



Medicare Health Outcomes Survey 2020 Survey Vendor Update Training



February 6, 2020



Welcome, Introduction, and Overview

2020 Survey Vendor Training Agenda

Time (p.m., ET)	Agenda Item	Presenter
1:00 – 1:10	Welcome, Introduction, and Overview	Janet Holzman
1:10 – 1:25	HOS CMS Update	Debra Stark
1:25 – 1:40	HOS 2020 Administration and Updates	Ruth Boansi
1:40 – 1:55	HOS 2019 Survey Results	Doug Ritenour Jael Rodriguez
1:55 – 2:15	Survey Material Updates	Zoe Sousane
2:15 – 2:35	Data Coding and Data Submission	Laura Zwolinski
2:35 – 2:45	Break	
2:45 – 3:10	Quality Oversight	Cindy Van
3:10 – 3:40	Data Management	Doug Ritenour Jael Rodriguez
3:40 – 3:55	Project Reporting	Theresa Hwee
3:55 – 4:10	Questions and Closing	Janet Holzman
4:10 – 4:30	Post-Training Test	



HOS CMS Update

Overview

- Introduction to the 2020 HOS
- Primary Goals of the HOS
- Public Reporting and Use of HOS Data
- Data Integrity
- Star Ratings Update
- Fielding Non-CMS Sponsored Surveys
- 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 quality of life
- Participants: Medicare beneficiaries at least 18 years of age who are currently enrolled in an 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 (QBPBs)
 - Help beneficiaries make informed choices
 - Assess frailty and health disparities
 - Target quality improvement activities
 - Advance the science of functional health outcomes measurement

Public Reporting of HOS Data

- HOS results are publicly reported by CMS for each contract
- Medicare Plan Finder (MPF) at www.medicare.gov displays basic, consumer-friendly information
- Additional details can be found at <http://go.cms.gov/partcanddstarratings>

Other Uses of HOS Data

- Estimate frailty and adjust payments for FIDE SNPs and PACE plans based on the average frailty of each plan's membership
- Research by CMS, other federal agencies, and external researchers
 - Public Use Files (PUF)
 - Limited Data Sets (LDS)
 - Research Identifiable Files (RIF)

Star Ratings: Impact

- Public Reporting
 - Ratings are displayed to help consumers compare plans, quality, and costs in enrollment decisions
- Marketing/Enrollment
 - 5-star plans can market year-round; beneficiaries can enroll at any time via a special enrollment period
 - MPF online enrollment is disabled for consistently low performing plans
- Financial
 - The Affordable Care Act established CMS' Star Ratings as the basis of Quality Bonus Payments to MA contracts

Star Ratings: Integrity

- 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

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 2020 HOS
- MAOs and HOS Vendors **MAY NOT**:
 - Attempt to influence or encourage beneficiaries to respond to survey questions in a particular way
 - Imply the MAO, its members, or its personnel or agents will be rewarded or will benefit from positive feedback
 - Offer incentives to encourage or influence participation
 - Indicate the MAO's goal is to be rated a certain way

Fielding Non-CMS Surveys

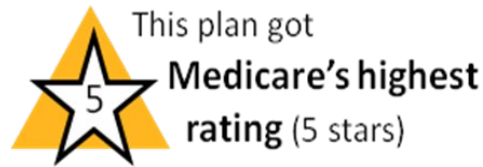
- CMS discourages survey vendors from fielding additional surveys February through August that may interfere with the official HOS, confuse beneficiaries, or increase survey fatigue
 - Other surveys may be fielded September through January

Fielding Non-CMS Surveys (Cont'd)

- Fielding surveys similar to HOS will negatively impact future 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
- Survey vendors fielding off-cycle, non-CMS sponsored surveys using the HOS or HOS-M instruments on behalf of MAOs must complete an application and acknowledge and sign the HOS Terms of Use

2020 Star Ratings

- 23 MA contracts achieved 5 stars



- 5 MA contracts identified as **consistently** low performers



Caution - This plan
got **low ratings** from
Medicare for at least
three years in a row

Star Ratings: Trends

- Weighted by enrollment, more than 81% of MA enrollees are currently enrolled in contracts that have 4 or more stars in 2020
 - ~75% based on 2019 Star Ratings
 - ~73% based on 2018 Star Ratings
 - ~69% based on 2017 Star Ratings

2021 Star Ratings

- 5 HOS measures will be included in the 2021 Star Ratings to be released in Fall 2020
 - 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*

2021 Star Ratings: Data Sources

- HOS data sources used in the *2021 Star Ratings*
 - PCS/MCS: 2017-2019 HOS Cohort 20 Performance Measurement Results (2017 HOS Baseline data and 2019 HOS Follow-Up data)
 - Effectiveness of Care measures: Cohort 20 Follow-Up (2019) and Cohort 22 Baseline data (2019)
- *2021 Star Ratings* release date: October 2020

Annual Data Use Agreement (DUA) Process

- Survey vendors complete all DUA processes in EPPE
- Survey vendors must execute the following steps:
 1. Verify staff and subcontractors and submit changes
 2. Submit data update request to add 2020 HOS data
- EPPE will not process any HOS DUA extensions or updates for any entity with an expired DUA for any CMS project

Terms of the DUA

- Survey vendors must:
 - Have a current DUA
 - Submit signed DUA Addendums as required
 - Update new subcontractors in EPPE
- Survey vendors and their subcontractors must not release HOS data to any unlisted entity, including MAOs and MA members
- In signing the DUA, survey vendors and their subcontractors must ensure data integrity, security, and confidentiality

DUA Restrictions and Deadlines

- Survey vendors are prohibited from using the HOS sample file for any other purpose, including deduplicating samples for other client surveys
- Survey vendors must submit a request in EPPE to add 2020 data to the DUA **by February 10, 2020**
- Submit Fully-Executed DUA Copy to HOS Project Team **by March 2, 2020**

DUA Resources

- Submitting a DUA Extension
- Updating Subcontractors in the DUA
- Adding 2020 Data to the DUA
- Additional EPPE Trainings and Resources
- Contact the EPPE Help Desk at 844-EPPE-DUA (844-377-3382) or EPPE@cms.hhs.gov for additional assistance




HOS 2020 Administration Updates

Overview

- Data Collection Overview
- Mail Protocol
- Telephone Protocol
- Data Collection Timeline
- HEDIS Volume 6 Updates

Data Collection Protocol

- Mixed mode
- 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
 -  **NEW:** Chinese protocol: mail *and* telephone

Standardized Data Collection

- Promotes consistency across survey vendors and MAOs
- Survey vendors may not modify the data collection protocol
- Follow *Medicare HOS Quality Assurance Guidelines and Technical Specifications V2.4 (QAG)*

Mail Protocol

- Standardized mailing materials and questionnaire (Appendix E)
 - 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

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 (Appendix F)
- Must have enough interviewers to support data collection timeline

Telephone Protocol (Cont'd)

- 6 to 9 telephone attempts
 - Different times of day
 - Different days of the week
 - Different weeks
 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. call window (member local time)
- Interviewers may not leave voicemail messages

Telephone Protocol (Cont'd)

Programming Gender for Telephone Interviewing

- Survey vendors use the CMS Administrative Gender variable in the sample file to program proxy interview pronouns and to skip the prostate cancer question for female respondents

Determining Language Preferences

- Survey vendors work with their 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

Chinese Survey Administration Updates

- Changes to Mail Implementation:
 - Standardized mailing materials and questionnaire
 - Prenotification letter
 - Two survey mailings containing survey cover letter, questionnaire, and business reply envelope
 - **NEW:** One reminder/thank-you postcard
- **NEW:** The HOS telephone protocol is now available in Chinese

Russian Survey Administration Updates

- Mail Implementation:
 - Standardized mailing materials and questionnaire
 - Prenotification letter
 - Two survey mailings containing survey cover letter, questionnaire, and business reply envelope
 - Two reminder/thank-you postcards (one after each mailing)
- There is no Russian telephone protocol

Customer Support Services

- Survey vendors must institute processes to accommodate English and Spanish incoming calls
- Survey vendors who field Chinese and Russian must institute processes to respond to calls 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

-  **NEW:** 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

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

Task	Date (2020)
Send sample files to vendors	March 16
Open survey vendor customer support telephone and email	March 30
Open inbound electronic telephone interviewing	March 30
Mail Baseline prenotification letter	March 30
Mail Baseline first questionnaire	April 6
Mail Baseline reminder/thank-you postcard	April 13

Data Collection Timeline (Cont'd)

Task	Date (2020)
Mail Follow-Up prenotification letter	April 27
Mail Follow-Up first questionnaire	May 4
Mail Baseline second questionnaire	May 11
Mail Follow-Up reminder/thank-you postcard	May 11
Mail Baseline second reminder/thank-you postcard (<i>Russian only</i>)	May 18

Data Collection Timeline (Cont'd)

Task	Date (2020)
Conduct Baseline outbound telephone interviewing	June 1 – July 6
Mail Follow-Up second questionnaire	June 8
Submit interim data files	June 23 – June 25
Conduct Follow-Up outbound telephone interviewing	June 29 – July 27

Data Collection Timeline (Cont'd)

Task	Date (2020)
End Baseline and Follow-Up data collection	July 27
Prepare and submit final data files	July 27 – August 10
Final data files due	August 10



HEDIS Volume 6 Updates

Summary of Changes

Language Protocol

- **NEW:** Added Chinese language telephone protocol

HOS Mailing Materials

- **NEW:** Updated HOS prenotification letters, first and replacement questionnaire letters, and reminder/thank-you postcards



HOS 2019 Survey Results

Overview

- HOS 2019 Survey Administration
- Response Rate Trends
- Survey Response Rates
 - *Cohort 22 Baseline*
 - *Cohort 20 Follow-Up*
- Survey Disposition Components
 - *Cohort 22 Baseline*
 - *Cohort 20 Follow-Up*
- Key Points

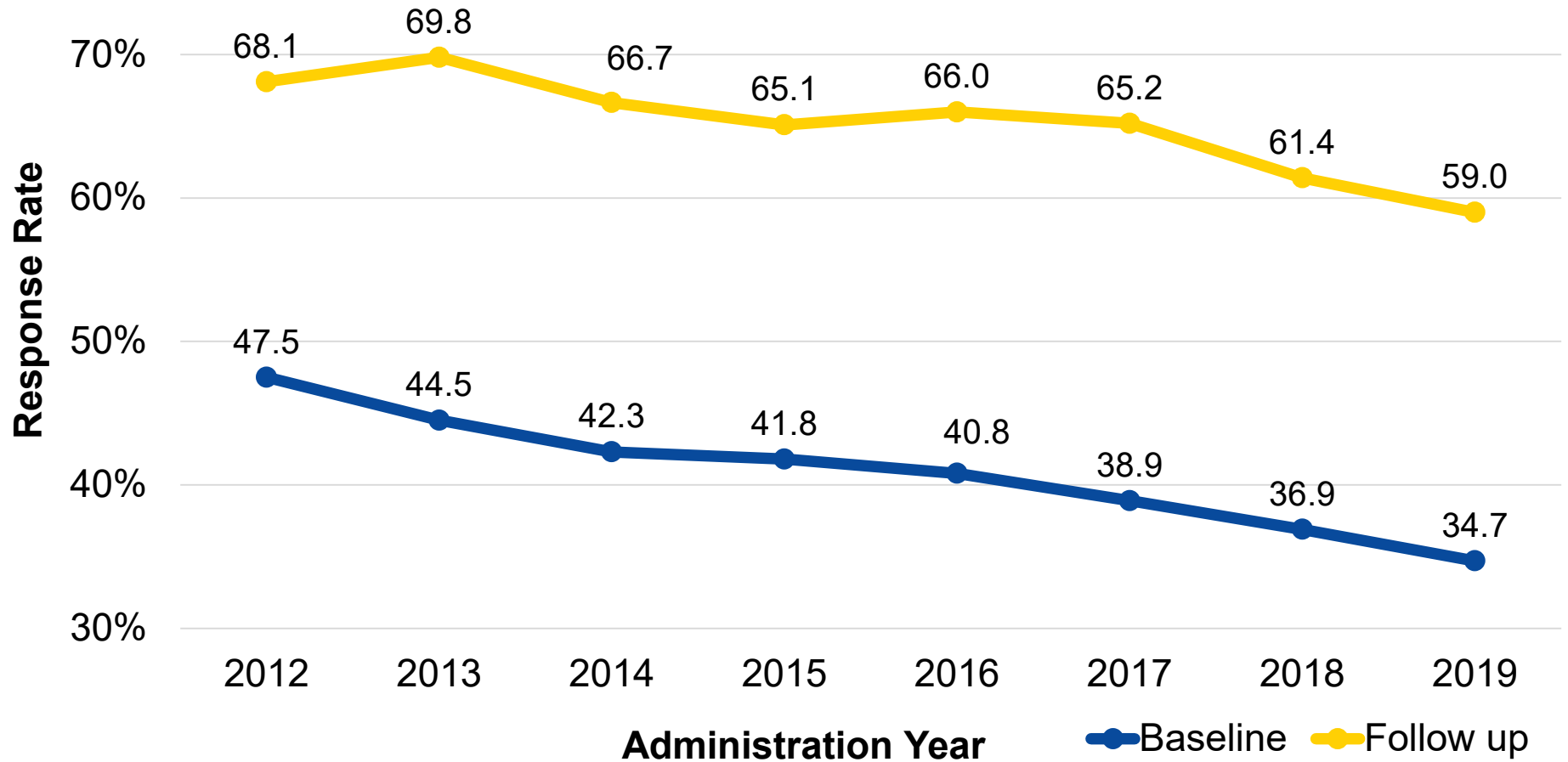
HOS 2019 Survey Administration

- Five survey vendors administered the HOS
- For this presentation, survey vendors were assigned a letter (A-E) randomly

