



**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**

## **Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®)**

### **MY 2021 Patient-Level Detail (PLD) Data File Submission Instructions**

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**Version 1.1**

**12/01/2021**

## Table of Contents

<b>1. General Information .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Why CMS Collects Patient-Level Data .....	1
1.3 Updates to HEDIS MY 2021 Technical Specifications .....	1
1.4 Plan All-Cause Readmissions (PCR) Measure File .....	1
<b>2. PLD Submission Instructions .....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 PLD Submission Process Overview .....	2
2.2 Accessing the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal .....	2
2.3 Checking the Status of Submitted Patient-Level Data Files .....	3
2.4 Accessing Submission Documentation .....	3
2.5 Getting Help .....	3
2.6 Submitting Patient-Level Detail Data Files .....	4
2.6.1 Annual Dry Run .....	4
2.6.2 Annual Data Submission.....	4
2.7 File Naming Conventions .....	4
2.7.1 Gentran/MFT Internet Server Files .....	4
2.7.2 Connect:Direct .....	5
2.8 Validation of Patient-Level Data Files .....	6
2.8.1 Tier 1 Validation .....	6
2.8.2 Tier 2 Validation .....	7
2.9 The Error Report Log .....	8
2.10 File Validation Rules .....	9
<b>Appendix A: Record of Changes .....</b>	<b>11</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Sample Email to Communicate Success .....	7
Figure 2: Sample Email to Communicate Failure .....	8
Figure 3: Sample Error Report for File 1 of 2 .....	8
Figure 4: Sample Error Report for File 2 of 2 .....	9

## List of Tables

Table 1: Gentran/MFT Internet Server File Name Key for File 1 .....	4
Table 2: Gentran/MFT Internet File Name Key for File 2.....	5
Table 3: Connect:Direct File Name Key for File 1 .....	5
Table 4: Connect:Direct File Name Key for File 2 .....	6
Table 5: Most Common Errors .....	10
Table 6: Record of Changes .....	11

# 1. General Information

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## 1.1 Introduction

This document provides Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs), Cost Plans, Demonstration Plans, and their Third-Party Vendors with instructions for the annual submission of Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®<sup>1</sup>) Patient Level Detail (PLD) quality of care measures to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

CMS requires the participating Plans to report HEDIS Measurement Year (MY) 2021 data and to provide the PLD data that is used to calculate the summary data for each submission. The PLD data files should be submitted between **8:00 AM ET on May 25, 2022, and no later than 11:59 PM ET on June 15, 2022**, to meet CMS requirements.

This document provides instructions for reporting the two HEDIS PLD files that are required to be submitted. The format and validation rules for the fixed width text files submitted with the patient-level results are given in the following documents:

1. HEDIS\_MY\_2021\_Patient\_Level\_Data\_File\_1\_of\_2.
2. HEDIS\_MY\_2021\_Patient\_Level\_Data\_File\_2\_of\_2.
3. HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File Specifications File 1 of 2.
4. HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File Specifications File 2 of 2.

## 1.2 Why CMS Collects Patient-Level Data

The PLD data files contain beneficiary identifiers such as the Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) which allow CMS to match HEDIS PLD data to other PLD data from CMS enrollment systems. This data source is significant as CMS uses this data to examine the impact of socio-economic status (SES) and disability status on the HEDIS PLD measures. The PLD data with MBIs are necessary for determining the Categorical Adjustment Index (CAI) values for the Part C Star Ratings. The PLD data with the MBIs are also used in analyses to assess whether certain groups (e.g., ethnic, racial, gender, geographic) receive fewer or more services than others.

## 1.3 Updates to HEDIS MY 2021 Technical Specifications

Review the HEDIS MY 2020 and MY 2021 Volume 2: Technical Specifications for Health Plans closely when performing measure calculations. Updates to the HEDIS MY 2021 specifications can be purchased from the NCQA store at <https://store.ncqa.org/index.php/performance-measurement.html>.

