

User Memorandum 005

To: MCBS Users
From: Debra Reed-Gillette
Director, Division of Survey Management and Analysis
Subject: **Call for Comments – Dental Utilization**
Date: November 26, 2014
CC: Project Files

The Division of Survey Management and Analysis (DSMA) invites individuals, groups, and professional communities to submit comments on the Dental Utilization (DUQ) section of the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS). Because most dental care is not covered by traditional Medicare, DSMA is specifically seeking to supplement current DUQ items to ensure that the MCBS is collecting proper context surrounding dental utilization. Submissions for proposed items that include how the items are currently used (e.g., other national surveys), any available documentation of their psychometric properties, and a description of how their inclusion in the MCBS would benefit Medicare, its beneficiaries, and the larger research community will be given special consideration.

Background on the MCBS and the DUQ Section

The MCBS is an in-person, longitudinal panel survey of 15,500 Medicare beneficiaries. The MCBS sample represents the total Medicare population, whether aged or disabled, living in the community or a facility, or served by managed care or traditional fee-for-service. Beneficiaries are interviewed three times a year over a period of four years to form a continuous profile of their health care experience. The survey is administered by field interviewers using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) and, when needed, show cards. Field interviewers are trained to administer the CAPI survey but are not trained medical staff. Two types of interviews are conducted in the MCBS: a community interview done in the home and a facility interview of knowledgeable staff on behalf of institutionalized beneficiaries. The interview is conducted in either setting, depending on the location of the beneficiary at the time of interview.

The DUQ questionnaire is administered to community beneficiaries every round (i.e., three times per year). The current instrument asks about dental visits, providers, insurance coverage, and prescribed medicines. An item about dental procedures performed was collected until round 62 (Winter 2012), and an item about reasons for not seeing a covered dental provider (if applicable) was asked until round 63 (Summer 2012). On average, the DUQ section takes 2.8 minutes to complete for new survey participants and 1.9 minutes for continuing participants. It is administered once a year in the fall round.

How to Comment or Request a Copy of the MCBS DUQ Questionnaire

Individuals, groups, and professional communities interested in commenting on this topic may email their comments to mcbcs@cms.hhs.gov or send a letter to the following address: DUQ Public Commentary, Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, 7500 Security Boulevard (MS B2-29-04), Baltimore, MD 21244. Only comments received on or before **December 31, 2014** will be considered.

The 2013 MCBS DUQ community questionnaire is available online at <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/MCBS/Questionnaires.html>. To access the 2013 DUQ questionnaire, click “2013 Questionnaires,” and download the zip file available under the “Downloads” heading. Within the zip file, the file named “C_R67_Dental_Utilization_DUQ.pdf” contains the community CAPI specification.