Survey	Number of Contracts
Total Unique Contracts	475
Cohort 22 Baseline	473
Cohort 20 Follow-Up	420

Response Rate Trends

Rounds 15-22 Baseline and Follow-Up Surveys: 2012–2019

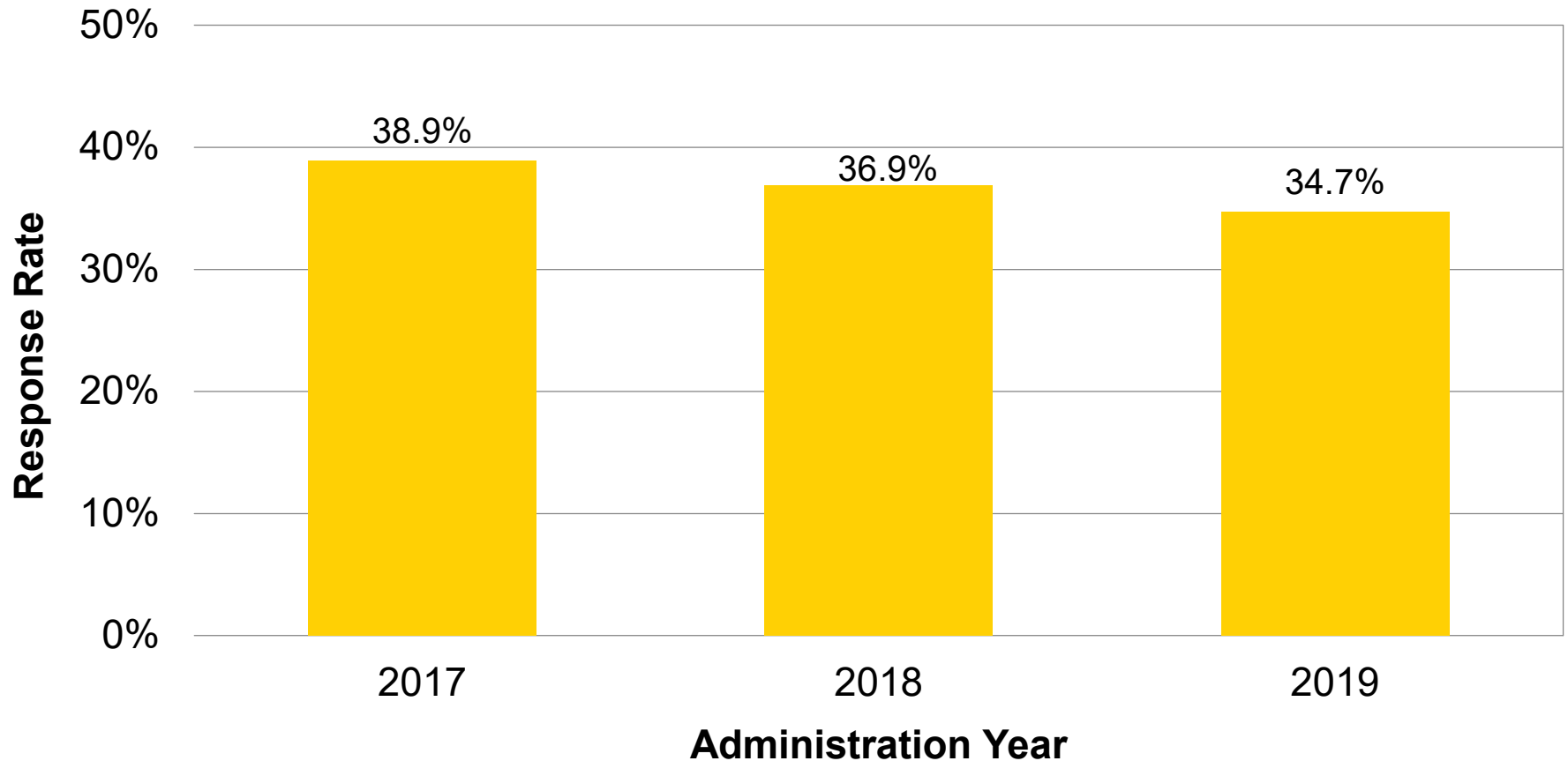


Survey Response Rates

Cohort 22 Baseline

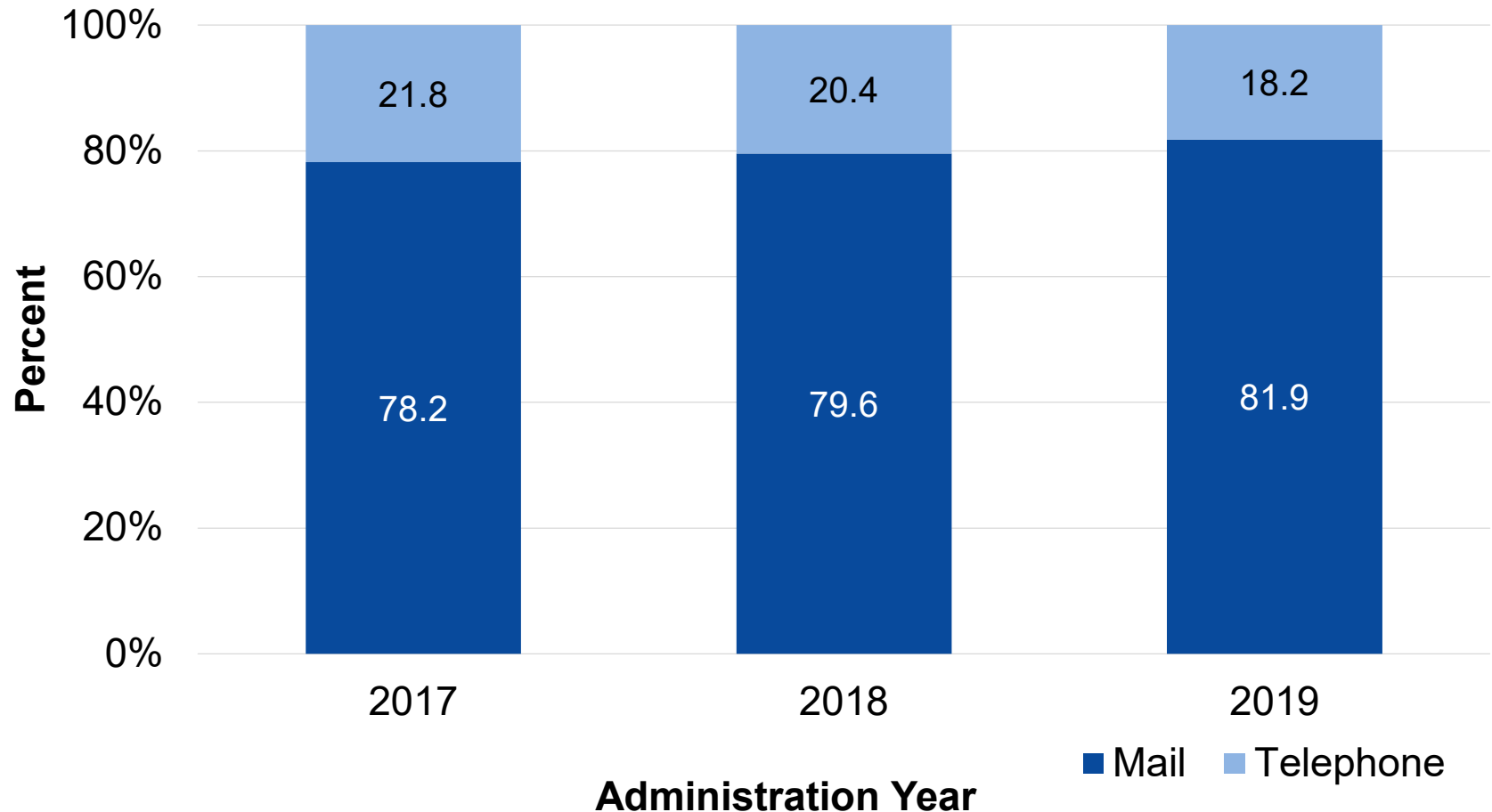
Overall Response Rates Trend

Cohorts 20-22 Baseline Surveys: 2017-2019



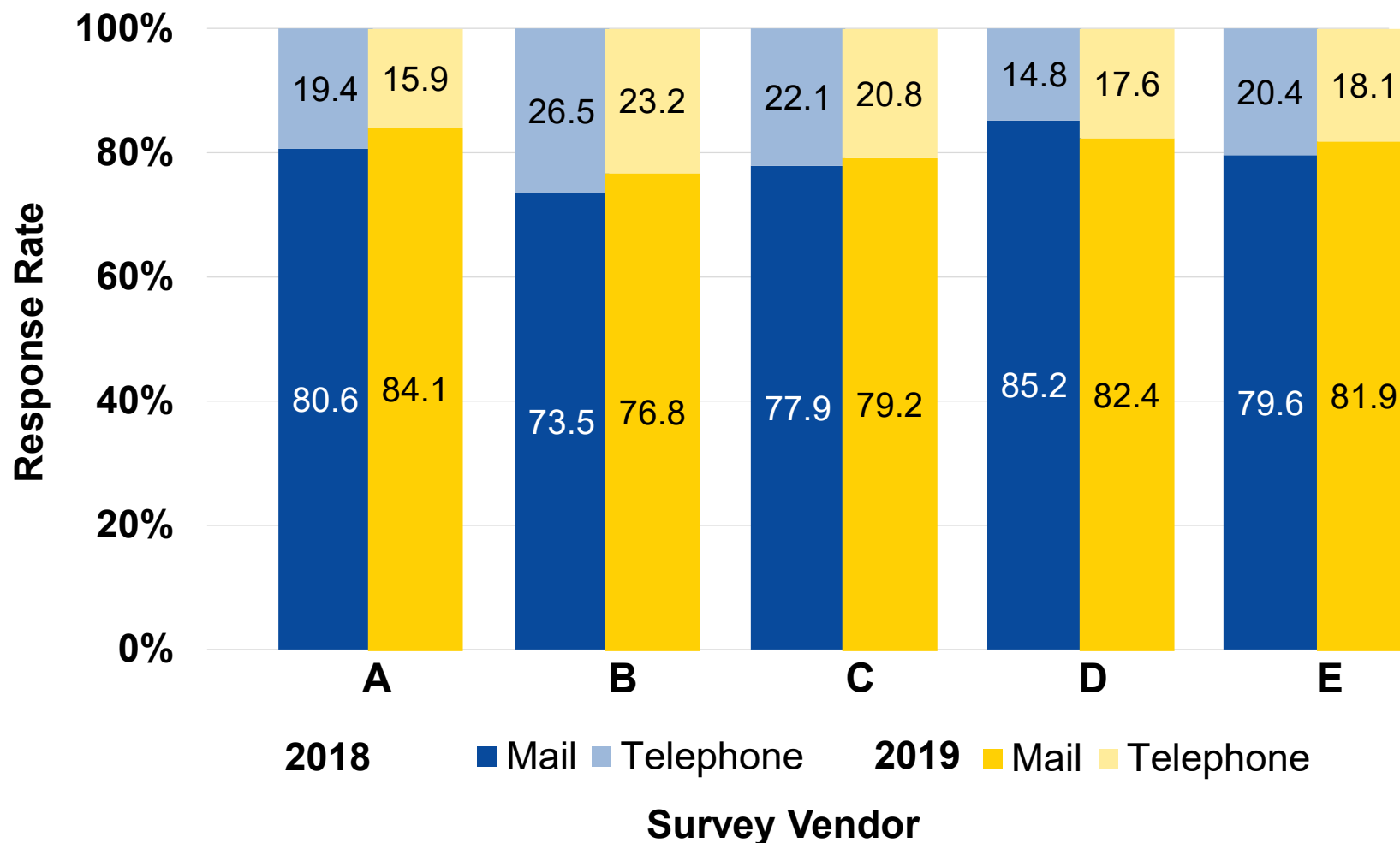
Completed Surveys by Mode

Cohorts 20-22 Baseline Surveys: 2017-2019



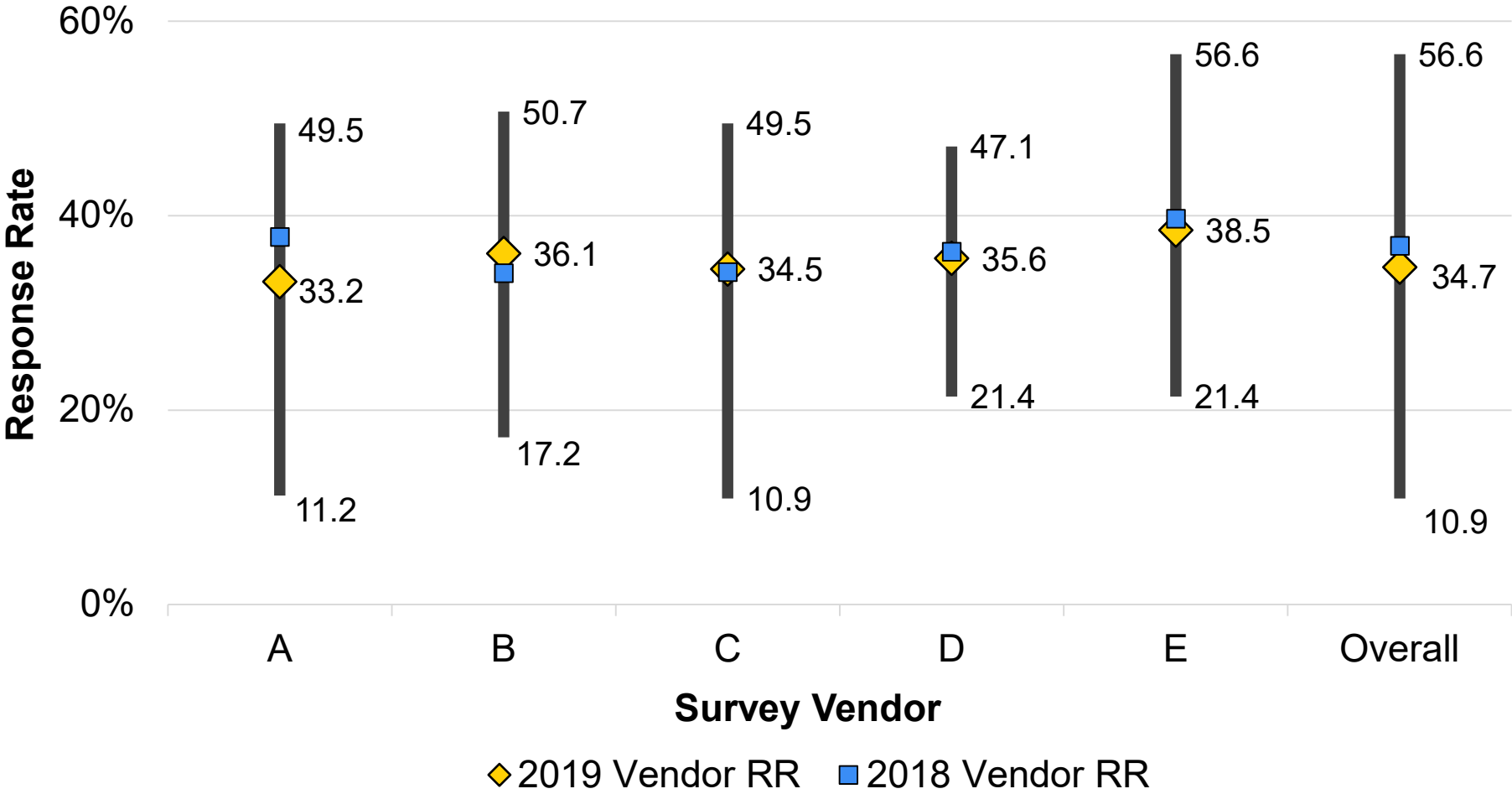
Completed Survey Rates by Mode and Vendor

Cohorts 21-22 Baseline Surveys: 2018-2019



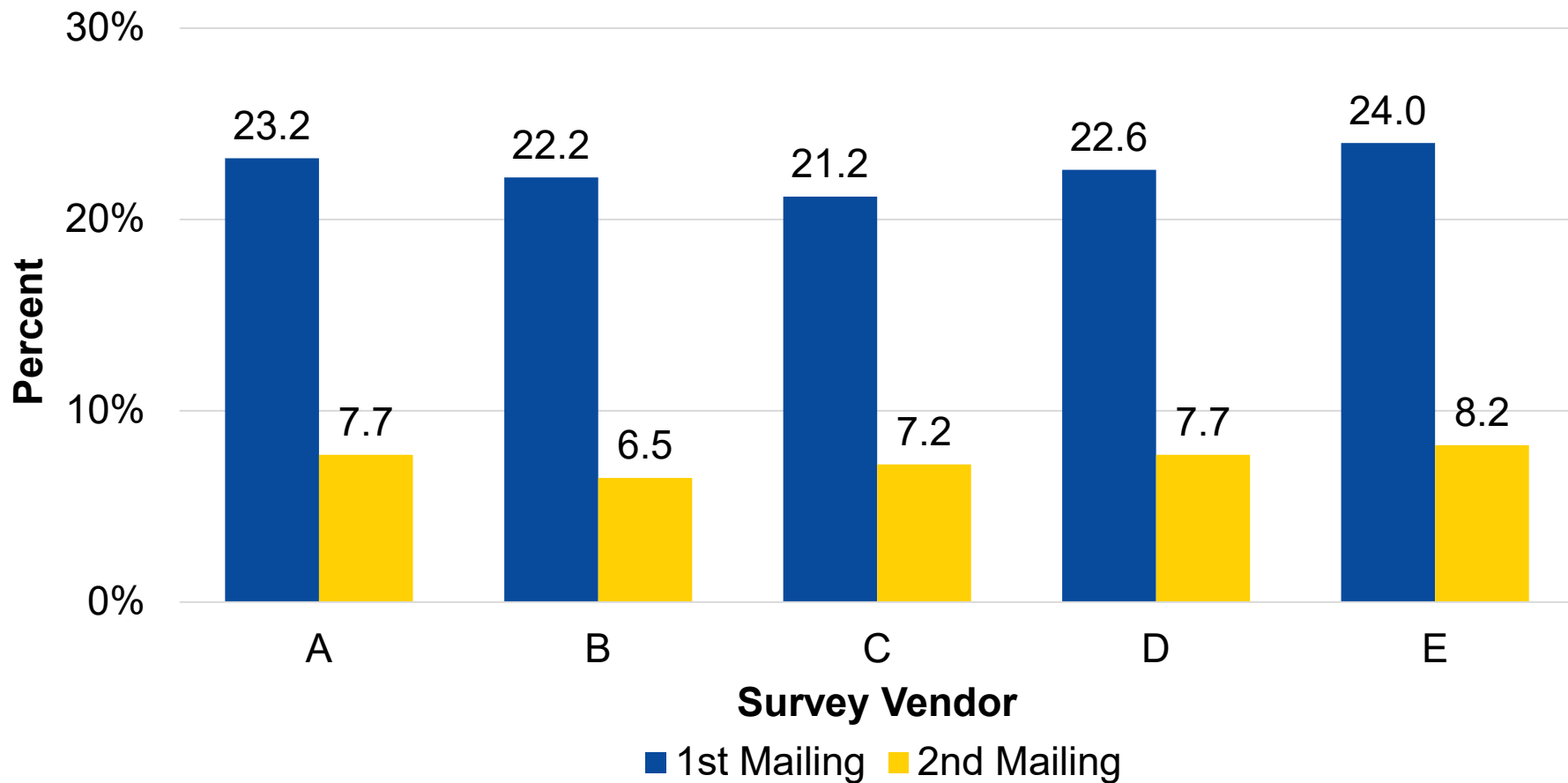
Variability of Completed Survey Rates by Vendor

