



MAC Satisfaction Indicator

2020 Customer Satisfaction *Overall Report*

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

- The Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) among the Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) increased one point to 69 in 2020. This improvement is considered statistically significant given the large number of survey responses received.
 - The 2020 MAC CSI score is one point higher than the most recent Federal Government Benchmark¹ score of 68 (measured in 2019).
 - Regulatory agencies typically have satisfaction levels in the 50s to 70s, placing MAC satisfaction on the high end of this range.
 - The increase in Customer Satisfaction was driven by notable increases in performance for all components (“drivers of satisfaction”).
- The drivers of satisfaction that have scored well historically continued to do so in 2020.
 - *Cost Report Audit and Reimbursement (77)*, *Internet Self-Service Portal (77)*, and *Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Helpdesk (76)* registered the highest driver scores.
 - As seen in the past, *Provider Outreach and Education* also scored strongly, at 74; up one point from last year.
 - Rounding out the high scoring drivers, *Claims Processing* improved upon the 2019 score by two points, climbing to 74.
- Scores for seven of the MAC jurisdictions saw some level of improvement in Customer Satisfaction, five of which were statistically significant improvements.
 - JN-First Coast is the highest scoring jurisdiction at 75.
- Data were collected from Part A, Part B and Durable Medical Equipment (DME) respondents.
 - Part A respondents represented 25% of the total number of completed surveys and had a satisfaction score of 67.
 - Part B respondents represented 61% of the total number of completed surveys and had a satisfaction score of 69.
 - DME respondents represented the remaining 14% of completed surveys and had a satisfaction score of 69.
- The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) methodology produces quantitative values (called impacts) for each of the components measured in terms of the degree of influence each has on the overall level of satisfaction.
 - The 2020 results show that *Provider Outreach and Education* and *Provider Enrollment* have the greatest influence on satisfaction. *Provider Telephone Inquiries* also has a relatively high amount of influence on satisfaction.
 - Improvements in these higher impact components offer the greatest opportunity for raising the overall level of satisfaction and should therefore be prioritized over less impactful components.
 - It is recommended to prioritize improvement in the high-impact drivers of satisfaction that scored relatively lower than the other drivers.
 - As one of the lowest scoring drivers with a large impact on satisfaction, investing resources in *Provider Enrollment* has the greatest opportunity to make gains in satisfaction.
 - Considering the relatively large impact *Provider Telephone Inquiries* has on satisfaction and the 2020 performance score, which has seen improvement but remains lower compared to the other areas, this component also warrants priority when developing improvement plans.
 - Individual MAC jurisdiction impacts have also been calculated in 2020. Using these impacts, MACs can analyze their data to determine the optimal areas to invest their resources to achieve improved levels of provider satisfaction.

¹ The Federal Government Benchmark as measured by the American Customer Satisfaction Index is a satisfaction rating of Federal Government services as a whole

RESULTS

Introduction

This study was conducted by CFI Group using the methodology of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The ACSI is a national indicator of customer evaluations of the quality of goods and services available to U.S. residents. It is the only uniform, cross-industry/government measure of customer satisfaction. Since 1994, the ACSI has measured satisfaction, its causes, and its effects, for seven economic sectors, 41 industries, more than 200 private-sector companies, two types of local government services, the U.S. Postal Service, and the Internal Revenue Service.

The ACSI is widely used to measure customer satisfaction among government programs. This methodology has measured hundreds of programs of federal government agencies since 1999. This allows benchmarking between the public and private sectors and gives information unique to each agency on how its activities that interface with the public affect the satisfaction of customers.

This report was produced by CFI Group on behalf of CMS. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact CMS at MSI@cms.hhs.gov

Segment Choice

This report is about providers' satisfaction with the services of their MACs.

Customer Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected online. CFI Group gave CMS 16 unique links to the survey – each correlating to an individual MAC jurisdiction. CMS then sent these links to the MACs for distribution to the appropriate audience, which gave respondents access to the web-based survey, hosted by CFI Group. Data collection took place from March 2, 2020 to April 9, 2020. A total of 6,409 completed surveys were collected and used for analysis.