## 1.4 Plan All-Cause Readmissions (PCR) Measure File

For the HEDIS MY 2021 PLD Data Collection Period, the PCR measure will be collected as a separate file and should be submitted in the same manner as File 1. File naming conventions

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<sup>1</sup> HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)

and a file detail record for the PCR measure file will be made available in a separate file document known as "HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File Specification File 2 of 2."

## 2. PLD Submission Instructions

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### 2.1 PLD Submission Process Overview

Participating Plans need to create PLD files conforming to the specifications in this document and upload files to CMS via CMS' Enterprise File Transfer (EFT) infrastructure using an existing Gentran, Managed File Transfer (MFT) Internet or Connect:Direct account. It is imperative that each organization confirm their ability to use the CMS EFT infrastructure prior to attempting an upload. Alternately, Participating Plans may use a third-party vendor for data file submissions. In either case, Gentran, MFT Internet, or Connect:Direct is the approved method for PLD file submissions.

### 2.2 Accessing the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal

The HEDIS PLD Web-Portal is a public facing website, however, only authorized users can log in to the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal. Refer to the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal User guide on how to gain access to the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal.

**HEDIS PLD Web-Portal URL:** <https://hedispld.cms.gov/>

The HEDIS PLD Point-of-Contact (POC) is the primary person responsible for the submission of an organization's PLD files to CMS. Historically, this person has been the organization's Quality Contact, as identified in the CMS Health Plan Management System (HPMS) system. If the person listed as the Primary POC is unavailable or no longer works for the company, please notify the HEDIS PLD Help Desk and a request will be sent to CMS and NCQA for approval to make the correct updates.

An email will be sent to the HEDIS PLD POCs that will include the availability of the HEDIS PLD application before the start of the Annual Dry Run and Annual Data Submission respectively. The HEDIS PLD Web-Portal is intended for Participating Plan POCs, and POC designees. It is not necessarily intended for use by Medicare Advantage (MA) Contract Third-Party Vendors or HEDIS PLD Auditors, although the information available on the home page is accessible to them. From the home page, all participating Plans can:

- Download Submission Documentation.
- View Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).
- Request a password reset link.
- Log in to the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal.

The Primary POC may request to add a back-up POC by contacting the HEDISPLD Help Desk at [HEDISPLD\\_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:HEDISPLD_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov). Only the Primary POC may request to add a back-up POC to the HEDIS PLD Portal.

POCs are asked to verify their contact information at the beginning of the submission period, specifically their email IDs. Incorrect contact information can result in the POCs not receiving pertinent information regarding the status of their submitted HEDIS PLD files. The HEDIS PLD Primary POC can request to add a backup HEDIS PLD POC to specific CMS contract numbers for viewing the file processing status and receiving file processing status emails or error log information for those contracts.

CMS strongly recommends that the HEDIS PLD Primary POC set up at least one additional user with access to the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal. If the person assigned as the HEDIS PLD Primary POC changes during the submission cycle, it is the Participating Plans' responsibility to contact the HEDIS PLD Help Desk immediately. Contact information is provided in section 2.2.

## 2.3 Checking the Status of Submitted Patient-Level Data Files

To obtain the status of the processed PLD files, users can check the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal. When logged in, the system will automatically display the status of the processed HEDIS PLD files for contracts assigned to the users.

After a file is submitted to CMS EFT, it may take up to two business days to process the file and post the status to the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal. Users are therefore suggested not to contact the HEDIS PLD Help Desk prior to that two-day period regarding their data file status unless it is the last day of submission. Users may, however, check the status of their HEDIS PLD file at any time by logging into the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal.

## 2.4 Accessing Submission Documentation

Copies of the "HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File Specifications" document can be obtained:

1. By accessing the 'Documents' tab within the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal; users do not have to log into the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal to view the submission documentation:  
<https://hedispld.cms.gov/>
2. On the CMS.gov website, under the "Downloads" Section:  
<https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/MCRAdvPartDENrolData/index.html>.

## 2.5 Getting Help

If users are experiencing difficulties accessing the CMS HPMS, submit requests and questions to: [hpms\\_access@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:hpms_access@cms.hhs.gov).

