

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Open Door Forum: Home Health, Hospice and DME

Moderator: Jill Darling
Thursday, February 23, 2023
2:00 pm ET

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen-only mode until the question and answer session of today's conference. At that time, you may press Star 1 on your phone to ask a question.

I would like to inform all parties that today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the conference over to Ms. Jill Darling. Thank you, you may begin.

Jill Darling: Thank you, (Sheila). Good morning and good afternoon, everyone. I'm Jill Darling in the CMS Office of Communications and welcome to today's Home Health, Hospice & DME Open Door Forum. Thank you for your patience and allowing more folks to come in as always.

So, before we get into today's agenda, I have one brief announcement. This open door forum is open to everyone, but if you are a member of the press you may listen in, but please refrain from asking any questions during the Q&A portion of the call. If you do have any inquiries please contact CMS at press@cms.hhs.gov. First on the agenda we have Brian Slater, who will give an announcement about an upcoming Webinar.

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Brian Slater: Thanks, Jill. Hey, good afternoon and I guess slightly good morning for those of you that are late risers on the West Coast.

So just a quick update, I'm sure a lot of people have already had this flagged either for them or have already seen it, but for those who haven't the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 has required CMS to undergo a transparency effort to engage stakeholders on the behavioral assumption adjustment.

We will be conducting this on Wednesday, March 29 from 1:30 to 3:00. The details, and the ability to register for the Webinar, are found on our Home Health Agency Center Web page. And the easiest way to go about that is just to go into Google and type in Home Health Agency Center Web page.

As soon as you go on that it's the very top link. And it's a hyperlink to register for the Webinar. So other details, and information, and data that are - we're required to provide will be forthcoming, but at least the ability to register for the Webinar is already out there and wanted to flag that for everyone.

So as soon as you register for the Webinar, you know, you will receive not only confirmation, but also receive the further details and materials that are forthcoming after you register. So, with that I think I'm going to pass it to (Lori).

(Lori): Thank you so much, Brian. I just have a few announcements for the Home Health CAHPS Survey. And also, on the phone is Beth Simon. We both are

contracting officer representatives for the Home Health CAHPS Survey Project.

All Home Health agencies, that are not currently participating in the survey because they are considered too small to require participation that is they had fewer than 60 patients from April 2021 through March 2022, need to complete the Home Health CAHPS Participation Exemption Request Form that is on the Home Health CAHPS Web site by March 31, 2023.

And all Home Health agencies that are participating in the Home Health CAHPS Survey should continue to do so even if their current patient counts have dropped this year because their patient counts were 60 or more in the previous year, of April 2021 to March 2022, and that is what drives the requirement for participation in the calendar year 2024 Home Health APU.

For all questions, or problems, with the survey, we always recommend that you contact the Home Health CAHPS team at HHCAHPS, H-H-C-A-H-P-S at rti dot org, or you can call toll-free at 866-354-0985. Thank you, that's all I have.

Jill Darling: Okay, thank you (Lori). Up next, we have Marcie O'Reilly, who has an update on the expanded Home Health Value-Based Purchasing Model.

Marcie O'Reilly: Thanks Jill. Good day everyone. As a reminder of the first performance year for the expanded Model began on January 1. CMS will use quality measures data from calendar year 2023 to assess each home health agency's performance for the calendar year 2025 payment year.

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We have developed many resources to assist home health agencies with understanding the expanded HHVBP Model. In addition to the expanded model guide, FAQs, and monthly newsletters, resources, including Webinars and podcasts for quality measures, quality improvement, our reports, the total performance score, and the payment adjustment are available on the expanded HHVBP Model Web page.

Notably, the February issue of the FAQs, that will be posted early next week, include recent questions about how the transition to OASIS-E affects the applicable measures in the HHVBP Model. Please note that each time you access the Model's Web page please refresh the page, or you may not see updated resources or new resources that were added since your last visit to the Web page.

The URL, for this Web page, is included in the agenda within the calendar appointment for today's ODF. Also, if you choose to Google information about the Model please use the term expanded HHVBP Model, not just HHVBP Model. And the Web page will be at the top of the list in the search results, so you can simply click on there to get to the page. If you Google just HHVBP Model the link at the top will take you to the Web page for the original nine-state model. If you land on the Web page for the original Model there is, however, a link in the banner at the top of the page that will take you to the expanded Model's Web page and all of these resources.

New to the Web page is a survey where you can provide feedback on the expanded HHVBP Model resources and submit topics for future resources to

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be developed. This brief survey should take about ten minutes to complete. The responses are anonymous unless you choose to share your name and email. The link to the survey is within the banner at the top of the Web page, as well as included in the calendar appointment for this ODS. The survey will close on March 31. I want to thank you in advance for your time and consideration in completing the survey.

