as ILLEGIBLE
  – Use all caps
  – Do NOT use any punctuation
• **NEW:** HOS contains 79 potential response items

• Exclude 12 skip pattern items from calculation
  – Q14, Q35a-35e, Q39, Q40, Q41, Q43, Q60, Q62
  – **Note:** Q52b is excluded from percent complete calculation because it is only asked in the telephone survey as part of a skip pattern

• Denominator is 67 items

\[
\% \text{ Complete} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Answered Items (Exclude Skip Pattern Items)}}{\text{Total Response Items} - \text{Excluded Items}} \times 100
\]
Coding Demographic Fields

• Survey vendors do **NOT** code a record T31 if only demographic information is collected from member or proxy
  – Only Q61 and Q62 answered
  – Interview ends before Q1

• Continue telephone attempts to reach the member or proxy to complete the survey
Assigning Survey Vendor-Generated Variables

• All survey vendor-generated variables should be associated with the round in which the data were collected

• Telephone Interviewer ID variable should be associated with the telephone attempt corresponding to final disposition code and to the telephone interviewer who conducts the telephone interview
Data Submission Process

• Data Validation
• Prepare and Submit Data Files
• Data Submission
  – Interim
  – Final
Data Validation

• Conduct record-level evaluations
• Confirm files contain a record for each member sampled in MA contract
• Compare data submission file to original sample file for an exact match across select variables
• Four general types of validations
  – Valid values, logic variable agreement, skip pattern logic, survey completion level
Prepare and Submit Data Files

• Submission and Organization IDs will be provided in the Header Record
• Submit all interim and final data files via the HOS Data Submission System
  – Survey vendors will receive instructions closer to the scheduled data submission periods
• Upload maximum of 80 files across all folders within a zip file
• Allow each zip file to process before uploading another
Prepare and Submit Data Files (Cont’d)

• Error Messages
  – Correct and re-upload data files
  – Cannot complete submission or mark files as “Final” unless all errors corrected

• Warning Messages
  – Review all warning messages
  – Verify accuracy of data
Interim Data Submission

- Allows opportunity to investigate data submission issues before Final Data Submission
- System opens **Tuesday, October 4** and closes **Thursday, October 6**
- All data received up to **three business days** prior to the Interim Data Submission due date (**Monday, October 3**) must be processed and submitted
- Complete data attestation prior to marking files “Final”
• Survey vendors review records thoroughly prior to submission to confirm all data are accurate
• Interim data files will be cleaned and analyzed
• The HOS Project Team will provide findings to survey vendors, if applicable, prior to Final Data Submission
• Data collection issues identified during Interim Data Submission may warrant Discrepancy Reports
• Survey vendors must correct any issues identified prior to Final Data Submission
Final Data Submission

- Final Data Submission opens **Tuesday, November 1**
- Complete data attestation prior to marking files “Final”
- Final data files due **Monday, November 14**
- Final data files will be cleaned and analyzed
  - Data collection issues identified during Final Data Submission may warrant Discrepancy Reports
Overview

- Data Submission and Review Process
- HSAG’s Data Evaluation Process
- Types of Discrepancies Investigated
  - Questionable Data Distributions
  - Skip Pattern Violations
  - Out of Range Values
  - Inconsistent or Missing Data
  - Inappropriate Cleaning
  - Missing Sections
- Suggested Quality Checks for Survey Vendors
- MA Contract Data Requests for Cohort 21
- HOS Case-Mix
- PFADL Change Score Measure
Data Submission and Review Process

Vendor A

Vendor B

Vendor C

Vendor D

Interim data submission to NCQA

Final data submission to NCQA
HSAG’s Data Evaluation Process

- Survey vendors submit plan-level text files to NCQA
- Upon receipt of the survey vendor text files from NCQA, HSAG combines the files into one data set
  - Examine differences among
    - Contracts
    - Survey vendors
    - Previous cohorts
    - Survey modes (i.e., Telephone vs. Mail)
    - Survey languages (i.e., English, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian)
  - Compare response distributions for missing values and variations from historical values
  - Identify potential response issues for new survey items
Types of Discrepancies Investigated

- Questionable Data Distributions
- Skip Pattern Violations
- Out of Range Values
- Inconsistent or Missing Data
- Inappropriate Cleaning
- Missing Sections
Questionable Data Distributions