Cohort 22 Baseline Survey: 2019



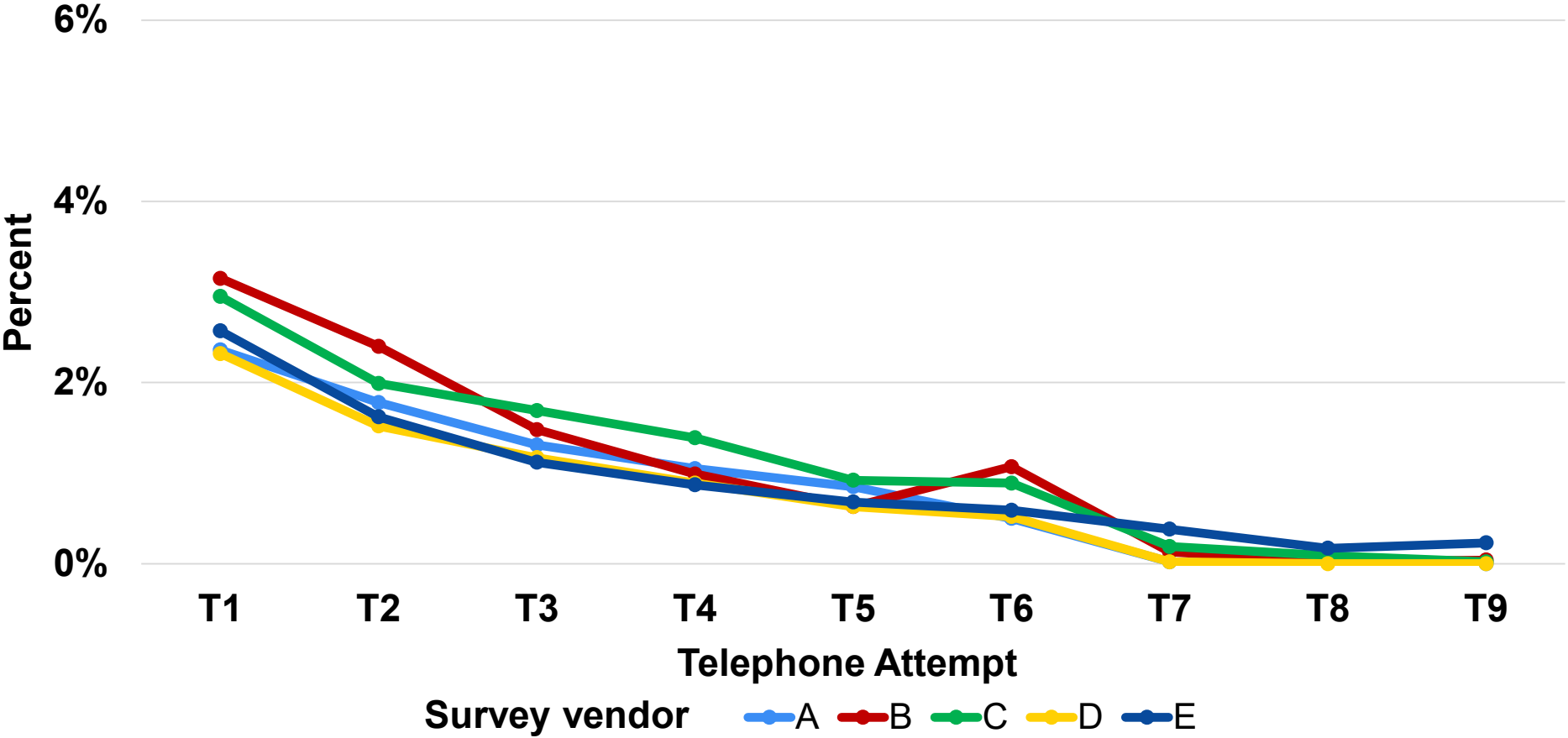
Percent of Sample Responding by Mail

Cohort 22 Baseline Survey: 2019



Percent of Sample Responding by Telephone

Cohort 22 Baseline Survey: 2019

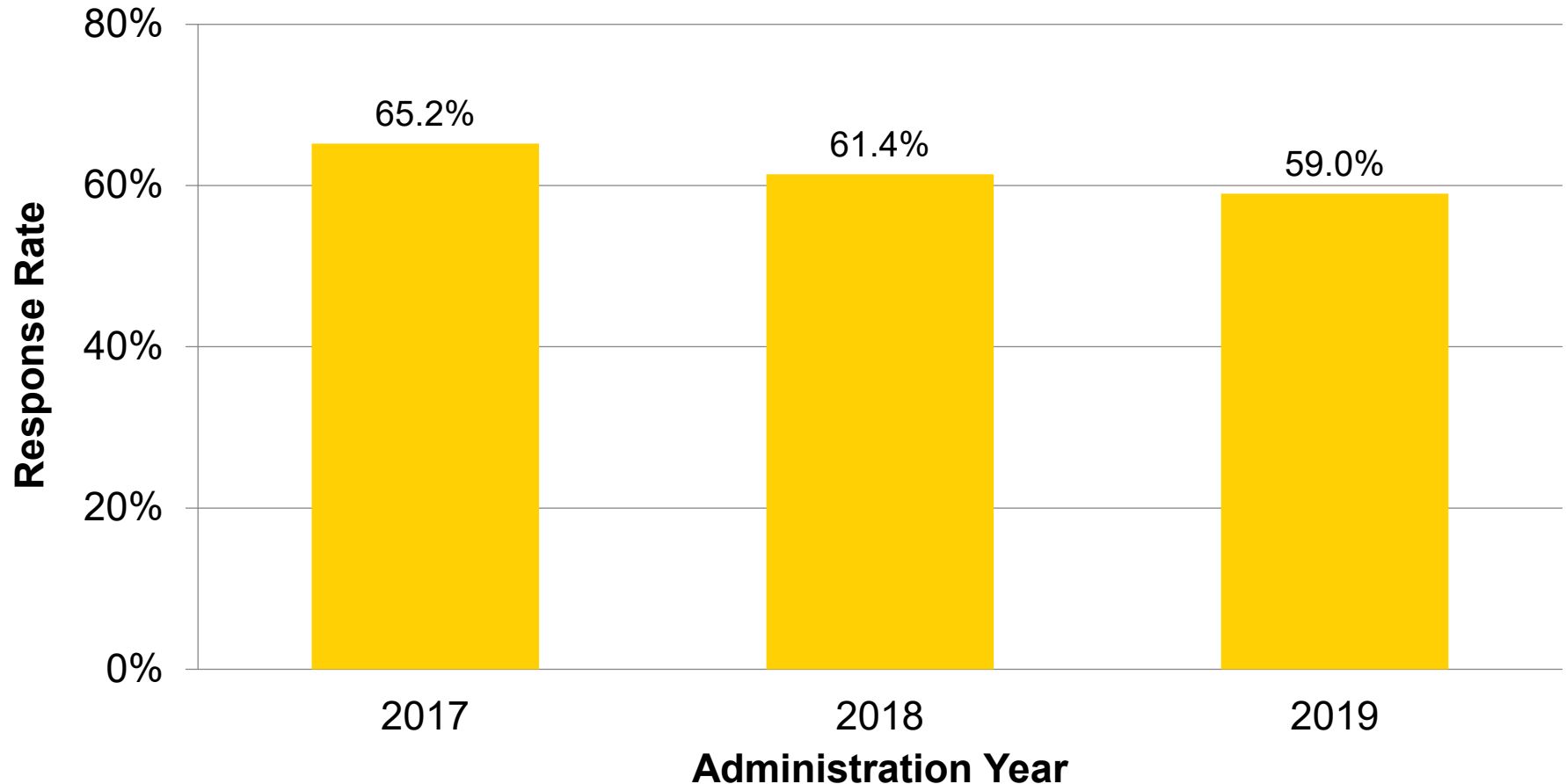


Survey Response Rates

Cohort 20 Follow-Up

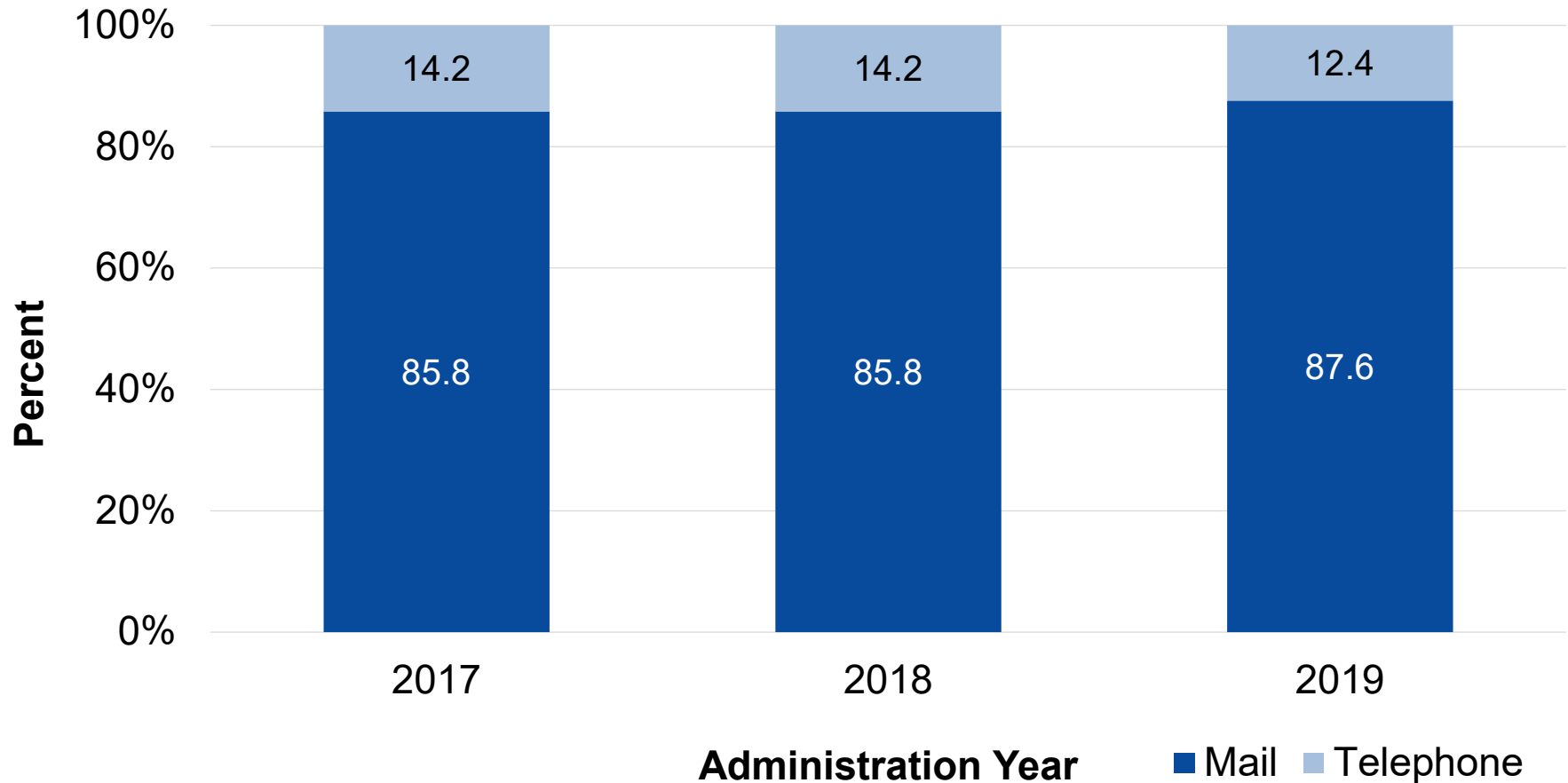
Overall Response Rates Trend

Cohorts 18-20 Follow-Up Surveys: 2017–2019



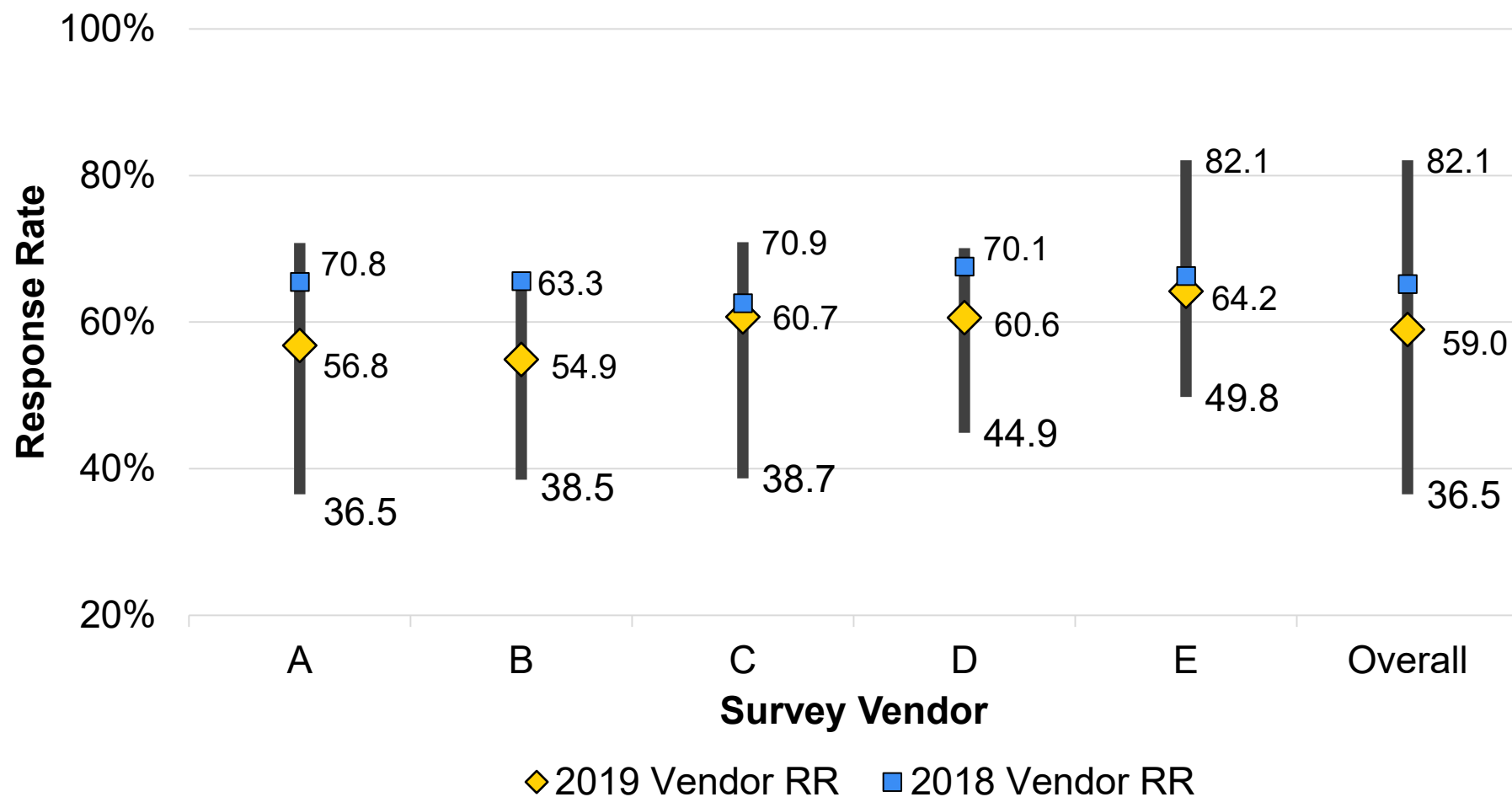
Completed Surveys by Mode

Cohorts 18-20 Follow-Up Surveys: 2017-2019



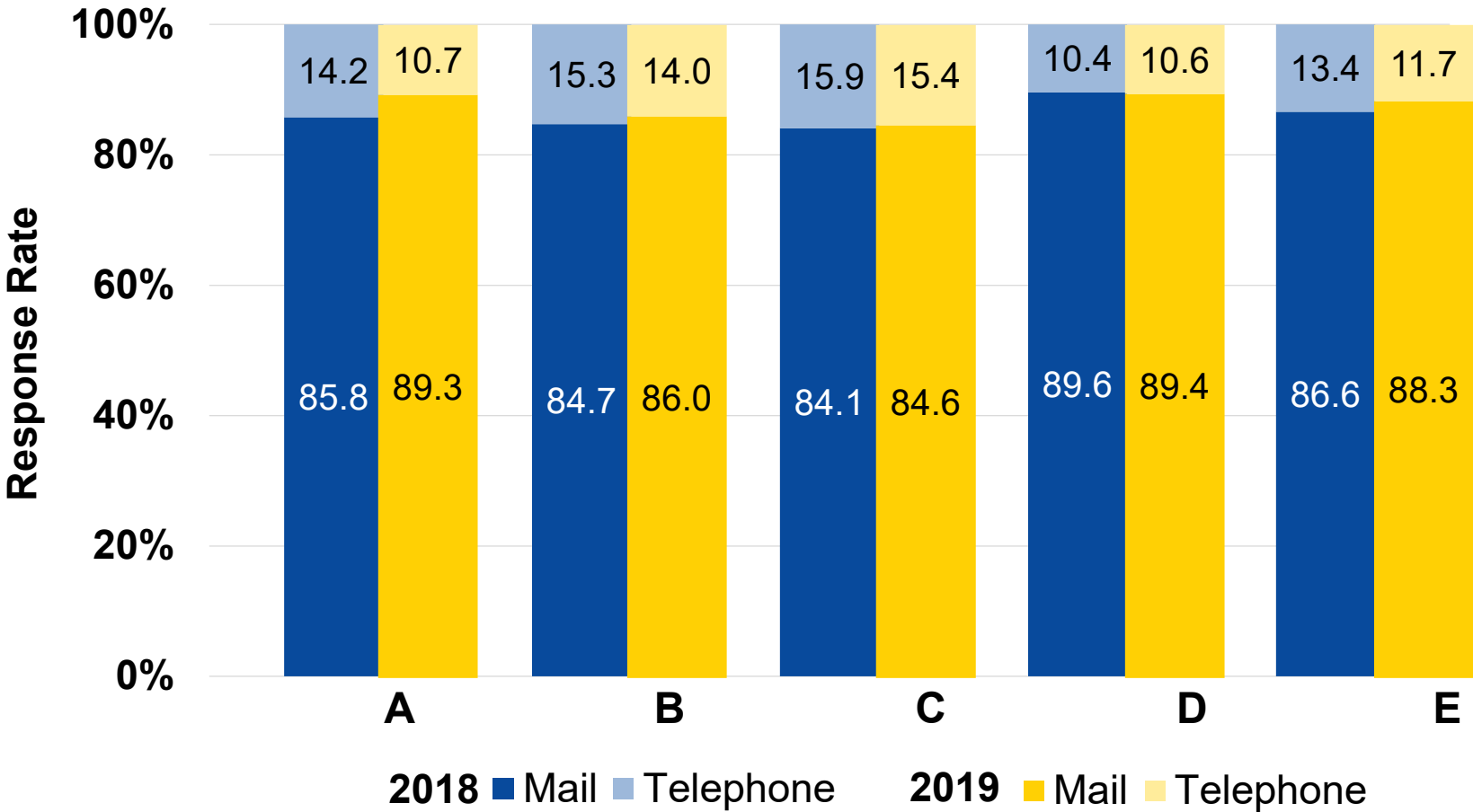
Variability of Completed Survey Rates by Vendor