In November and January, we provided each HHA a Pre-Implementation Performance Report, also known as a PIPR. Using the most current data available, this report provides each HHA with their agency-specific performance data for the applicable measures used in the expanded Model with comparison to HHAs nationally within your peer cohort. This report also provides preliminary achievement thresholds and benchmarks for each measure. All HHVBP specific reports are located in the HHA Provider Preview Reports Folder in iQIES. On average, 20% of HHAs have downloaded these reports. We encourage the rest of you to download this report and take advantage of the information provided. If you're not seeing your HHAs report please contact the iQIES help desk. The email address for the help desk is also included in the agenda for today's open door forum.

Additionally, please submit questions about policies and resources for the expanded Model to our help desk at hhvbpquestions@lewin.com. This email address is also listed within today's agenda.

And if you're not receiving emails from CMS about the expanded Model please go to our Web site and join our listserv. The link to the listserv is near

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the bottom of the Web page. Thank you, and I'll now turn it over to my colleague, (Jermama Keys).

(Jermama Keys): Thanks so much, Marcie. Good afternoon, everyone. I am going to be providing some Home Health policy reporting updates today.

First, we would like to share an update about the QAO performance reports. The next QAO interim performance report will be available in iQIES folders in April of 2023.

This report will include OASIS assessments completed during the period of January 1 through December 31 of 2022. It also includes assessments submitted by January 31 of 2023.

As a reminder, the effective date for OASIS-E is January 1, 2023. The final OASIS-E user manual was posted to the HHQRP Web site on December the 14 of 2022. And you can visit the OASIS User's Manual Web page to actually access this resource.

In addition, the final OASIS-E instrument - both the all item version and the time point version are available currently for download on the OASIS datasets Web page. The OASIS submission information, and HHQRP measure list have also been updated to reflect the impact of the transition to OASIS-E on the Home Health Quality Reporting Measures page.

We would also like to share some updates about the 2023 risk model update. We've updated the risk adjustments to accommodate those changes or some

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changes in OASIS-E. So, the new models begin, and are applied, to the starts of care and resumptions of care with a M0090 date assessment completed as of January 1 or later.

These new risk assessment models remove items that no longer are collected by OASIS-E. The information on the 2023 risk models is available in the 2023 Risk Adjustment Technical Specifications Update, which is posted on the Quality Measures page of the Home Health QRP Web site.

Next, we have updates related to the Home Health exclusions to certain outcome measures. So, beginning with the hospice transfers and discharges as of January 1, 2023, and later, patients who were discharged or transferred to hospice are excluded from some of the quality measures.

These exclusions apply to the following assessment based measures, improvement in ambulation, locomotion, improvement in bathing, improvement in bed transferring, improvement in toilet transferring, improvement in lower body dressing, improvement in upper body dressing, improvement in management of oral medications, improvement in bowel incontinence, improvement in confusion frequency, improvement in dyspnea, and discharge to community (OASIS based). For further information on these updates you can look at the 2023 QM User's Manual, which is also posted on the Home Health QRP Web site.

Finally, we have several new or updated resources that are available. The January 2023 CMS OASIS quarterly QAs were posted on the QTSO Web site last month.

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There is a new home health QRP Health Equity Informational tab that has been added to the HH QRP Web site. And there will be more information added to that tab as we move forward with health equity efforts related to the Home Health QRP.

The Home Health Quality Measure, or QM Manual Version 2.0 and the change table are now available on the HH QRP Web site. In addition, the potentially - or potential preventable hospitalization and changes in skin integrity measure specs have been updated as well.

The Home Health Quality Measures Table and the Risk Adjustment Technical specs have also been updated for 2023. All of these resources can be found on the Home Health Quality Measures page in the Download section. The third edition of the HH QRP COVID-19 Public Reporting Tip Sheet is also now available for download on the Home Health Quality Reporting Training Web page for those that would like to take a look at that.

You may send any questions to the CMS Home Health Quality Help Desk. And that email is in your agenda today. And that is all that I have for the Home Health Quality Reporting Program.

Now I would like to give you some updates on the Hospice Quality Reporting Program. We would first like to share some public reporting updates.

So, the Next Care Compare refresh has taken place this month. And as part of the February 2023 refresh, CMS conducted an annual update of the Public Use File, or the PUF data on Care Compare.