• Responses to each question by survey vendor
  – Overall
  – For telephone and mail mode surveys
  – For each survey language
• Compared with historical trends
• New questions
• Open-ended questions
• Questions with more than one answer permitted
  – Hispanic ethnicity
  – Race
  – Living arrangement – alone or with others
Skip Pattern Violations

• Skip pattern violations by beneficiaries that occur in the mail survey data are expected
  – If no skip pattern violations are found across questions that commonly have such violations, further investigation may be warranted

• Skip pattern violations in the telephone data are NOT expected
  – If skip pattern violations are found in telephone records, further investigation may be warranted
Out of Range and Inappropriate Values

• Verify that all responses are valid by conducting range checks for all survey fields
• Identify shifts in data values due to misalignment of fields in the survey vendor text files
• Verify that dates are within the appropriate ranges
  – All survey dates should correspond to the survey administration window
• Verify that height in feet field has appropriate values
  – More likely to be between 4-6 feet than above 6 feet or below 4 feet
Inconsistent or Missing Data

• Compare values contained in the member-level data provided by CMS and the respondent’s survey data
  – Race
  – Gender

• Verify administrative survey fields
  – Round Number
  – Survey Disposition
  – Survey Language
  – Survey Dates
  – Do Not Survey Flag
  – Electronic Telephone Interviewer ID
Inconsistent or Missing Data (Cont’d)

• Investigate inconsistencies across fields
  – Frequencies of “ineligible” surveys among survey vendors
  – Percent complete of the survey portion of each record
  – Percent complete vs. survey dispositions
  – Round numbers vs. survey dispositions

• Review similar survey fields for internal consistency
  – Correlations between similar item responses
Example 1: Questionable Data Distribution

Q35: In the past 7 days, how would you rate your pain on average?*

*Responses have been formatted for presentation legibility; they are displayed differently than in the HOS survey.
Example 2: Inappropriate Missing Pattern

- Q38: Many people experience leakage of urine, also called urinary incontinence. In the **past six months**, have you experienced leaking of urine?
  - Yes → Go to Q39
  - No → Go to Q42
Inappropriate Missing Pattern (Cont’d)

Answer to Q38:

☑ Yes → Go to Q39

OR

☑ No → Go to Q42

Answer of “Yes” or “No” Indicates to go to Q39 or Q42, respectively

Q39: During the past six months, how much did leaking of urine make you change your daily activities or interfere with your sleep?

Answer & proceed to Q40-41

Q42: In the past 12 months, did you talk with a doctor or other health provider about your level of exercise or physical activity? For example, a doctor or other health provider may ask if you exercise regularly or take part in physical exercise.

Proceed as indicated.
Inappropriate Cleaning: Mail Surveys

• Open-ended numeric questions (healthy days, weight, height)
  – Enter as written by the respondent, except as directed by the QAG
  – Small number of invalid or inappropriate values expected

• Skip patterns
  – Enter all responses as marked on the survey
  – Small number of skip pattern violations expected

• Absence of respondent-generated errors in mail surveys may indicate inappropriate cleaning by the survey vendor
Example 3: Inappropriate Cleaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Height in Inches (not corresponding to other examples)</th>
<th>Survey Vendor (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid (00-98)</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Answer (88)</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing (99)</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Mail survey results without any inappropriate responses for one survey vendor
- Mail survey responses should not be cleaned prior to submission
Missing Responses

• Recognize gatekeeper questions
• Look at key questions like the Veterans RAND 12-Item Health Survey and Activities of Daily Living (VR-12, ADLs) for unexpected sequences
  – Entire section of the survey is blank
• Missing data at the contract level and survey vendor level
Example 4: Missing Responses

- Responses missing for Q3a – Q9
- Identify and investigate clusters of missing responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2a</th>
<th>Q2b</th>
<th>Q3a</th>
<th>Q3b</th>
<th>Q4a</th>
<th>Q4b</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Q6a</th>
<th>Q6b</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>Q10a</th>
<th>Q10b</th>
<th>Q10c</th>
<th>Q10d</th>
<th>Q10e</th>
<th>Q10f</th>
<th>Q11a</th>
<th>Q11b</th>
<th>Q11c</th>
<th>Q12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suggested Quality Checks for Survey Vendors

- Check for inconsistencies in skip patterns for telephone records
- Check for missing responses indicating possible coding errors
- Examine the distribution of responses for improbable results in mail surveys
- Investigate for coding errors in fields with extreme frequencies (0% or 100%) for any one response
Suggested Quality Checks for Survey Vendors (Cont’d)