Questionnaire and Reporting

CMS and CFI Group worked collaboratively to develop the questionnaire. While the questionnaire is agency-specific in terms of components, outcomes, and introductions it follows a format common to all the federal agency questionnaires that allows cause-and-effect modeling using the ACSI model. The MSI survey asks respondents to rate the performance of 10 different aspects (referred to as “components” or “drivers” throughout the report) of their experiences with a MAC. The component scores are weighted averages based on the ratings of specific questions that capture the essence of each component (referred to as “attributes” throughout the report). For example, the *Provider Telephone Inquiries* component is comprised of ratings for the consistency of information given by representatives, the ability of representatives to resolve issues on a single call, and the service given by the Contact Center.

The Customer Satisfaction Index is measured independently of the components, using three attribute-level questions of its own: overall satisfaction, a comparison to expectations and a comparison to an “ideal” MAC.

Throughout the report, some score differences are called “significant”. All score changes are tested for statistically significant differences, which is a function of sample size, standard deviation, and the magnitude of the score difference itself. Due to the nature of the testing being sensitive to sample sizes, it is possible that smaller score changes (where corresponding sample sizes are high) of 1 or 2 points can be determined to be significant while greater changes (where corresponding sample sizes are low) are not considered significant.

Most of the questions in the survey asked the respondent to rate items on a 1-to-10 scale, where “1” is “poor” and “10” is “excellent.” Scores are converted to a 0-to-100 scale for reporting purposes. Note that the scores reported are not percentages, but averages on a “0” to “100” scale where “0” is “poor” and “100” is “excellent.”

Respondent Background

In addition to having respondents give performance scores across a number of components, individuals also gave answers to several non-rated questions in order to segment the data and learn about the complete respondent profile of those completing the questionnaire.

Part A and Part B respondents made up a total of 86% of all completed surveys, leaving 14% of surveys coming from DME respondents. This breakout is consistent with data collected during the past two years.

The breakdown of the Medicare enrollment types represented by respondents was similar to 2019.

- 27% reported their Medicare enrollment type as a clinic/group practice
- 21% reported as physicians
- 16% reported as institutional providers
- 12% reported as DME Supplier/DMEPOS
- 6% reported as home health providers
- 5% reported as non-physician practitioner
- 3% reported as hospice providers
- 11% reported as "other"

Down one percentage point compared to 2019, 91% of respondents indicated they have submitted claims in the past six months.

EDI Helpdesk staff interaction occurrences remain unchanged compared to last year. In 2020, 35% of those eligible to answer said they had interacted with staff in the past six months.

Roughly two-thirds (67%) of respondents reported having called their MAC's provider contact center in the past six months.

Portal usage is up one percentage point in 2020, with 66% of respondents saying they have logged into the portal in the past six months.

Use of the MAC's IVR system by survey respondents in 2020 (45%) is slightly lower compared to 2019 (49%) but roughly consistent with the levels seen in recent years.

The percentage of respondents who have received medical review determinations or results letters in the past six months was 44%, matching the percentage from the previous year.