The annual update of the information on Care Compare comes from the Hospital and Post-Acute Care, or PAC, provider utilization and payment Public Use File or PUF. Care Compare will display PUF data for the calendar years of 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Next, we would like to update you on the next HQRP forum which will be held this spring in April of 2023. This forum will be providing an overview of updates for the HQRP. And you will see registration for this form in mid-March.

Finally, we also have updates related to health equity. There is also a new hospice QRP Health Equity tab available on the HQRP Web site. The Web page contains information relevant to CMS's ongoing health equity efforts as described in President Biden's Executive Order.

The Health Equity Technical Expert Panel, or TEP, summary report will also be posted this spring on the HQRP Web site. Links to the resources, registration, and other announcements that I provided can be found on the HQRP Announcements and Spotlights page.

And if there are any questions in relation to the hospice QRP, they can be directed to the email address that's provided in your agenda. Thank you very much. I'll pass it back to you, Jill.

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Jill Darling: Great, thank you (Jermama) and to Marcie, Lori, and Brian. (Sheila), will we - please open the lines for Q&A?

Coordinator: Absolutely, thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question please press Star 1, unmute your phone, and record your name clearly. Your name is required to introduce your question.

If you need to withdraw your question, press Star 2. Again, to ask a question, please press Star 1. It will take a few moments for questions to come through. Please stand by.

And once again if you would like to ask a question at this time you can press Star 1 and record your name when prompted. One moment please. Our first question comes from (Barb Hansen). Your line is open.

(Barb Hansen): Hi. I just wondered if it's possible to pin down the date a little bit more for the hospice QRP update in late April. Thank you.

(Jermama Keys): So, the HQRP form is going to be towards the end of April. I'm not sure if that helps any, but it won't be at the very beginning it will be towards the end of April. And again, you should see some information in reference to registration about mid-March.

(Barb Hansen): Thank you.

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Coordinator: Thank you. We are showing no further questions at this time, but again if you would like to ask a question, you can press Star 1 and record your name at the prompt. One moment, please, for any additional questions. Our next question will come from (Lisa Holman). Your line is open.

(Lisa Holman): Yes, I was questioning the mention of the patient who was transferred or discharged to hospice. I saw in the document M2420 Response 3, but I didn't see anything about M2410 where the patient is transferred to an inpatient hospice. Could you confirm that?

(Jermama Keys): If it's the specific item I don't want to misconstrue any information or give you an incorrect answer. If you could forward this specific question to the Home Health help desk, they will be able to get you back a more concrete answer.

(Lisa Holman): Okay, so I just want to make sure, is it they're being discharged to home hospice and/or transferred to inpatient hospice and the outcomes were impacted or just discharged to home hospice?

(Jermama Keys): So that - it's my understanding that it is hospice as a whole. But I do want to make sure that you forward that specific question because there are nuances between the inpatient hospice and then the Home Health.

(Lisa Holman): Right, yes, I understand. I just understood it was just home hospice, but when I read it myself, and so I just want to make sure. Thank you.

(Jermama Keys): Right. No, it's not necessarily clear, but we always associate it with home hospice based on the Home Health benefit. But again, if you forward that

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question with those specifics then we'll be able to make sure that we get you a reply that you can move forward with.

(Lisa Holman): Thank you.

(Jermama Keys): No problem.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question comes from (Lisa Johnson). Your line is open.

(Lisa Johnson): Yes, thank you. Would you please repeat the exclusions for the hospice transfers and where I can find the information on those?

(Jermama Keys): So, the information was just recently updated on the Measures page in the Download section. But the exclusion for the outcome measures is what you wanted me to repeat, correct?

(Lisa Johnson): Yes, please.

(Jermama Keys): Okay, so the exclusions are going to apply to the following assessment based measures, improvement in ambulation and locomotion, improvement in bathing, improvement in bed transferring, improvement in toilet transferring, improvement in upper body dressing, improvement in lower body dressing, improvement in management of oral medications, improvement in bowel incontinence, improvement in confusion frequency, improvement in dyspnea and discharge to community.

(Lisa Johnson): Thank you.

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(Jermama Keys): No problem.

Coordinator: We are showing no further questions, but again if you would like to ask a question at this time, you can press Star 1 and record your name when prompted. One moment, please. We are still showing no further questions at this time.

Jill Darling: All right, great. Well, thank you, (Sheila). Thank you to our speakers and those who participated to ask questions.

You'll get a good chunk of your day back. We appreciate you calling in. And if you do have any questions, please feel free to send it into the email. It's homehealth_hospice_DMEODF-L@cms.hhs.gov. And it is always located on the agenda. So, thank you, everyone. This concludes today's call.

Coordinator: Thank you. Once again, that does conclude today's conference. Thank you for participating. You may disconnect at this time.

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