Cohort 20 Follow-Up Survey: 2019



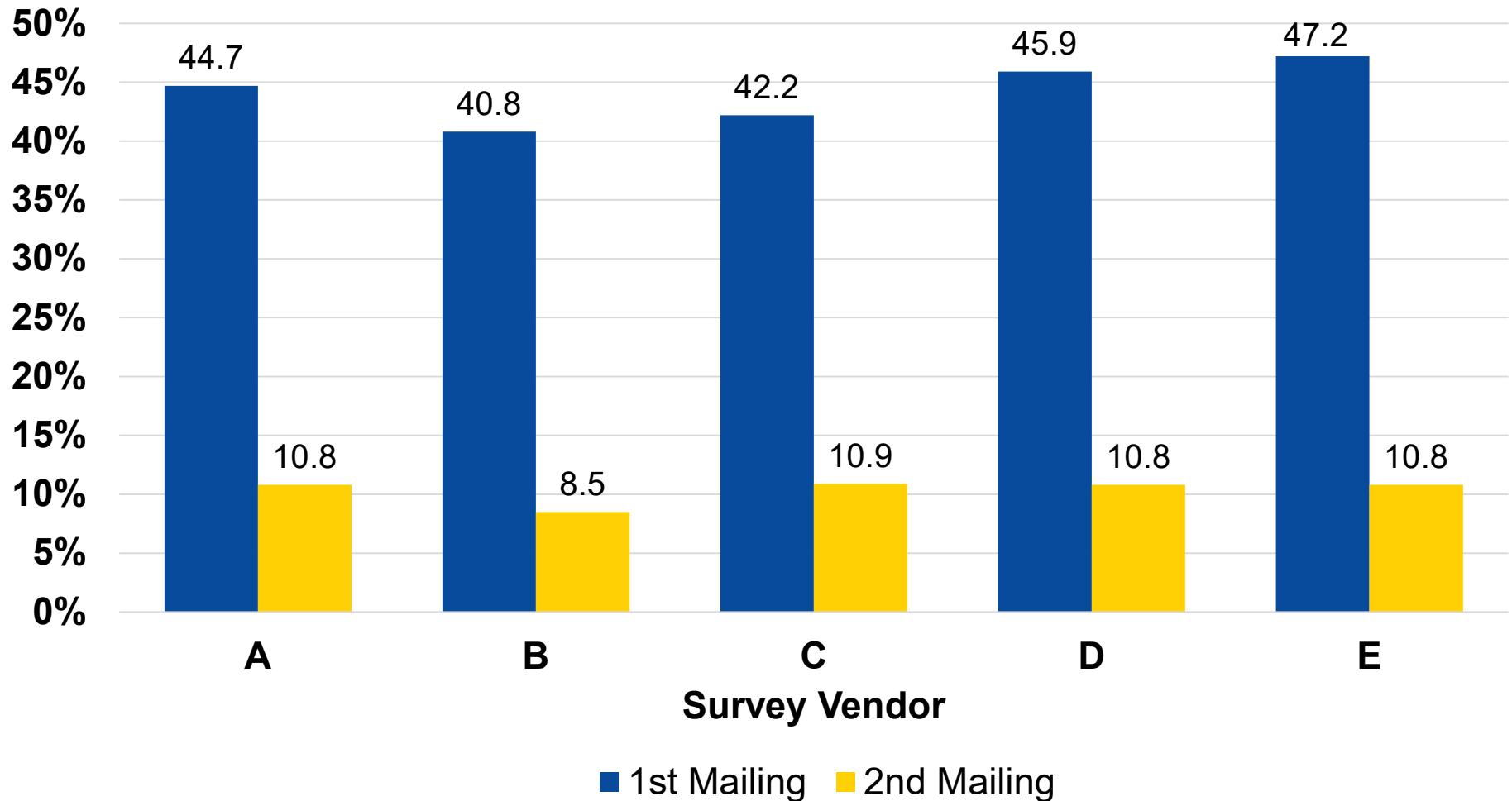
Completed Survey Rates by Mode and Vendor