To sign up for Gentran, MFT Internet, or Connect:Direct or if users are experiencing difficulties accessing these systems, users should contact the MAPD Help Desk:

Phone: 1-800-927-8069

Email: [mmahelp@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:mmahelp@cms.hhs.gov)

Hours of Operation: M-F 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM ET

If users are experiencing difficulties accessing the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal, need assistance troubleshooting problems with their HEDIS PLD file, or have other problems of a technical nature, they can contact the HEDIS PLD Help Desk at:

Email: [HEDISPLD\\_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:HEDISPLD_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov)

Phone: 1-833-760-2116

Hours of Operation:

Annual Dry Run: April 4 – April 22, 2022: M-F 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM ET

Annual Data Submission:

- May 25 – June 14, 2022: M-F 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM ET
- June 15, 2022: 8:00 AM to 11:59 PM ET

May 30, 2022 – Closed for the Memorial Day Holiday

## 2.6 Submitting Patient-Level Detail Data Files

### 2.6.1 Annual Dry Run

The Annual Dry Run starts April 4, 2022, at 9:00 AM ET and ends April 22, 2022, at 5:00 PM ET. Participating Plans may submit test data files to CMS via Gentran, MFT Internet or Connect:Direct which will then be submitted for validation. This testing verifies the connectivity to CMS and finds programming or logic errors before the Annual Data Submission. Therefore, participating Plans do not have to submit a complete data set during the Annual Dry Run.

Files submitted during the Annual Dry Run will be processed exactly as they are processed during the Annual Data Submission. Refer to the “PLD Submission Process Overview” Section 2.1 for more information on how files are processed (and what happens when a file fails validation).

Files must conform to the CMS naming conventions to be processed. Refer to Section 2.7 titled “File Naming Conventions” for more information on the method for naming test data files. Test data files not named in accordance with these instructions will not be processed.

### 2.6.2 Annual Data Submission

The Annual Data Submission starts May 25, 2022, at 8:00 AM ET and ends June 15, 2022, at 11:59 PM ET. Files submitted during the Annual Data Submission will be processed as described in Section 2.1 “PLD Submission Process Overview”. No files will be accepted or processed after the deadline.

Files must conform to the CMS naming conventions to be processed. Refer to Section 2.7 titled “File Naming Conventions” for more information on the method for naming production data files. Data files not named in accordance with these instructions will not be processed.

## 2.7 File Naming Conventions

The PLD files should be named as per the following CMS policies and procedures noted below.

**Note:** File name variables are shown in lowercase, italic letters (e.g. “*guid*”); all other file name components should be coded exactly as shown below. If Gentran transitions to IDM, then users should use their IDM user ID in lieu of their IDM User ID.

### 2.7.1 Gentran/MFT Internet Server Files

#### 2.7.1.1 Gentran/MFT Internet File Name for File 1

*guid*.NONE.HEDIS.Y.ccccc.FUTURE.s

**Table 1: Gentran/MFT Internet Server File Name Key for File 1**

File Name Component	Key
<i>guid</i> .	IDM User ID (7 Characters) <b>OR</b> System ID
NONE.HEDIS.Y.	Should be coded exactly as shown
cccc.	The contract number
FUTURE.	Should be coded exactly as shown
s	Enter a “P” or “T”, where “P” is for Annual Data Submission and “T” is for Annual Dry Run

Annual Data Submission File Name Example for File 1 using IDM User ID:  
UHCDDMV.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.FUTURE.P

Annual Dry Run File Name Example for File 1 using IDM User ID:  
UHCDDMV.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.FUTURE.T

Annual Data Submission File Name Example for File 1 using System ID:  
AAAAAAA.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.FUTURE.P

NOTE: "AAAAAAA" = System ID

Annual Dry Run File Name Example for File 1 using System ID:  
AAAAAAA.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.FUTURE.T