- Verify that coding of responses has not been reversed
- Identify and investigate clusters of missing responses
- Always check revised data files for unexpected changes, and submit explanation for any unexpected changes with resubmitted files
- Verify that all HOS codes are present for each reporting field, rather than only flagging invalid codes
Suggested Quality Checks for Survey Vendors (Cont’d)

• Verify that:
  – Mail survey responses are not cleaned prior to submission
  – Electronic telephone interviewing program does not permit skip pattern violations
  – Names do not contain any accents or other special characters
MA Contract Data Requests for Cohort 21
The three HOS Performance Measurement outcomes are death, change in physical health from physical component summary (PCS) score, and change in mental health from mental component summary (MCS) score.

Actual health outcomes are assessed at Baseline and Follow-Up from the VR-12, and beneficiaries are categorized as better, the same, or worse at follow up.

Expected results are derived using logistic regression to predict expected probability of death, and expected PCS and MCS change for each member.

Baseline demographic and socioeconomic indicators, and baseline health status are included in the case-mix adjustment models for expected results.
HOS Case-Mix (Cont’d)

- National averages are calculated for actual outcomes of death, PCS same or better, and MCS same or better.
- Actual and expected outcomes are the aggregated percentages for each MAO, and death is incorporated with physical health only.
- Final HOS outcomes are adjusted by combining the differences between actual and expected results for each MAO with the national averages.
- In summary, the Performance Measurement Analysis determines the percentages of beneficiaries in the MAO who are better, the same, or worse than expected at the two-year follow up in comparison to national averages.
PFADL Change Score Measure

- The longitudinal Physical Functioning Activities of Daily Living (PFADL) change score measure is part of the 2022 display measures on the CMS website and the Health Plan Management System (HPMS).
- The PFADL change score measure combines two PF questions (limitations in moderate activities and climbing stairs) with six ADL items to create a Likert-type scale, computed at baseline and two-year follow up.
- The PFADL change score measure can be interpreted as approximating the percent of function retained over two years by the average beneficiary in a Medicare Advantage plan.
- A detailed methodology used to create the PFADL change score measure is described on the Survey Results page of the HOS website (https://www.HOSonline.org).
For inquiries, please contact the Medicare HOS Information and Technical Support at

Telephone: (888) 880-0077

or

Email: hos@hsag.com

HOS Website: https://www.HOSonline.org
Quality Oversight and Project Reporting
Overview

• Oversight Activities
  – Before Survey Administration
  – During Survey Administration
  – After Survey Administration
  – Ongoing Activities

• Technical Support

• Accellion
# Before Survey Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oversight Activity</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Comments from NCQA</th>
<th>Finalize Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mailing Material Review</td>
<td>Friday, June 10</td>
<td>Friday, June 24</td>
<td>Tuesday, July 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Telephone Interviewing Material Review</td>
<td>Friday, June 24</td>
<td>Friday, July 8</td>
<td>Monday, July 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Vendor QAP</td>
<td>Friday, July 1</td>
<td>Survey Vendor Conference Call (Monday July 18 – Friday, July 29)</td>
<td>Within 5 Business Days of call</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mailing Materials

- Review final print-ready HOS mailing materials
- **NEW:** Survey vendors must submit materials for review in the format in which they will be printed
  - e.g., If survey vendors print four postcards per page, submit the print-ready document for review
- Due **Friday, June 10**
  - Send electronic copies to hos@ncqa.org
  - Comment/approve by Friday, June 24
  - All materials must be final by **Tuesday, July 5**
Common Findings

• Omission of footnote about how sampled members may request materials in their preferred language
• Incorrect formatting of postcards
• Incorrect font and font size
Electronic Interviewing Materials

• Review telephone interviewing screenshots and skip pattern logic
• Due Friday, June 24
  – Two weeks after submitting mailing materials
  – Send electronic copies to hos@ncqa.org
  – Comment/approve by Friday, July 8
  – All materials must be final by Monday, July 18
• Survey vendors may also send website links to functioning telephone systems for the HOS Project Team to review, in addition to the screenshots
• Subcontractor(s) must follow the same review schedule
Common Findings

• Missing instructions and probes
• Missing emphasis on select words
• Grammatical errors
• Improper usage of parentheses
• Missing skip pattern documentation
Survey Vendor QAP

• Describes survey vendor compliance with the HOS protocols and quality oversight processes