Cohorts 19-20 Follow-Up Surveys: 2018-2019



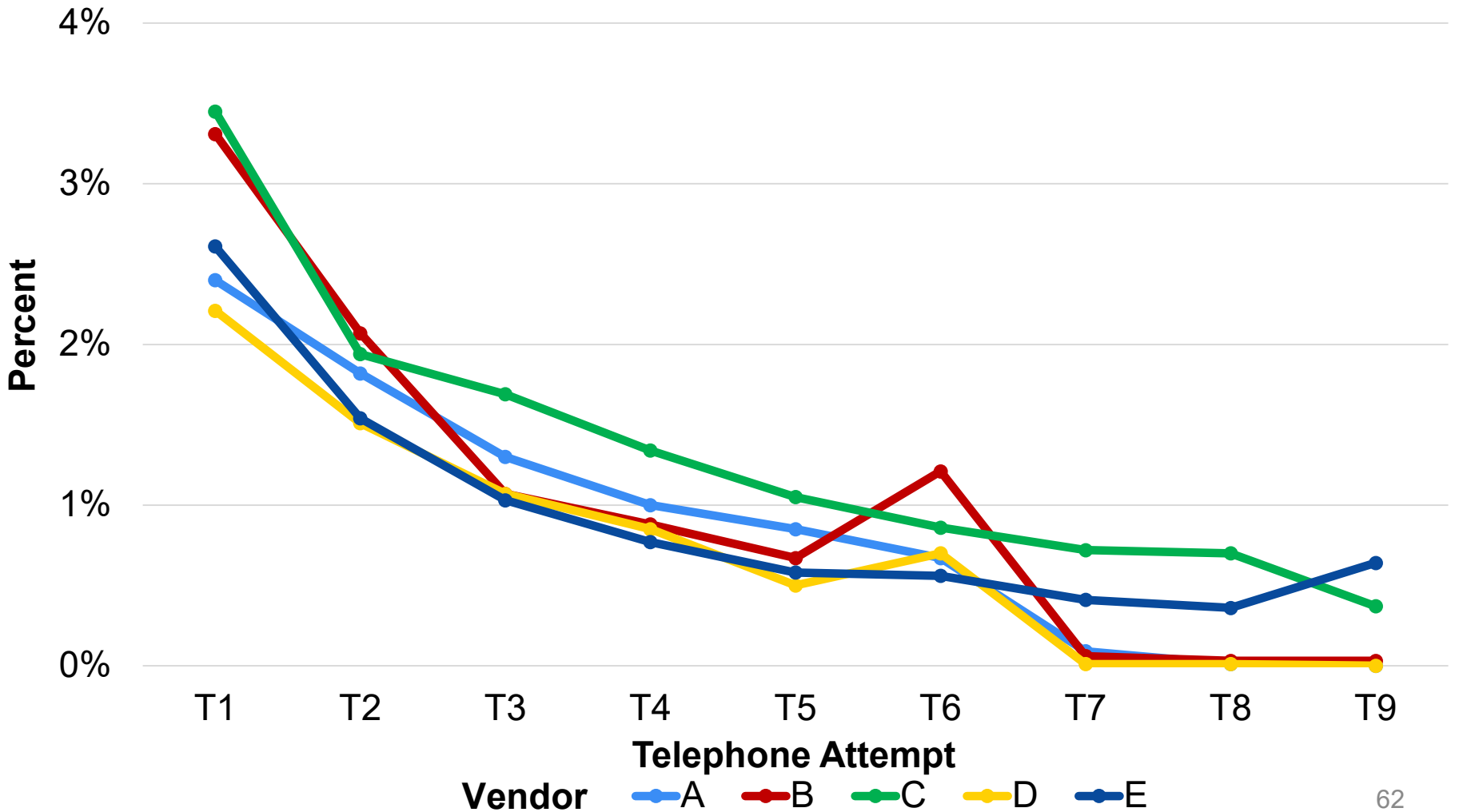
Percent of Sample Responding by Mail

Cohort 20 Follow-Up Survey: 2019



Percent of Sample Responding by Telephone

Cohort 20 Follow-Up Survey: 2019

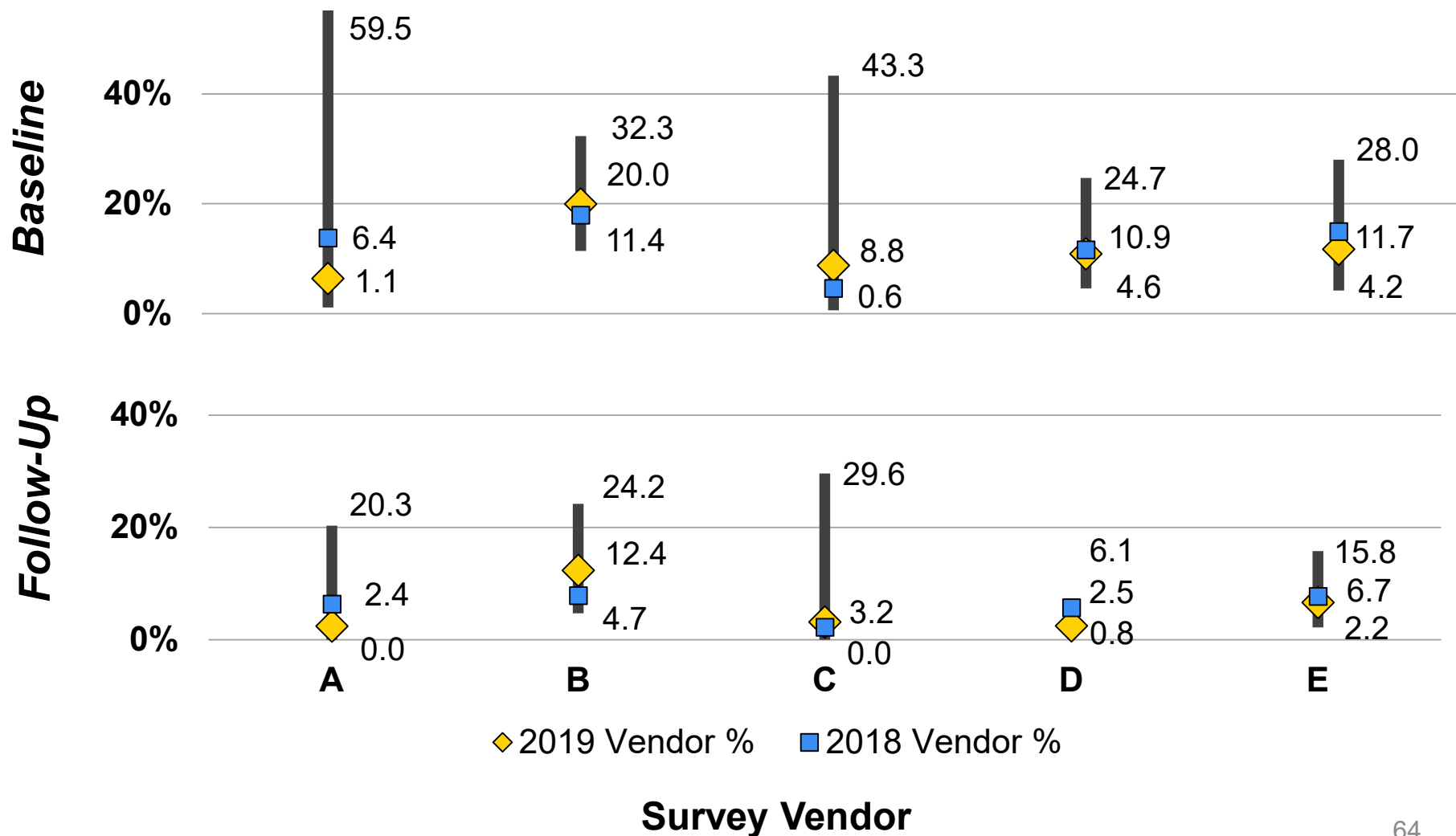




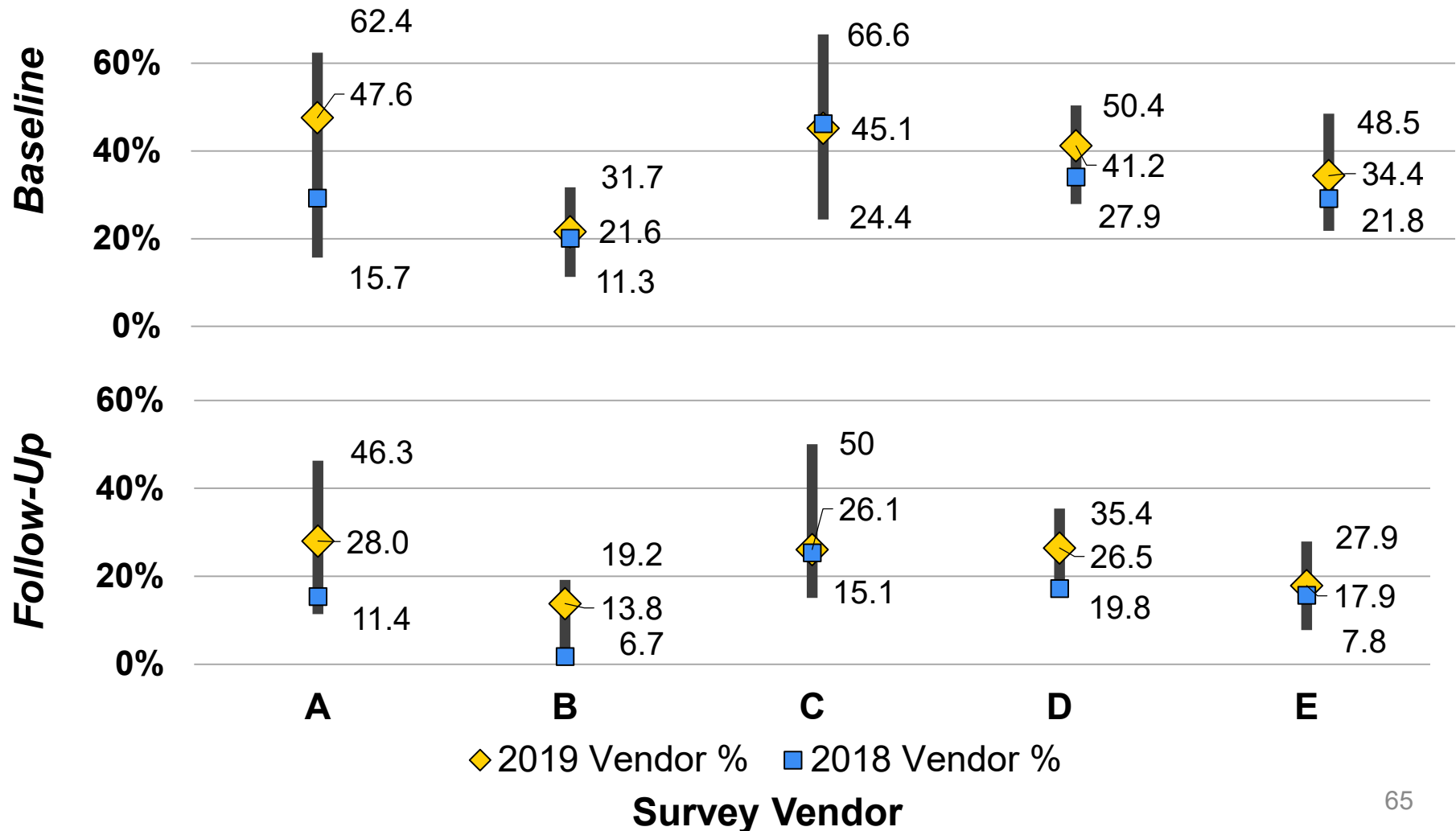
Survey Disposition Components

Cohort 22 Baseline and Cohort 20 Follow-Up

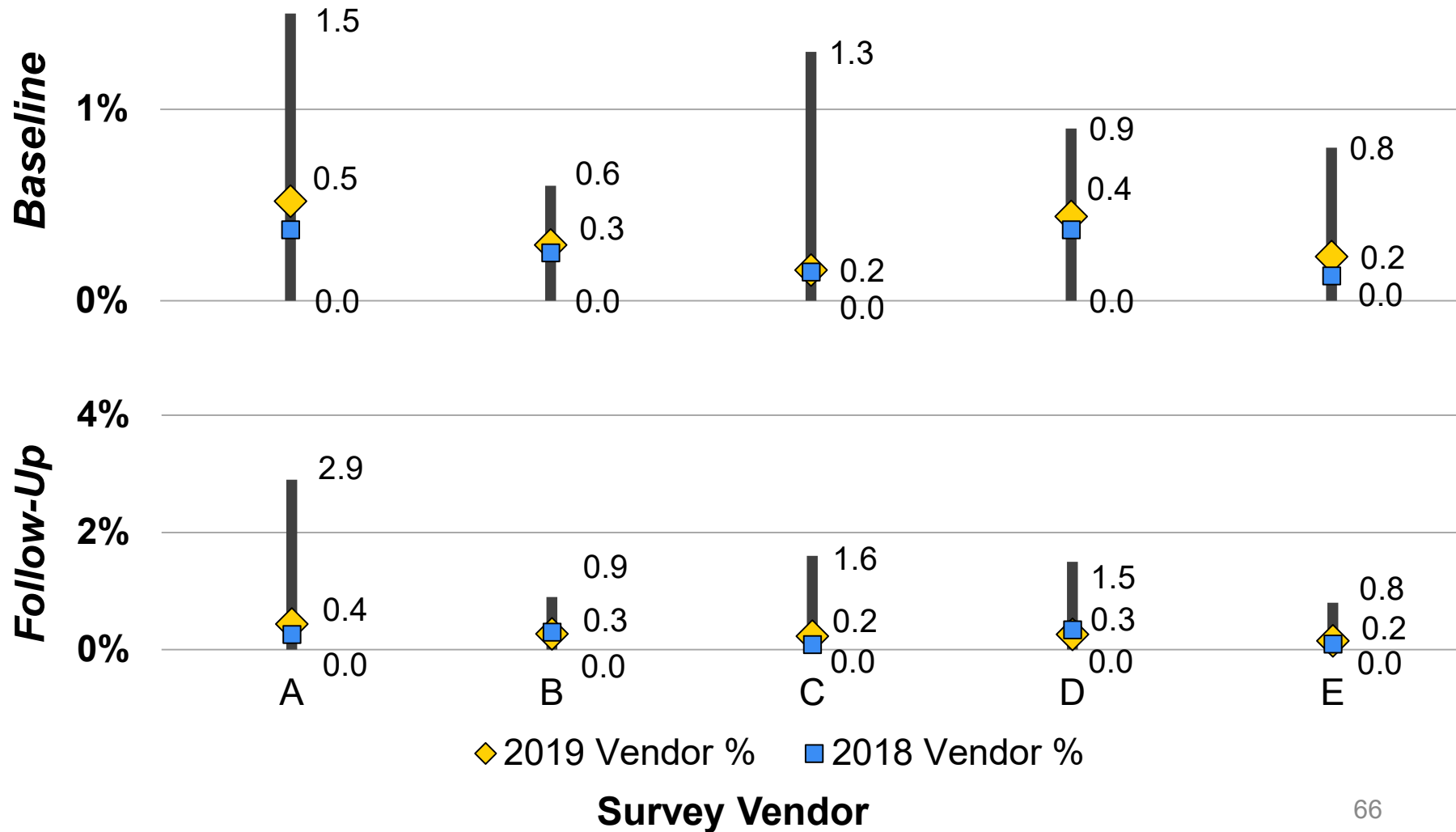
Mail Nonresponse After Max Attempts: M36



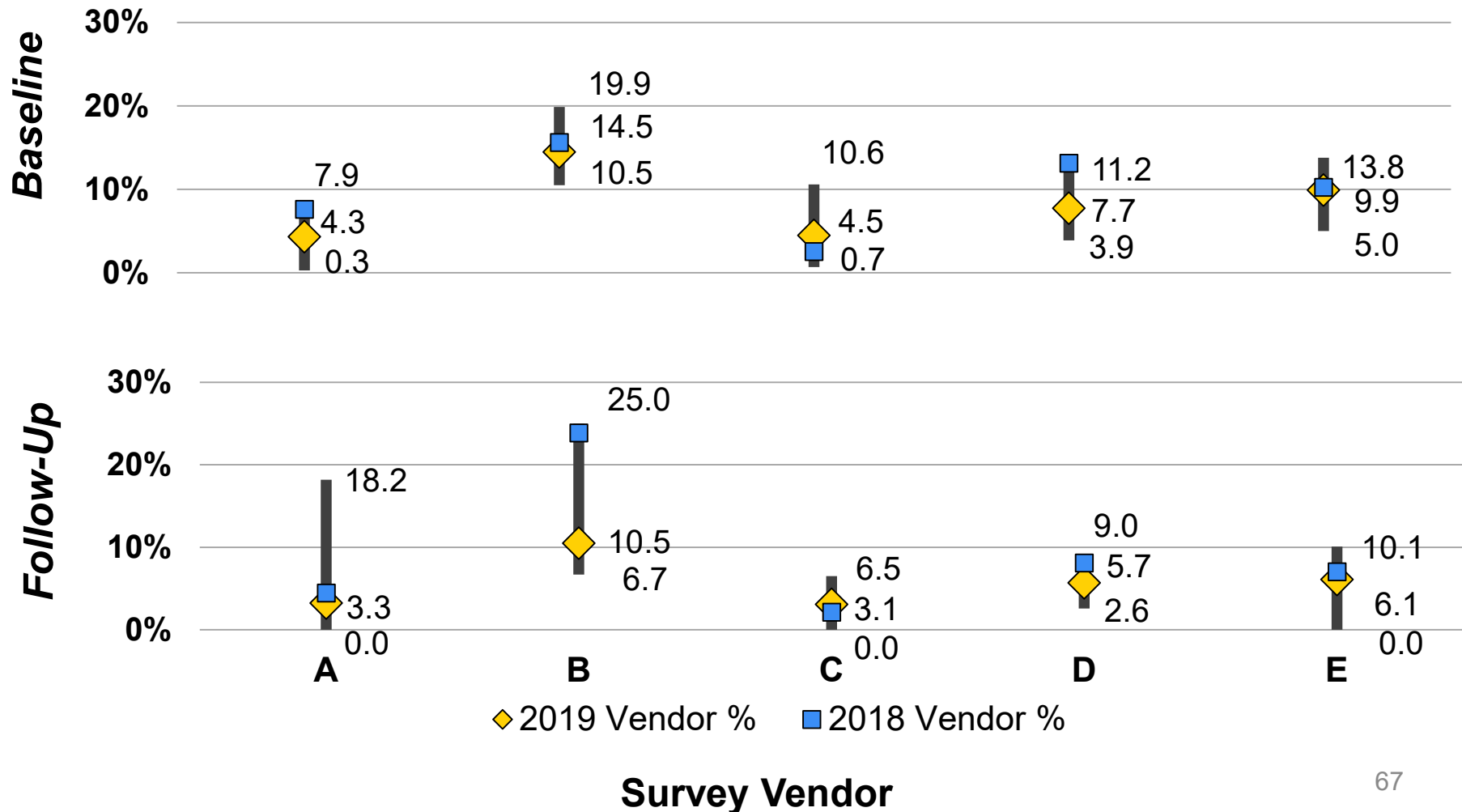
Telephone Nonresponse After Max Attempts: T36



Mail Refusal: M32



Telephone Refusal: T32



Key Points

- Both Baseline and Follow-Up response rates continued to decrease in 2019
- Over 75% 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 response rate ranges across contracts were evident for some survey vendors




Survey Material Updates

Overview

- Mailing Material Updates
- Telephone Script Updates
- FAQ Updates

Mailing Material Updates

Mailing Material Templates

-  **NEW:** The HOS 2020 prenotification letters, cover letters, and reminder/thank-you postcards feature shortened text and plain language updates
- Use the 2020 versions when preparing your organization's mailing materials (Appendix E of the QAG)

Mailing Material Updates (Cont'd)

CMS Letterhead


- **NEW:** Prenotification letters and survey cover letters are required to include the CMS letterhead

Signature of CMS Official

- **NEW:** Prenotification letters and survey cover letters must include the signature of the designated CMS official


Mailing Material Updates (Cont'd)

Personalized Salutation

-  **NEW:** Salutations for all materials must be personalized with the member's first and last name as listed in the sample file (e.g., “Dear [MEMBER FIRST NAME] [MEMBER LAST NAME]”)

Mailing Material Updates (Cont'd)

Font Size

-  **NEW:** Prenotification letters, survey cover letters, and reminder/thank-you postcards should be printed in Times New Roman font in 13-point type or larger. For Chinese characters, print in PMingLiu or SimSun in 13-point type or larger

Mailing Material Updates (Cont'd)

Q60 (Language)


- **NEW:** Added “Russian” response option to Q60 to align with all available survey languages

60. What language do you mainly speak at home?

- ☐ English
1
- ☐ Spanish
2
- ☐ Chinese
3
- ☐ Russian
4
- ☐ Some other language (please
7 specify)
-

Telephone Script Updates

Interviewer and Programming Notes

-  **NEW:** Separated interviewer notes from programming notes in the telephone script