NOTE: "AAAAAAA" = System ID

### 2.7.1.2 Gentran/MFT Internet File Name for File 2

*guid*.NONE.HEDIS.Y.*cccc*.PCR.*s*

**Table 2: Gentran/MFT Internet File Name Key for File 2**

File Name Component	Key
<i>guid</i> .	IDM User ID (7 Characters) <b>OR</b> System ID
NONE.HEDIS.Y.	Should be coded exactly as shown
<i>cccc</i> .	The contract number
PCR.	Should be coded exactly as shown
<i>s</i>	Enter a "P" or "T", where "P" is for Annual Data Submission and "T" is for Annual Dry Run

Annual Data Submission File Name Example for File 2 using IDM User ID:  
UHCDDMV.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.PCR.P

Annual Dry Run File Name Example for File 2 using IDM User ID:  
UHCDDMV.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.PCR.T

Annual Data Submission File Name Example for File 2 using System ID:  
AAAAAAA.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.PCR.P

NOTE: "AAAAAAA" = System ID

Annual Dry Run File Name Example for File 2 using System ID:  
AAAAAAA.NONE.HEDIS.Y.Hxxxx.PCR.T

NOTE: "AAAAAAA" = System ID

## 2.7.2 Connect:Direct

### 2.7.2.1 Connect:Direct File Name for File 1:

*s*#EFT.ON.HEDIS.*cccc*.DYYMMDD.THHMSST

**Table 3: Connect:Direct File Name Key for File 1**

File Name Component	Key
<i>s</i>	Enter a "P" or "T", where "P" is for Annual Data Submission and "T" is for Annual Dry Run
#EFT.ON.HEDIS.	Should be coded exactly as shown
<i>cccc</i> .	The contract number
DYYMMDD.THHMSST	Should be coded exactly as shown



Annual Data Submission File Name Example for File 1:  
P#EFT.ON.HEDIS.Hxxxx.DYYMMDD.THHMSST  
Annual Dry Run File Name Example for File 1:  
T#EFT.ON.HEDIS.Hxxxx.DYYMMDD.THHMSST

### 2.7.2.2 Connect:Direct File Name for File 2:

s#EFT.ON.HEDIS.ccccc.PCR.DYYMMDD.THHMSST

**Table 4: Connect:Direct File Name Key for File 2**

File Name Component	Key
s	Enter a "P" or "T", where "P" is for Annual Data Submission and "T" is for Annual Dry Run
#EFT.ON.HEDIS.	Should be coded exactly as shown
cccc.	The contract number
PCR.DYYMMDD.THHMSST	Should be coded exactly as shown

Annual Data Submission File Name Example for File 2:  
P#EFT.ON.HEDIS.Hxxxx.PCR.DYYMMDD.THHMSST

Annual Dry Run File Name Example for File 2:  
T#EFT.ON.HEDIS.Hxxxx.PCR.DYYMMDD.THHMSST

## 2.8 Validation of Patient-Level Data Files

An automated tool will be used to perform validation checks on all PLD files received during the Annual Dry Run and Annual Data Submission. This check ensures that the structure and contents of a data file adhere to the file specifications. Data files that do not comply with the file specification will be rejected and an email notification along with an error log will be sent to the designated HEDIS PLD POC or designee. Refer to the section titled “The Error Report Log” for information on the types of validations performed and the details of the error log.

The HEDIS PLD Help Desk will coordinate with the HEDIS PLD POC or designee to resolve data file validation problems and errors. Participating Plans may have to submit their data files multiple times to resolve all validation errors. For questions regarding data file validation errors, the participating Plans may contact the HEDIS PLD Help Desk. Refer to Section 2.2 for the HEDIS PLD Help Desk contact information.

All files submitted are subjected to a two-tiered validation process. Tier 1 consists of validating the PLD file naming convention. Tier 2 consists of a character-level validation of the contents of the PLD file.

### 2.8.1 Tier 1 Validation

The CMS EFT will verify that the file is named in accordance with the Gentran, MFT Internet or Connect:Direct file naming conventions. Files that fail this initial check will not get processed at CMS. In those instances, the CMS EFT will notify the user via a failure email message confirming that their HEDIS PLD file was not processed. If an email of this nature is received, the user will need to correct any naming convention errors and resubmit the file. All the HEDIS PLD file submissions that pass the Tier 1 verification conforming to the correct naming convention will receive a success email message from CMS EFT.