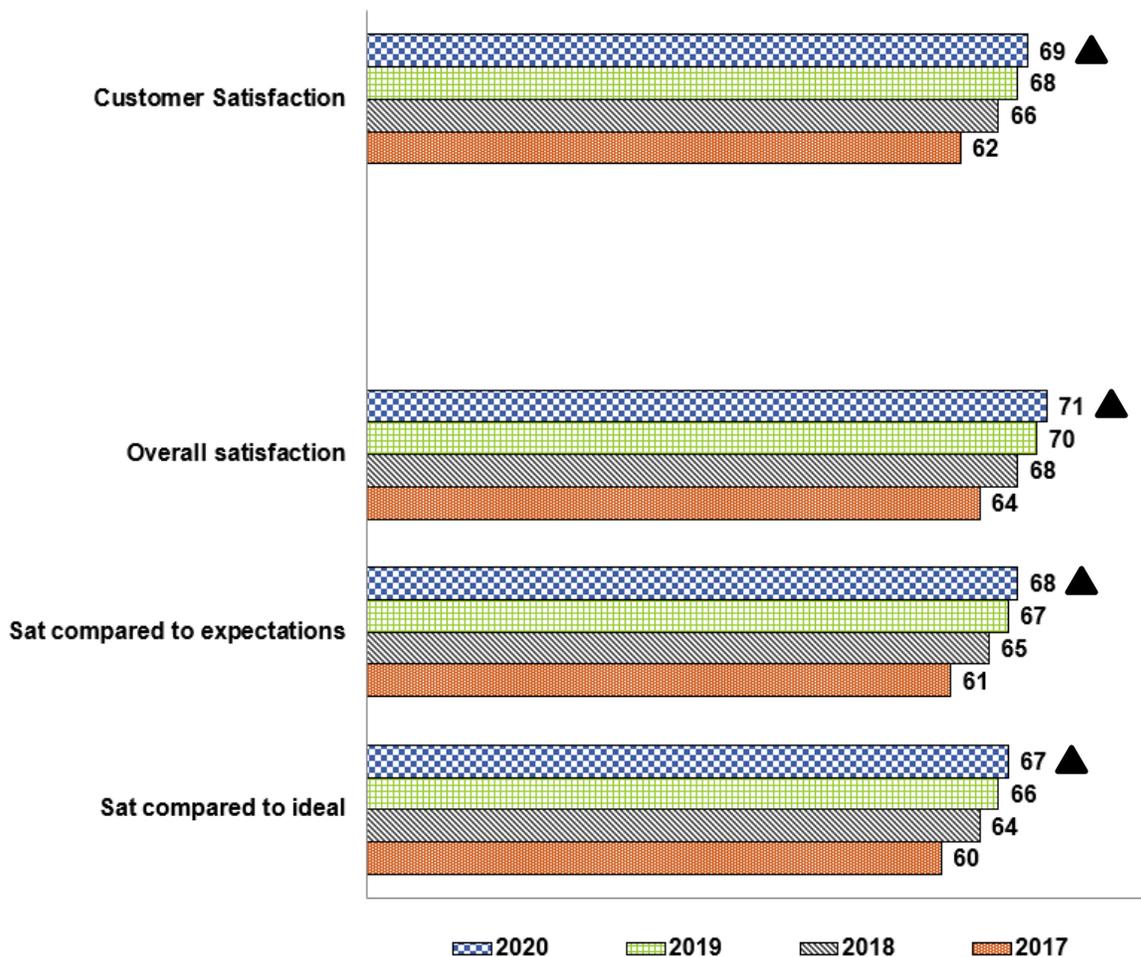
The level of participation in outreach and education activities offered by the MACs is comparable to last year with 42% of respondents saying they participated in one or more activities in the past six months. Satisfaction among those who have participated in outreach sessions or educational activities continues to be higher than those who have not. As is typical, webinars (46%) were identified as the most effective resource/activity by the highest percentage of respondents. MAC websites (14%, up one percentage point) and in-person training (10%, down two percentage points) round off the top three most often cited resources considered most effective by respondents.

Slightly more respondents (Part A and B respondents only) reported having gone through the Medicare enrollment process in the past six months (41% vs. 40% in 2019). Of those giving feedback on the enrollment process, 60% said they checked the status of their application.

Finally, the percentage of eligible respondents (Part A respondents only) that reported submitting a Medicare cost report to their current MAC in the past 12 months matched the 2019 percentage of 46%.