 - Survey vendors are only required to include interviewer notes on screen when programming electronic telephone interviewing systems

Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)


Chinese Telephone Protocol

- **NEW:** The HOS telephone protocol is now available in Chinese
 - Since there is no capitalization in Chinese, interviewer instructions are included in the Chinese telephone script to denote when responses should be read only if necessary

<p>>Q15< 現在我要問一些關於特定醫療狀況的問題。</p> <p>您是否失明或有嚴重視力問題，即使戴眼鏡也一樣？</p> <p>{READ IF NECESSARY:}</p> <p><1>是 <2>否</p> <p><9>NOT ASCERTAINED</p> <p>[Q16]</p>	<p>>Q15< 現在我要問一些關於特定醫療狀況的問題。</p> <p>[MEMBER NAME] 是否失明或有嚴重視力問題，即使戴眼鏡也一樣？</p> <p>{READ IF NECESSARY:}</p> <p><1>是 <2>否</p> <p><9>NOT ASCERTAINED</p> <p>[Q16]</p>
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Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)

Pronunciations

-  **NEW:** Removed all but the following pronunciations from the telephone script:
 - Angina pectoris [an-JYE-nuh or AN-jin-uh PECK-ter-iss]
 - Myocardial infarction [MY-oh-car-dee-el in-FARK-shun]
 - Emphysema [EM-fi-see-ma]
 - Crohn's disease = [crones dih-ZEEZ]
 - Ulcerative colitis = [UHL-suh-rey-tiv kuh-LAHY-tis]
 - Arthritis = [ahr-THRAI-tis]
 - Osteoporosis = [os-tee-oh-puh-ROH-sis]
 - Sciatica = [sigh-AT-ih-ka]
 - Incontinence = [in-KON-tih-NENS]

Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)

Q51 (Falls)

- **NEW:** Added the following required text to last bullet of Q51: “to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking?”

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has your doctor or other health provider done anything else to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking? {IF R ANSWERS YES, CODE <1> YES AND MOVE TO Q52.}	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has [MEMBER NAME]'s doctor or other health provider done anything else to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking? {IF R ANSWERS YES, CODE <1> YES AND MOVE TO Q52.}
<1> YES	<1> YES
<2> NO	<2> NO
<3> I HAD NO VISITS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	<3> [HE/SHE] HAD NO VISITS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS
<9> NOT ASCERTAINED	<9> NOT ASCERTAINED

Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)

Q58b (Hispanic Ethnicity)

- **NEW:** Added the following required text to Q58b: “When I read the following list, please select one or more categories that describe your ethnicity. I must ask you about all categories in case more than one applies. As I read each category, please answer with a yes or no.”