## 2.8.2 Tier 2 Validation

Files that conform to the Tier 1 validation will be further validated to ensure that they are in the correct format and layout. Processes are run to ensure that the files conform to the validation rules outlined in Section 2.10 of this document.

### 2.8.2.1 HEDIS PLD File Passes Tier 2 Validation

When a PLD file passes the Tier 2 validation requirements, two things happen:

1. The HEDIS PLD Web-Portal will be automatically updated with the status of the processed file as “Passed”. Refer to Section 2.2 titled “Accessing the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal” for more information on the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal.
2. The system will automatically send the following email to the HEDIS PLD File POC and/or their designee from the no-reply\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov email address.

If the POC does not receive an email communication within two business days of submitting the PLD files, the POC is suggested to check their spam inbox and verify whether their company’s firewall is rejecting emails from [no-reply\\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:no-reply_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov).

**Figure 1: Sample Email to Communicate Success**

From: [no-reply\\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:no-reply_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov)  
 [mailto:[no-reply\\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:no-reply_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov)]  
 Sent: Friday, June 3, 2022 4:13 PM  
 To: Participating Plans POC

Subject: HEDIS Submission P.HEDIS.Hxxxx.D190604.T1052594 Successful

*Congratulations! Your file submission on Friday, June 03, 2022 for file P.HEDIS.Hxxxx.DYYMMDD.THHMMSST was successfully processed without error. No further action is needed on your part regarding the aforementioned file. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via email or phone at HEDISPLD\_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov or 1-833-760-2116.*

### 2.8.2.2 HEDIS PLD File Fails Tier 2 Validation

When a HEDIS PLD file fails the Tier 2 validation requirements, two things happen:

1. The HEDIS PLD Web-Portal will be automatically updated with the status of the process file as “Failed”. Refer to 2.2 titled “Accessing the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal” for more information on the HEDIS PLD Web-Portal.
2. The system will automatically send the following email and an error report to the HEDIS PLD File POC and/or their designee from the no-reply\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov email address. The error report provides detailed information so that the POC can easily identify the specific areas in the file that failed the validation process. All errors must be resolved and resubmitted to CMS to successfully process the file; therefore, the file may be resubmitted as often as necessary until all the errors have been resolved. Each resubmission should contain all the data records of the PLD file.

**Figure 2: Sample Email to Communicate Failure**

From: [no-reply\\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:no-reply_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov)

[mailto:[no-reply\\_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:no-reply_HEDISPLD@cms.hhs.gov)]

Sent: Friday, June 3, 2022 11:07 AM

To: Participating Plans POC

Subject: HEDIS Submission P.HEDIS.Hxxxx.D190604.T1052594 Error

Your file submission on Friday, June 3, 2022, for file P.HEDIS.Hxxxx.DYYMMDD.THHMMSST was processed, and one or more errors were discovered. Attached is a detailed error report describing the discrepancies. Please correct these errors and resubmit your data file. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via email or phone at [HEDISPLD\\_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:HEDISPLD_Helpdesk@cms.hhs.gov) or 1-833-760-2116.

## 2.9 The Error Report Log

If a submitted data file fails the validation check, an email is sent along with an error log to the HEDIS PLD POC and their designees.

The Line Number field in the Error Report (Figure 3 and Figure 4) provides all the line numbers associated with each record where the error was discovered during file processing. The Line Number field will show the line number of the first record and the line number of the last record separated by a hyphen (-) when the line numbers are consecutive in nature. Common errors are discussed in Table 5.

**Figure 3: Sample Error Report for File 1 of 2**

File: P.HEDIS.HXXXX.D200603.T1500057

Submitted On: 06/03/2022

Total Errors: 3

Field: MBI\_NUMBER (MBI Number)

Count: 24

Line Number(s): 2-11,13,15,17,19,21-30

Columns: 1 -11

Error Description: must be a valid MBI. For more specification details for MBI, please refer to the File Specifications document.