Customer Satisfaction Index

The **Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)** is a weighted average of three questions and represents the overall level of satisfaction had by respondents. The questions are answered on a 1-to-10 scale and converted to a 0-to-100 scale for reporting purposes. The three questions measure: Overall satisfaction (Q45); Satisfaction compared to expectations (Q46); and Satisfaction compared to an “ideal” organization (Q47). These same three questions are used across all ACSI surveys to give a multi-dimensional measure of satisfaction. Furthermore, the method of measuring satisfaction independently of the components allows for the cause-and-effect modeling to determine what components are the primary drivers of satisfaction. The model assigns the weights to each satisfaction question in a way that maximizes the ability of the index to predict changes in satisfaction.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

The 2020 CSI for all MACs as a whole is 69, which represents a one-point statistically significant increase compared to 2019. Regulatory agencies typically have satisfaction levels in the 50s to 70s, placing MAC satisfaction on the high end of this range and one point higher than the latest federal government average (68). *The confidence interval for the Customer Satisfaction Index at a 90% level of confidence is +/- 0.5 points. This means that there is a 90% likelihood that the true score of the Customer Satisfaction Index is within 0.5 points of the reported score.*

Below is a table with the CSI scores by jurisdiction. As seen in 2019, both ends of the score range improved in 2020, with the low end increasing from 60 to 65 and the high end increasing from 74 to 75.

MAC Jurisdictions	JA DME – Noridian	JB DME – CGS	JC DME – CGS	JD DME – Noridian	J6 – NGS	JK – NGS	JH – Novitas	JL – Novitas	JN – First Coast	JM – Palmetto	JE – Noridian	JF – Noridian	J5 – WPS	J8 – WPS	J15 – CGS	JJ – Palmetto
Sample Size	168	207	278	230	196	169	601	514	189	611	520	542	324	228	828	804
Customer Satisfaction	69	70	70	67	67	65	71	73	75	65	65	67	70	73	70	68
Overall satisfaction	71	74	74	70	70	68	73	74	79	68	67	69	72	75	73	70
Sat compared to expectations	68	69	69	67	66	64	71	72	74	64	64	66	69	71	69	67
Sat compared to ideal	67	68	67	65	65	63	69	72	72	63	64	66	68	72	69	66

MAC Customer Satisfaction Model – Overall

Attribute scores are the mean (average) respondent scores to each individual question that was asked in the survey. Respondents are asked to rate each question on a 1-to-10 scale with “1” being “poor” and “10” being “excellent.” CFI Group converts the mean responses to these questions to a 0-to-100 scale for reporting purposes. It is important to note that these scores are averages, not percentages. The score is best thought of as an index, with 0 meaning “poor” and 100 meaning “excellent.”