Member Script	Proxy Script
<p>>Q58b< When I read the following list, please select one or more categories that describe your ethnicity. I must ask you about all categories in case more than one applies. As I read each category, please answer with a yes or no.</p> <p>Are you: Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano/a?</p> <p><0> NO OR NOT ASCERTAINED <1> YES</p>	<p>>Q58b< When I read the following list, please select one or more categories that describes [MEMBER NAME]’s ethnicity. I must ask you about all categories in case more than one applies. As I read each category, please answer with a yes or no.</p> <p>Is [he/she]: Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano/a?</p> <p><0> NO OR NOT ASCERTAINED <1> YES</p>

Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)

Q60a (Language)

- **NEW:** Added “Russian” response option to Q60a to align with all available survey languages

Member Script	Proxy Script
>Q60a< What language do you mainly speak at home?	>Q60a< What language does [MEMBER NAME] mainly speak at home?
<1> English, [Q61]	<1> English, [Q61]
<2> Spanish, [Q61]	<2> Spanish, [Q61]
<3> Chinese, [Q61]	<3> Chinese, [Q61]
<4> Russian, or [Q61]	<4> Russian, or [Q61]
<7> Some other language? [Q60b]	<7> Some other language? [Q60b]
<9> NOT ASCERTAINED [Q61]	<9> NOT ASCERTAINED [Q61]

Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)

Q61 (Marital Status)

- **NEW:** If a telephone respondent provides an answer to Q61 before an interviewer reads all response options, the interviewer marks the response provided and moves to the next question

Electronic Telephone Interviewing System Specifications	
Member Script	Proxy Script
>Q61< What is your current marital status? Are you: <1> Married, <2> Divorced, <3> Separated, <4> Widowed, or <5> Never married? <9> NOT ASCERTAINED [Q62]	>Q61< What is [MEMBER NAME]'s current marital status? Is [he/she]: <1> Married, <2> Divorced, <3> Separated, <4> Widowed, or <5> Never married? <9> NOT ASCERTAINED [Q62]
Interviewer Note: If respondent selects an option before all the options are read, code that option and move to the next question.	

Telephone Script Updates (Cont'd)

Q68 (Income)

- **NEW:** Added the following required text to Q68:
"Your best estimate would be fine."

Member Script	Proxy Script
>Q68< Which of the following categories best represents the combined income for all family members in your household for the past 12 months ? Your best estimate would be fine.	>Q68< Which of the following categories best represents the combined income for all family members in [MEMBER NAME]'s household for the past 12 months ? Your best estimate would be fine.

Telephone Script Requirements

- Use the 2020 versions when preparing your organization's telephone interviewing system (Appendix F of the QAG)

FAQ Updates

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- **NEW:** Added three questions to Appendix C:
Frequently Asked Questions for Customer Support

Questions About the Survey Instrument

50. *Why are you asking about my gender?*

We are required to ask about your gender for demographic purposes. We want to be sure that the people we survey accurately represent the Medicare beneficiaries in our country. You can skip any question that you don't want to answer.

51. *Why are you asking about my race/ethnicity?*

We ask about your race/ethnicity for demographic purposes. We want to be sure that the people we survey accurately represent the racial/ethnic diversity of Medicare beneficiaries in our country. You can skip any question that you don't want to answer.

52. *Why are you asking about my income level?*

We ask about your income for demographic purposes. We want to be sure that the people we survey accurately represent the different income groups of Medicare beneficiaries in our country. Please be assured that this information will be kept completely confidential. You can skip any question that you don't want to answer.



Data Coding and Data Submission

Overview

- File Specification Review
- File Layout Changes
- Decision Rules
- Disposition Codes
- Data Coding
- Data Processing
- Data Submission

File Specification 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
- Two records
 - **Header Record:** contract-level information
 - **Member-Level Record:** member-level information from:
 - Sample File Layout
 - Survey File Layout

File Layout Changes

Sample File

- **NEW:** Removed “2 = Other HOS non-quality reporting sample” as a valid value for the HOS Quality Reporting Sample variable

Supplemental File

- **NEW:** Removed HIC Number

File Layout Changes (Cont'd)

Survey File Record

- **NEW:** Survey vendors are no longer required to append the entire sample file to the beginning of the survey file record
- **NEW:** Only the following sample file variables are included in the survey file record
 - Beneficiary Link Key, Medicare Beneficiary ID, CMS Contract Number
 - Member First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name
 - CMS Date of Birth

File Layout Changes (Cont'd)

Survey File Record

- **NEW:** Q60a (Primary Language) variable
 - Added valid value of 4 = Russian
 - Revised the valid value for “Some other language (please specify)” from 4 to 7
- **NEW:** Added new valid value of “TN” for Survey Round

Field Description	Field Position		Field Length	Added Valid Values
	Start	End		
Question 60a	199	199	1	4 = Russian 7 = Some other language
Survey Round	285	286	2	TN = Inbound telephone

Decision Rules

Open-ended Questions

- Q67a and Q67b (Proxy First and Last Name)
 - Code response exactly as provided, regardless of appropriateness
 - Survey vendors may clean the data only in the following instances:
 - Last Name and First Name should be separated into their own fields
 - If Traditional Chinese characters included, translate to English for inclusion in final data files
- Q60b (Primary Language – Please Specify)
 - Code response exactly as provided, regardless of appropriateness

Decision Rules (Cont'd)

- Illegible data for Q60b and Q67
 - Record response as ILLEGIBLE
 - Use all caps
 - Do **NOT** use any punctuation
- Multiple mark questions
 - If it is obvious a member is crossing out one response to select another, code the corrected response


Calculating Percent Complete

- HOS contains 85 potential response items
- Exclude 12 skip pattern items from calculation
 - Q14, Q35a-Q35e, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q65, Q67
 - **Note:** Q57b is excluded from percent complete calculation because it is only asked in the telephone survey as part of a skip pattern
- Denominator is 73 items

$$\% \text{ Complete} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Answered Items (Exclude Skip Pattern Items)}}{\text{Total Response Items} - \text{Excluded Items}} \times 100$$

Disposition Codes

Not Enrolled in MAO (M21/T21)

-  **NEW:** Clarified how to disposition members who insist that they are not a Medicare beneficiary

Final Disposition	Disposition Code	Definition/Explanation
Not Enrolled in MAO	M21/T21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>If a member responds to the mail survey that he or she is “not in the plan/MAO” assign the disposition code “M32 – Refusal”</i>• <i>For telephone surveys, if a member insists that he or she is “not in the plan/MAO” assign the disposition code “T32 – Refusal” (interviewers must still use the appropriate FAQ to attempt to complete the survey)</i>

Disposition Codes (Cont'd)

Bad Address *and* Mail-Only Protocol (M24)

- **NEW:** This disposition code will not be used in 2020 due to the addition of the Chinese telephone protocol and the lack of a Russian Follow-Up protocol

Data Coding

Coding Demographic Fields

- Survey vendors do **NOT** code a record T31 if only demographic information is collected from member or proxy
- Continue telephone attempts to reach the member or proxy to complete the survey

Data Coding (Cont'd)

Assigning Survey Round Variable

- **NEW:** Added new variable for inbound telephone attempts
 - TN = Respondent completed the survey during an inbound telephone attempt
 - Assigned only for T10, T11, and T31 disposition codes
 - Code the Survey Completion Date as the interview date
- **NEW:** Updated coding guidance when Survey Language is 4 = Chinese to reflect new Chinese telephone protocol
 - M1, M2, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, MT, TN are now permitted for surveys completed in Chinese

Data Coding (Cont'd)

Assigning Survey Language Variable

- **NEW:** Clarified that 5 = Russian is the only survey language that requires exclusively mail disposition codes for completed surveys
 - Assigned only for M10, M11, and M31 disposition codes
- **NEW:** Updated valid Disposition Codes for surveys with a Survey Language of 4 = Chinese to reflect new Chinese telephone protocol
 - M10, T10, M11, T11, M31, T31 are now permitted for surveys completed in Chinese

Data Coding (Cont'd)

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

Data Processing and Submission

Data Processing Requirements

- Survey vendors must process data within **three business days** throughout fielding

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

Interim Data File Submission

- Interim data submission allows the opportunity to investigate data submission issues before submitting files
- Submit all interim data files via the HOS Data Submission System
- System opens **Tuesday, June 23** and closes **Thursday, June 25**
- All data received up to **three business days** prior to the interim data submission due date (**Monday, June 22**) must be submitted

Interim Data File Submission (Cont'd)

- Survey vendors review records thoroughly prior to submission to confirm that submitted data are accurate
- Interim data files will be cleaned and analyzed
- HOS Project Team will provide results to survey vendors, if applicable, prior to final data submission
- Data collection issues identified during interim data submission may warrant discrepancy reports

Prepare and Submit Data Files

- Submission and organization IDs will be provided in the Header Record
- Upload a maximum of 80 files within a zip file at one time
- Let each zip file process before uploading another
- Review and correct all errors received from the HOS Data Submission System
 - Revise and re-upload data files, as needed

Final Data Submission

- Final data submission opens **Monday, July 27, 2020**
- Complete data attestation prior to submission
- Final data files due **Monday, August 10, 2020**
- Final data files will be cleaned and analyzed
 - Data collection issues identified during final data submission may warrant discrepancy reports



Quality Oversight

Overview

- Oversight Activities
 - Before Survey Administration
 - During Survey Administration
 - After Survey Administration
 - Ongoing Activities

Before Survey Administration

Oversight Activity	Due Date	Comments from NCQA	Finalize Materials
Mailing Material Review	Friday, February 21	Friday, March 6	Monday, March 16
Electronic Telephone Interviewing Material Review	Friday, March 6	Friday, March 20	Monday, March 30
Survey Vendor QAP	Friday, March 13	Survey Vendor Conference Call	Within One Week

Mailing Materials

- Review final print-ready HOS mailing materials
- Due **Friday, February 21**
 - Send electronic copies to hos@ncqa.org
 - Comment/approve by Friday, March 6
 - All materials must be final by **Monday, March 16**

Mailing Materials (Cont'd)

Common Findings

- Omission of footnote about how sampled members may request materials in their preferred language
- Improper capitalization of select words
- Incorrect bolding or italicizing of select words
- Incorrect font use

Electronic Interviewing Materials

- Review telephone interviewing screenshots and skip pattern logic
- **Due Friday, March 6**
 - Two weeks after submitting mailing materials
 - Send electronic copies to hos@ncqa.org
 - Comment/approve by Friday, March 20
 - All materials must be final by **Monday, March 30**
- Subcontractor must follow the same review schedule

Electronic Interviewing Materials (Cont'd)

Common Findings

- Missing instructions and probes
- Missing emphasis on select words
- Grammatical errors
- 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 in the QAG (Appendix B)
 - Due **Friday, March 13**

Survey Vendor QAP (Cont'd)

Common Findings

- Missing issue remediation section
- Outdated protocols
- Missing detail on subcontractor oversight
- Omission of foreign language protocol details
- Incorrect or missing survey disposition code crosswalk

During Survey Administration

Oversight Activities	Dates (2020)
Survey Vendor Conference Calls	Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 10
Seeded Mailings	April – June
Customer Support Reviews	April – May
Survey Vendor Progress Reports	April – August
Data Record Review	May – July
Site Visits	June
Electronic Telephone Interviewing Monitoring	June – July
Interim Data File Submission Deadline	Thursday, June 25

Survey Vendor Conference Calls

- Scheduled to take place **Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 10**
- Provide feedback on QAPs
 - Submit revisions **5 business** days after call, if needed
- Review 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 and CMS in all survey mailings that are sent to members
- Document seeded mailing process in detail in QAP

Customer Support Review

- Assess customer support responses to the specifications in QAG and FAQ
- Customer support review: *Telephone*
 - Baseline Cohort Review
 - Follow-Up Cohort Review
- Customer support review: *Email*
 - Securely forward all customer support emails with responses on a weekly basis

Customer Support Review (Cont'd)

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 during administration for adherence to the HOS protocols during survey administration
- Deadlines and report requirements outlined in QAG
- Submit progress reports to hos@ncqa.org

Survey Vendor Progress Reports (Cont'd)

- Narrative Reports
 - Summary of challenges/difficulties encountered
 - Experience with fielding to date
- Summary Status Reports
 - Survey dispositions
 - Response rates
- Member Correspondence (i.e., white mail)

Telephone Interviewer Monitoring

- Survey vendors monitor 10%, at a minimum, including subcontractors
- HOS Project Team will conduct remote silent monitoring of interviewers and interviewing system
 - Baseline (June), Follow-Up (July)

Telephone Interviewer Monitoring (Cont'd)

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

Telephone Interviewer Monitoring (Cont'd)

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 review
 - Data security

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
- The HOS Project Team will provide a list of requirements and records prior to the review
- Conduct reviews onsite or remotely

Data Record Review (Cont'd)

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

Oversight Activities	Dates (2020)
Survey Vendor Final Report	Friday, August 14
Report of HOS Records Stored and Facility Standards for Records Storage Facilities Inspection Checklist	Friday, September 4

Ongoing Activities

- Discrepancy Reports & Corrective Action Plan
- Technical Support

Discrepancy Report & Corrective Action Plan

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

Appendix G: Discrepancy Report Form |

Instructions: Submit the Discrepancy Report Form to the [HOS Project Team](mailto:hos@ncqa.org) (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.

