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HHCAHPS Announcement on the Home Health, Hospice, and DME Open Door Forum conference call scheduled on January 19, 2011, 2 p.m.

All Medicare-certified home health agencies (HHAs) that served 59 or fewer Home Health CAHPS (HHCAHPS) survey eligible patients between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010, are advised that the deadline for submitting a Participation Exemption Request form (posted on the official HHCAHPS website, <https://homehealthcahps.org>), is 11:59 p.m. EST on January 21, 2011 (two days from now), for the Calendar Year (CY) 2012 Annual Payment Update (APU). However, the data submission deadline for third quarter 2010 data (data for the months of July, August and/or September 2010) is due January 28, 2011, which is a one week extension. We extended the data submission deadline by one week due to a weather-related state of emergency in multiple states. Your HHCAHPS survey vendor knows about the one-week extension for third quarter 2010 data submission to the HHCAHPS Data Center.

All Medicare-certified HHAs that have submitted or intend to submit a Participation Exemption Request form are advised that the exemption from HHCAHPS expires on March 31, 2011. Unless an agency again qualifies for an exemption from HHCAHPS for the next year (CY 2013), all HHAs, must begin their HHCAHPS participation on April 1, 2011.

How do agencies know if they qualify for an exemption request for the next year (CY 2013)? To be exempted from participating in the HHCAHPS Survey for the CY 2013 APU, all Medicare-certified agencies should count the number of home health patients they served between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011. If 59 or fewer patients are counted, then HHAs should report the count on the Participation Exemption Request form for the CY 2013 APU, which will be posted on the HHCAHPS website, <https://homehealthcahps.org> on April 1, 2011.

Also, for all Medicare-certified HHAs that have not yet started HHCAHPS, including HHCAHPS that were exempt from participation for the CY 2012 APU because they are new HHAs, we strongly advise that these agencies go to the official HHCAHPS website, <https://homehealthcahps.org>, and register for HHCAHPS credentials and review the list of approved HHCAHPS survey vendors, so that they may begin their vendor selection process, and authorize a survey vendor so that they may start HHCAHPS as soon as possible or no later than for the April 2011 sample month.

Most importantly, if you have any questions, or need further information about HHCAHPS, please contact the HHCAHPS Coordination Team via email at hcahps@rti.org or call toll free at 1-(866)-354-0985.