Field: STATE (State)

Count: 24

Line Number(s): 2-11,13,15,17,19,21-30

Columns: 73 -74

Error Description: must be a valid postal code

Field: GENDER (Gender)

Count: 24

Line Number(s): 2-11,13,15,17,19,21-30

Columns: 80 -80

Error Description: can only be one of the following: m/M, f/F, or o/O

**Figure 4: Sample Error Report for File 2 of 2**

```

File: P.HEDIS.HXXXX.PCR.D200603.T1500057
Submitted On: 6/03/2022
Total Errors: 3
Field:      MBI_NUMBER (MBI Number)
Count:      24
Line Number(s): 2-10,12,14,16-17,19,21-30
Columns:     1 -11
Error Description: must be a valid MBI. For more specification details for MBI, please refer to the File Specifications document.

Field:      STATE (State)
Count:      24
Line Number(s): 2-10,12,14,16-17,19,21-30
Columns:     73 -74
Error Description: must be a valid postal code

Field:      GENDER (Gender)
Count:      24
Line Number(s): 2-10,12,14,16-17,19,21-30
Columns:     80 -80
Error Description: can only be one of the following: m/M, f/F, or o/O

```

## 2.10 File Validation Rules

Each record in the data set will be validated with these validation rules:

- Each row in the HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File 1 will be validated to ensure that it matches the specifications noted in the HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File Specifications File 1 of 2.
- Each row in the HEDIS MY 2021 PCR Patient-Level Data File 2 will be validated to ensure that it matches the specifications noted in the HEDIS MY 2021 Patient-Level Data File Specifications File 2 of 2.
- Numeric values (e.g., member months, denominators, and numerators) must be right-justified and blank filled to the left of the value.
- Text fields (e.g., “Organization Name” in the Header record) must be left-justified and blank filled to the right of the value.
- Contract number in the file name and the corresponding Submission ID will be validated against the submission list.
- The participating Plans are expected to submit HEDIS PLD Files using their Medicare Advantage (MA) Submission IDs and not Plan Benefit Package (PBP) Submission IDs.
- Only required PLD files will be processed.
- The system will reject mismatched contract numbers in the file name and the header of the file. If the contract number in the file name does not match the contract number in the Header record, this file will not be processed and subsequently rejected.
- Participating Plans are to include MBI for every contract member enrolled at any point during the 2021 measurement year.

**Table 5: Most Common Errors**

Error Message/Type	Root Cause	Resolution
"Row data does not contain correct number of bytes."	The row size went beyond the specified limit listed in the data specification.	Blank spaces beyond the specified limit must be removed. Do not add blank spaces between rows.
"The contract number in the file name does not match the contract number in the header"	The contract number in the file name is different from the contract number in the header of the file.	Verify that the contract numbers are the same on the file name as the header row within the file.
"SNP Enrollee Type"	Values received are outside of the range specified in the data specifications document.	Enter a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "0" if this member is NOT enrolled in an SNP plan benefit package.</li> <li>• "1" if this member is enrolled in a DUAL ELIGIBLE SNP benefit package.</li> <li>• "2" if this member is enrolled in an INSTITUTIONAL SNP benefit package</li> <li>• "3" if this member is enrolled in a CHRONIC CONDITION SNP benefit package.</li> </ul>

## Appendix A: Record of Changes

**Table 6: Record of Changes**

Version #	Date	Author/Owner	Description of Change
0.1	10/05/2021	Tashana Nunes, Scope Infotech, Inc.	Initial Draft.
0.2	10/22/2021	Tashana Nunes, Scope Infotech, Inc.	Peer Review comments addressed.
0.3	10/28/2021	Tashana Nunes, Scope Infotech, Inc.	PSO review comments addressed.
1.0	10/28/2021	Tashana Nunes, Scope Infotech, Inc.	Approved for baseline.
1.1	11/15/2021	Tashana Nunes, Scope Infotech, Inc.	Addressed CMS comments.