I. General Information		Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Report <input type="checkbox"/> Updated Report	
		Report Submission Date: MM/DD/YY	
Name:		Organization:	
Title:		Address:	
E-mail:		Telephone:	
II. Description of Discrepancy			
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.			
Date Discrepancy Discovered:		Discrepancy Time Frame:	
Detailed Description of Discrepancy and How the Discrepancy Was Discovered:			
III. Impact of Discrepancy			
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.			
Survey Languages Impacted:		<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Russian	
CMS Contract Number	Number of Affected Surveys	Number of Sampled Members Impacted	
H#### or All			

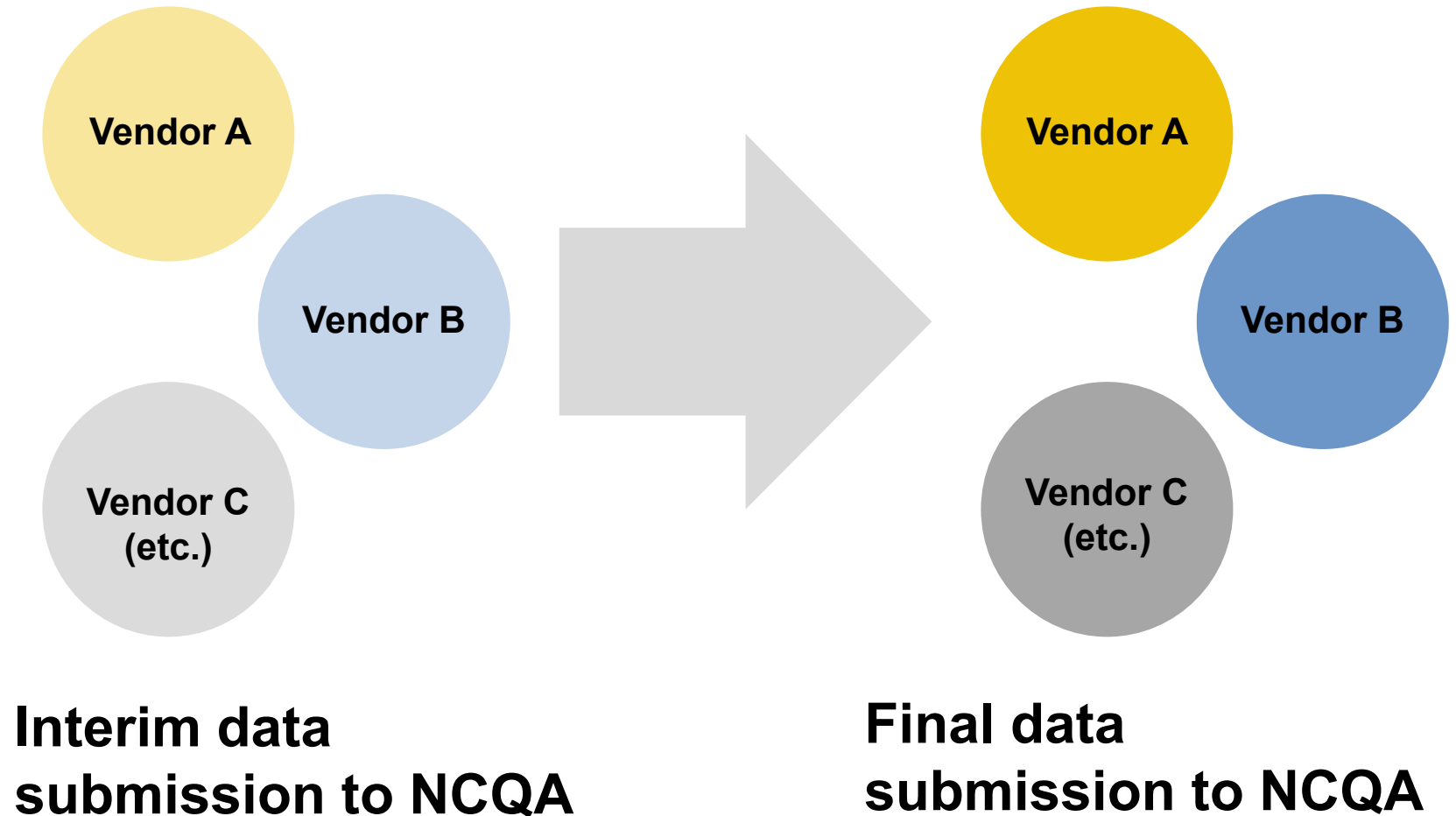


Data Management

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
- MA Contract Data Requests for Cohort 19
- HOS Case-Mix

Data Submission and Review Process



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
 - 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
 - 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: Inconsistent or Missing Data

Q57a: Are you male or female?

☐

Male

☐

Female

Example 2: Inconsistent or Missing Data

Gender Discrepancies			
	CMS Gender	Survey Gender	Match
Survey Vendor (not corresponding to other examples)	(one record example per vendor)		
A	M	F	x
B	M	F	x
C	F	M	x
D	M	F	x
E	F	F	✓

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

Height in Inches (not corresponding to other examples)	Survey Vendor (percent)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Valid (00-98)	93.8	92.15	93.75	95.35	98.01
Inappropriate Answer (88)	1.23	0.33	0.00	0.05	.61
Missing (99)	3.29	5.12	4.03	5.83	3.88

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

Missing Sections

- Look at key questions (VR-12, ADL) for unexpected sequences
 - Entire section of the survey is blank
- Missing data at the contract level and survey vendor level

Example 4: Missing Sections

Record	Q1	Q2a	Q2b	Q3a	Q3b	Q4a	Q4b	Q5	Q6a	Q6b	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10a	Q10b	Q10c	Q10d	Q10e	Q10f	Q11a	Q11b	Q11c	Q12
54	2	3	1											1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	2
55	1	2	1											3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	1	8
56	3	1	1											1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	7
57	1	2	2											2	2	3	2	1	1	3	2	2	0
58	1	2	2											2	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	0
59	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1
60	3	2	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	8

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

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

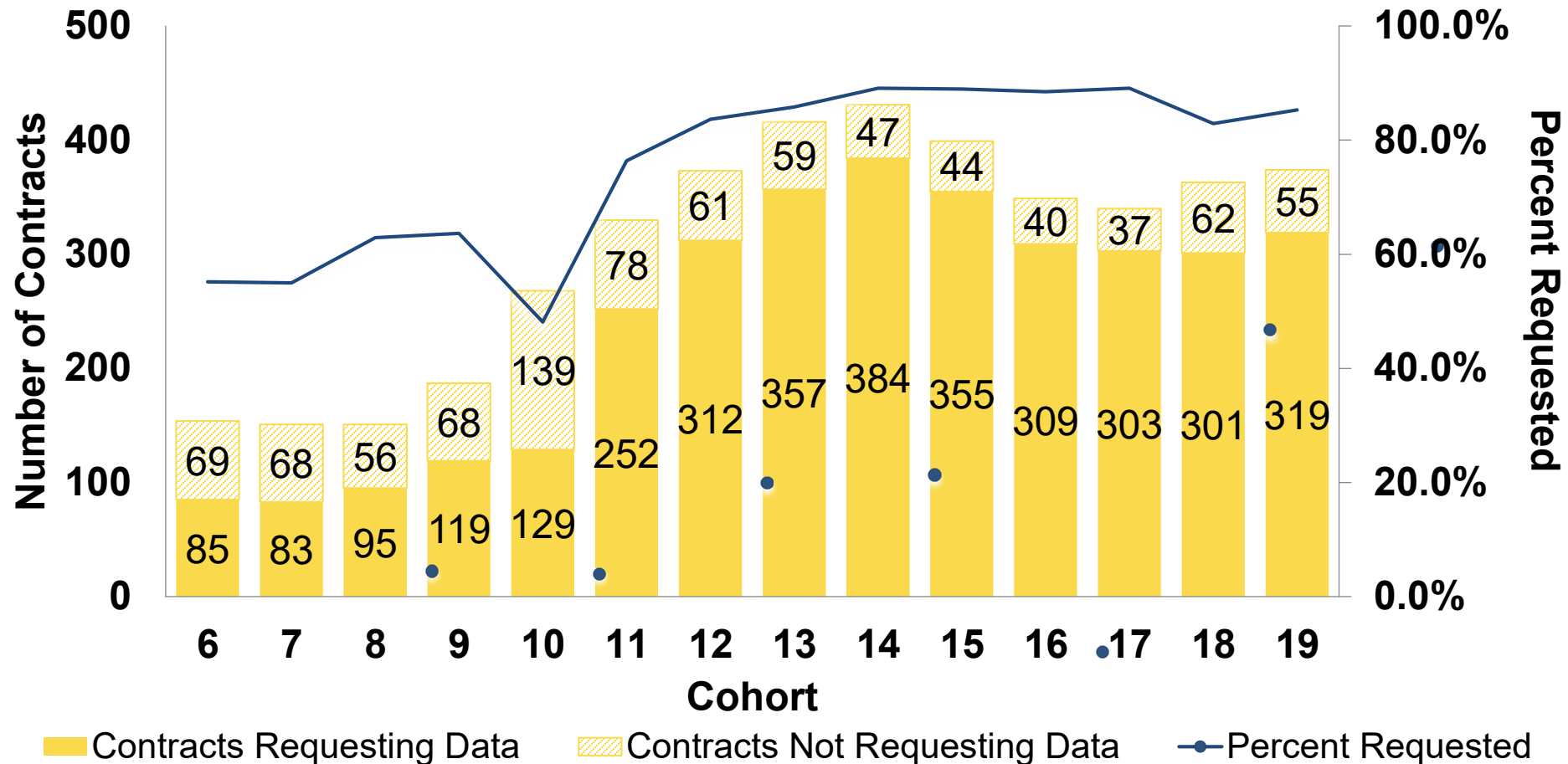
Suggested Quality Checks for Survey Vendors (Cont'd)

- 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

MA Contract Data Requests for Cohort 19



HOS Case-Mix

- 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 beneficiary
- 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



Project Reporting

Overview

- Survey Materials Submission
- Reporting Requirements
 - Survey Vendor QAP
 - Project Reports
 - Seeded Mailings
 - Member Correspondence
 - Customer Support Emails
- Data Submission
- Blinded Response Rates
- Communications

Survey Materials Submission

Oversight Activities	Dates (2020)
Submit Mailing Materials/Final Printed Material Proofs	Friday, February 21
Finalize Mailing Materials	Monday, March 16
Submit Electronic Telephone Screenshots	Friday, March 6
Finalize Electronic Telephone Screenshots	Monday, March 30

Reporting Requirements

Deliverable (Report #)	Due Date (2020)
QAP (#1)	Friday, March 13
Project Reports (#2-10)	Fridays (Biweekly) April 10 – July 31
Final Project Report (#11)	Friday, August 14
HOS Records Storage Report	Friday, September 4

Survey Vendor QAP

- Report #1
- Document compliance with HOS Protocols and quality oversight of processes
- QAPs must follow the Model QAP format in Appendix B of the QAG
- Document previous administration issues and action to prevent the issues from reoccurring
- Due **March 13**

Biweekly Project Reports

- Please review the QAG for the specific instructions for each report
- Recurring deliverables
 - Narrative Reports (Reports #2-8)
 - Summary Status Reports (Reports #3-11)
 - Member Correspondence (Reports #2-10)
- One-time deliverable
 - Copy of progress report to MAOs (Report #9)

Narrative Reports

Survey Progress and Survey Vendor Experience

- Overview of mail and telephone protocols
- Summary of challenges/difficulties encountered
- Experience to date
- Customer support summary statistics

Narrative Reports (Cont'd)

- Narrative Report #2:
 - Overview of Baseline prenotification letter and first questionnaire mailing, printing, and fulfillment processes
 - Verification of mail out date of Baseline prenotification letter and first questionnaire mailing (e.g., USPS generated report)
 - Status of staff training and SMS development
 - Confirmation of customer support functionality and testing
 - Outstanding issues or concerns

Narrative Reports (Cont'd)

- Narrative Reports #2-5 and #7:
 - Overview of required materials
 - Survey vendor provides a USPS-generated report to verify mail out dates for applicable mailing
 - Outstanding issues or concerns

Narrative Reports (Cont'd)

- Narrative Report #6 and #8:
 - Overview of progress to date
 - Describe telephone protocol and training
 - Implementation of telephone interviewing
 - High-level statistics on customer support calls and emails
 - Process of converting partially completed surveys (Report #6 only)
 - Report on experience with submitting interim data files (Report #8 only)

Summary Status Reports


- 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_C23B_MM-DD-20.xls
 - Survey Vendor Name_SSR_C21F_MM-DD-20.xls
- Use template provided
 - Updated 2020 SSR template provided prior to fielding

One-Time Deliverable

Sample of MAO Progress Reports (Report #9)

- 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

Final Detailed Status Report

- Three components:
 1. Data synthesis (required)
 2. Discussion component (required)
 - Survey implementation, issues encountered, lessons learned, recommendations
 -  **NEW:** List any additional language translations requested by MAOs
 3. Recommendations for 2021 HOS Administration
- Reports used for:
 - Informing QAG updates
 - Process improvement

Seeded Mailings

- Seeded mailings must be created in the member mailing database as a QA tool
- Include the HOS Project Team and CMS in all survey mailings that are sent to members (including prenotification letters)

Member Correspondence

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

Member Correspondence (Cont'd)

- Include member contact information for CMS follow up
- **Note:** Do **NOT** send member correspondence via email

Examples of Correspondence to Be Sent	Examples of Correspondence NOT to Be Sent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Messages intended for CMS• Comments about the MAO/provider• Personal problems• Requests for medical assistance and supporting documentation• Opinions about the survey instrument or federal government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Death notices• Address changes• Language barrier• Institution notice• Comments written on or throughout the survey, including marginal comments

Customer Support Emails

- All emails received through survey vendor's customer support email address must be forwarded to the HOS Project Team via Accellion on a **weekly** basis

Data Submission

- Baseline and Follow-Up final data files due **Monday, August 10**
- Timely submission is required
- Specific instructions provided as data submission approaches
- Late files result in automatic 1-star rating

Blinded Response Rates

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



Questions and Closing