• QAPs must follow the Model QAP format (Appendix B in the QAG)
  – Due Friday, July 1

• **NEW:** 2022 QAPs must include:
  – Description of process for dialing multiple telephone numbers for a single member
Common Findings

• Outdated protocols
• Missing detail on subcontractor oversight
• Omission of Spanish, Chinese, and Russian protocol details
• Incorrect or missing survey disposition code crosswalk
## During Survey Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oversight Activities</th>
<th>Dates (2022)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Vendor Conference Calls</td>
<td>Monday, July 18 – Friday, July 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeded Mailings</td>
<td>July – September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Support Reviews</td>
<td>July – August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Vendor Progress Reports</td>
<td>July – December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Visits</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Record Review</td>
<td>September – October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Telephone Interviewing Monitoring</td>
<td>September – October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Data File Submission Deadline</td>
<td>Thursday, October 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During Survey Administration

Survey Vendor Conference Calls

Seeded Mailings

Customer Support Reviews

Survey Vendor Progress Reports

Site Visits

Data Record Review

Electronic Telephone Interviewing Monitoring

Interim Data File Submission Deadline
Survey Vendor Conference Calls

- Held **Monday, July 18 – Friday, July 29**
- Provide feedback on QAPs
  - If QAP revisions are needed, vendors must submit revisions within **five business days**
- Review major issues from previous year and discuss updates to survey administration
Seeded Mailings

• Assess timeliness of delivery and accuracy of mailing materials
• Include HOS Project Team in all survey mailings that are sent to members (including prenotification letters)
• Document seeded mailing process in detail in QAP
• Seeded mailings must be created in the member mailing database as a QA tool
Customer Support Review

• Assess customer support responses to the specifications in QAG and FAQ

• Customer support review: *Telephone*
  – HOS Project Team makes anonymous calls to customer support line

• Customer support review: *Email*
  – *Securely* forward all customer support emails with responses on a weekly basis
  – Survey vendors may be asked to send member contact information and/or English translations of emails to HOS Project Team
Common Findings

- Emails not responded to within 24 hours
- Customer support representatives unable to answer questions according to the FAQ
- Long delays and pauses while responding
Survey Vendor Progress Reports

• Tracks survey vendor status for adherence to the HOS protocols during survey administration
  – Submit progress reports to hos@ncqa.org

• Deadlines and report requirements in QAG
  – Recurring deliverables
    • Narrative Reports (Reports #2-8)
    • Summary Status Reports (Reports #3-9)
    • NEW: Telephone Attempt Reports (Reports #6-9)
    • Member Correspondence (Reports #2-10)
  – One-time deliverable
    • Sample of MAO progress reports (Report #7)
Narrative Reports

Survey Progress and Vendor Experience

• Overview of mail and telephone protocols
  – Verification of mail out dates
• Summary of challenges/difficulties encountered
• Experience to date
• Customer support summary statistics
• Synthesis of data collected to date
• Monitor response rates for each protocol phase and processing of returned mail surveys
• Submit two files (Baseline and Follow-Up) with naming conventions:
  – Survey Vendor Name_SSR_C25B_MM-DD-YY.xls
  – Survey Vendor Name_SSR_C23F_MM-DD-YY.xls
• **NEW:** Progress with telephone attempts to date
• Use 2022 template provided prior to fielding
NEW: Summary status report includes template to report on progress with telephone attempts to date

- Submit with Progress Reports #6-9
- Report plan H-number, plan name, total number of cases to receive calls, number of telephone attempts made, and number of closed cases
- Template provided to survey vendors ahead of fielding
Sample of MAO Progress Reports (Report #7)

• One-time deliverable
• Reports must follow guidelines and only provide information specified in the QAG
  – Summary Status Report data
• Sending member-specific data is prohibited
• As a reminder, survey vendors are NOT permitted to share their own unpublished results
## Biweekly Progress Reports

### Reporting Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORT #2</th>
<th>Narrative Report:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overview of Baseline and Follow-Up prenotification letter and first questionnaire printing, fulfillment, and mailing processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Verification of mail out dates of Baseline and Follow-Up prenotification letter and first questionnaire mailing (e.g., USPS generated report).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Status of staff training and SMS development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confirmation of customer support functionality and testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outstanding issues or concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Other Deliverable:</strong> Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Due Date

Friday, July 29
### Reporting Requirements

| REPORT #3 | **Summary Status Report:** Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts. **Narrative Report:**  
• Overview of Baseline and Follow-Up reminder/thank-you postcard mailing.  
• 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. |
|---|---|
| REPORT #4 | **Summary Status Report:** Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts. **Narrative Report:**  
• Overview of progress with protocol to date.  
• Detail problems or issues to date.  
• Outstanding issues or concerns. **Other Deliverable:** Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, August 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, August 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Reporting Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORT #5</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary Status Report:</strong> Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts.</td>
<td><strong>Friday, September 9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative Report:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overview of Baseline and Follow-Up second questionnaire mailing and second reminder/thank-you postcard mailing (Russian only).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verification of mail out dates of Baseline and Follow-Up second questionnaire mailing and second reminder/thank-you postcard mailing (Russian only) (e.g., USPS generated report).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overview of progress with protocol to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail problems or issues to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide high-level summary statistics on respondent calls to customer support line or email (summarize FAQ) and number of requests for Spanish (Chinese and Russian, if applicable) version of the instrument. Specify number of calls and/or emails requesting information regarding an internet version of the survey.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>NEW:</strong> Describe telephone protocol and training.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding issues or concerns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Deliverable:</strong> Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reporting Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORT #6</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary Status Report:</strong></td>
<td>Friday, September 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>NEW:</strong> Telephone attempt progress to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative Report:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Overview of progress with protocol to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Detail problems or issues to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Describe process of converting partially completed surveys to complete, and progress.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Report on progress of Baseline and Follow-Up electronic telephone interviewing implementation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Deliverable:</strong></td>
<td>Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Biweekly Progress Reports (Cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Requirements</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REPORT #7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary Status Report:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>NEW:</strong> Telephone attempt progress to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative Report:</strong></td>
<td>Friday, October 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding issues or concerns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail problems or issues to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Report on progress of Baseline and Follow-Up electronic telephone interviewing implementation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Report on experience with submitting interim data files.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Deliverable:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Submit a sample of the interim/progress report that is provided to HOS clients.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reporting Requirements | Due Date
--- | ---
REPORT #8
**Summary Status Report:**
- Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts.
- **NEW:** Telephone attempt progress to date.

**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.

Friday, October 21

REPORT #9
**Summary Status Report**
- Baseline and Follow-Up Cohorts.
- **NEW:** Telephone attempt progress to date.

**Other Deliverable:** Member correspondence (white mail), if applicable.

Friday, November 4
Blinded Response Rates

- HOS Project Team will provide blinded response rates to survey vendors based on Summary Status Reports on a biweekly basis
White mail sent biweekly to HOS Project Team:

- Written notes/letters, notes on cover letters, prenotification letters, survey covers, or envelopes must be sent.
- Forward any member correspondence that appears to be directed at CMS or the government.
- Not required to forward white mail that indicates a member is ineligible (e.g., deceased, institutionalized, wrong address, language barrier).
- Not required to forward marginal comments written on the survey.
NEW: When submitting member correspondence, survey vendors must include all white mail received in the previous two weeks.

- Do NOT send member correspondence via email

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Correspondence to Be Sent</th>
<th>Examples of Correspondence NOT to Be Sent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Messages intended for CMS</td>
<td>• Death notices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comments about MAO/provider</td>
<td>• Address changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Personal problems</td>
<td>• Language barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Requests for medical assistance and supporting documentation</td>
<td>• Institution notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opinions about the survey instrument or federal government</td>
<td>• Comments written on or throughout the survey, including marginal comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Telephone Interviewer Monitoring

• Survey vendors monitor 10%, at a minimum, including subcontractors and across all survey languages
• HOS Project Team will conduct remote silent monitoring of interviewers and interviewing system
  – HOS Project Team will conduct separate remote monitoring sessions with each subcontractor
HOS Project Team assesses interviewers on:

- Reading script verbatim with correct pronunciations
- Accurate probing
- Speaking clearly
- Maintaining an appropriate pace
- Operating the electronic interviewing system competently
- Capturing accurate responses
- Answering questions appropriately
Common Findings

- Inappropriate tone maintained with respondents
- Not reading all response options
- Improper probing
- Mispronunciations
- Missing emphasis on key words
- Inappropriate coding of responses
- Incorrect responses to member questions
Site Visits

• Evaluate survey vendor’s compliance with the QAG
  – Project organization
  – Survey management system
  – Staff training
  – Sample file processing
  – Oversight of staff and subcontractors
  – Mail and telephone operations
  – Data security

• Site visits may be conducted remotely
  – Survey vendors share and present all required systems, processes, and documentation using web conferencing
Data Record Review

- Review select records of varying survey dispositions and survey rounds
- Track record throughout survey timeline
  - Sample file
  - Address and telephone update
  - Mail phase
  - Data receipt and entry
  - Telephone phase
  - Data submission
- Provide documentation
  - Hard copy or scanned images
  - Telephone recording
  - Customer support logs
Data Record Review (Cont’d)

• Survey vendor systems/databases must be available to the HOS Project Team
• HOS Project Team will provide a list of requirements and records prior to the review
• Conduct reviews remotely
Common Findings

- Incorrect survey round codes and disposition codes
- Incorrect coding of open-ended questions
- Continuing attempts in English after member requests to be contacted in Spanish
- Coding multiple marked questions
## After Survey Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oversight Activities</th>
<th>Dates (2022)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Vendor Final Report</td>
<td>Friday, November 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report of HOS Records Stored and Facility Standards for Records Storage Facilities Inspection Checklist</td>
<td>Friday, December 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Three components:
  1. Data synthesis (required)
  2. Discussion component (required)
     – Survey implementation, issues encountered, lessons learned, recommendations
     – List any additional language translations requested by MAOs
     – List any additional survey modes requested by MAOs and/or respondents (e.g., internet, text) and number of requests
  3. Recommendations for 2023 HOS Administration

• Reports used for:
  – Informing QAG updates
  – Process improvement
Ongoing Activities

• Discrepancy Reports & Corrective Action Plan
• Technical Support
Discrepancy Report & Corrective Action Plan

- Appendix G of QAG
- Complete and submit Discrepancy Report within **one business day**
- Provide as much information as possible
  - Discrepancy Description
  - Corrective Action Plan

Discrepancy Report Form

**Instructions:** Submit the Discrepancy Report Form to the HOS Project Team (hos@ncqa.org). Initial discrepancy reports must be submitted within **one business day** of discovering the discrepancy occurred, regardless of whether the organization is still determining all relevant information. Complete as many fields in this report as possible. Information not known at the time of completing the initial report should be recorded as “Pending.” Any information reported as “Pending” must be included in an updated Discrepancy Report due within one week of submitting the original report. More than one updated report may be required. Do not include any PHI/PI in the Discrepancy Report Form or in any emails to the HOS Project Team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. General Information</th>
<th>Select one:</th>
<th>Initial Report</th>
<th>Updated Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Description of Discrepancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the discrepancy and include any additional information that may help the HOS Project Team understand what occurred. Provide as much detail as possible, including the discrepancy time frame (when the issue occurred during survey administration), how you identified the discrepancy, and causes of the discrepancy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Discrepancy Discovered:</th>
<th>Discrepancy Time Frame:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dated:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detailed Description of Discrepancy and How the Discrepancy Was Discovered:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Impact of Discrepancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a breakdown of affected surveys and impacted members by CMS Contract. Insert one row for each contract impacted. If the issue impacts your entire sample, write in “All” under each category.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Languages Impacted:</th>
<th>□ English □ Spanish □ Chinese □ Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMS Contract Number:</td>
<td>Number of Affected Surveys: Number of Sampled Members Impacted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Was Estimation of Affected Surveys Reached?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technical Support

- Email hos@ncqa.org
  - Reports, updates, and questions
- Contact the project team with questions, comments, requests, or concerns
NCQA’s Secure Site Accellion

• NCQA uses an Accellion account system
  – All new users must register with the system
• All materials and documents sent via Accellion
• Sample files will be sent via Accellion
• Survey vendors use Accellion to securely send member correspondence and other deliverables
• Accellion address: https://accellion.ncqa.org
NCQA’s Secure Site Accellion (Cont'd)

• NCQA provides an Accellion file request to survey vendors
• The file request does not expire and should be used to send secure files to the HOS Project Team throughout survey administration
  – Access the file request by logging in to https://accellion.ncqa.org
Other Resources

• NCQA’s Customer Support
  – 1-888-275-7585
  – To verify legitimacy or for questions about NCQA

• 1-800 Medicare
  – 1-800-633-4227
  – To verify legitimacy of the survey
  – Complaints, compliments, concerns about Medicare, MAOs, physicians, or care received