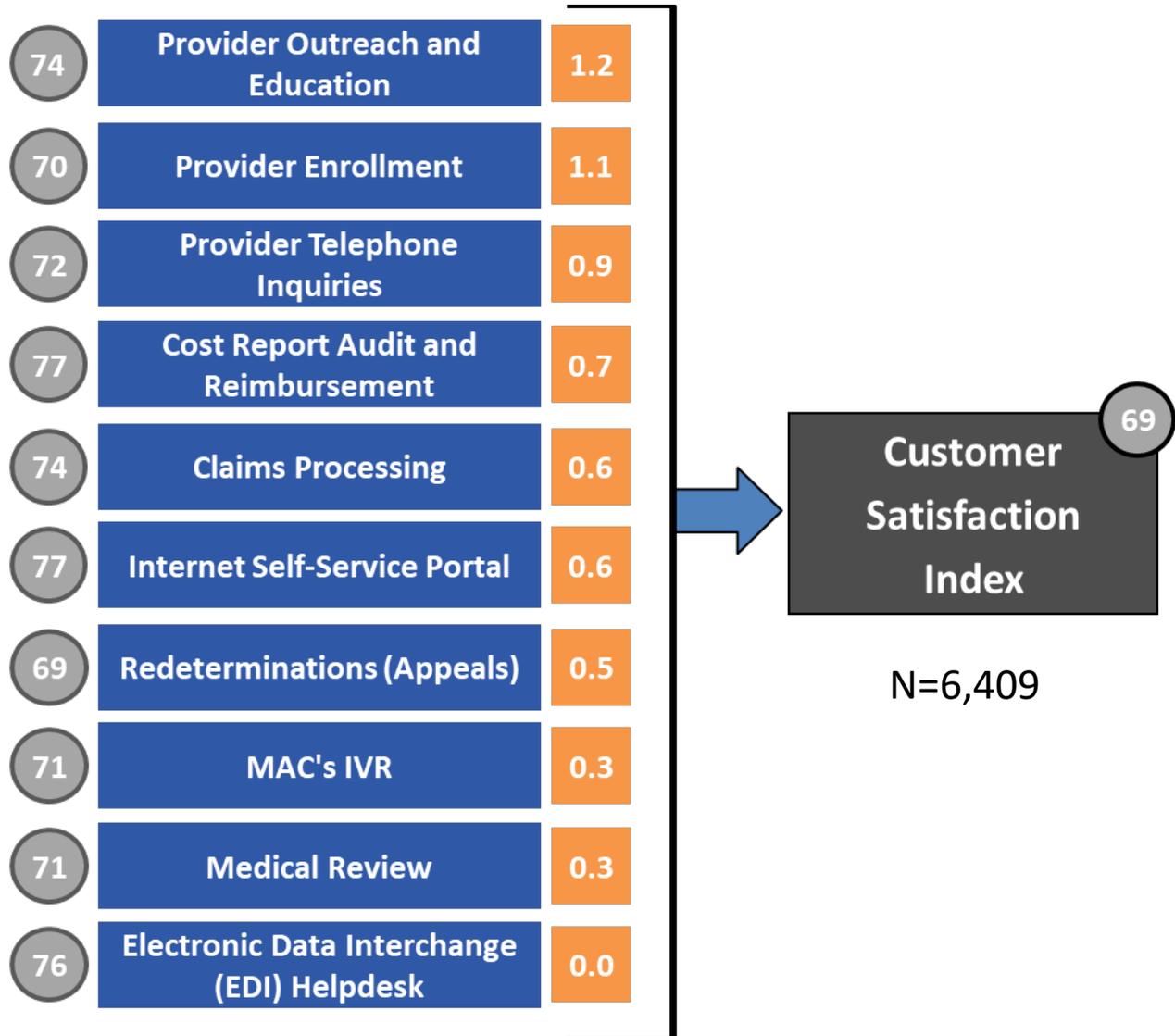
A component score is the weighted average of the individual attribute ratings given by each respondent to the questions presented in the survey. A score is a relative measure of performance for a component, as given for a particular set of respondents. In the model illustrated on the next page, the component area *Provider Enrollment* is an index of the ratings for its specific attributes: ‘application status process’ and the ‘enrollment application guidance’.

Impacts should be read as the effect on Customer Satisfaction if the driver (component) were to be improved or decreased by five points. For example, if the score for *Provider Enrollment* (component) increased by five points (70 to 75), Customer Satisfaction would increase by the amount of its impact, 1.1 points, (from 69 to 70.1). If the driver (component) increases by less than or more than five points, the resulting change in satisfaction would be the corresponding fraction of the original impact. Impacts are additive. Thus, if multiple components were to each improve by five points, the related improvement in satisfaction will be the sum of the impacts.

As with scores, impacts are also relative to one another. A low impact does not mean a component is unimportant. Rather, it means that a five-point change in that one component is unlikely to result in much improvement in Satisfaction at this time. Therefore, components with higher impacts are generally recommended for improvement first, especially if scores are lower for those components.

MAC Customer Satisfaction Model – Overall (continued)

The model picture below depicts each component measured on the survey along with its score (in the gray boxes) and impact on Customer Satisfaction (orange rectangles). The components are sorted in descending order according to their impact value at the aggregate level of all MACs combined.

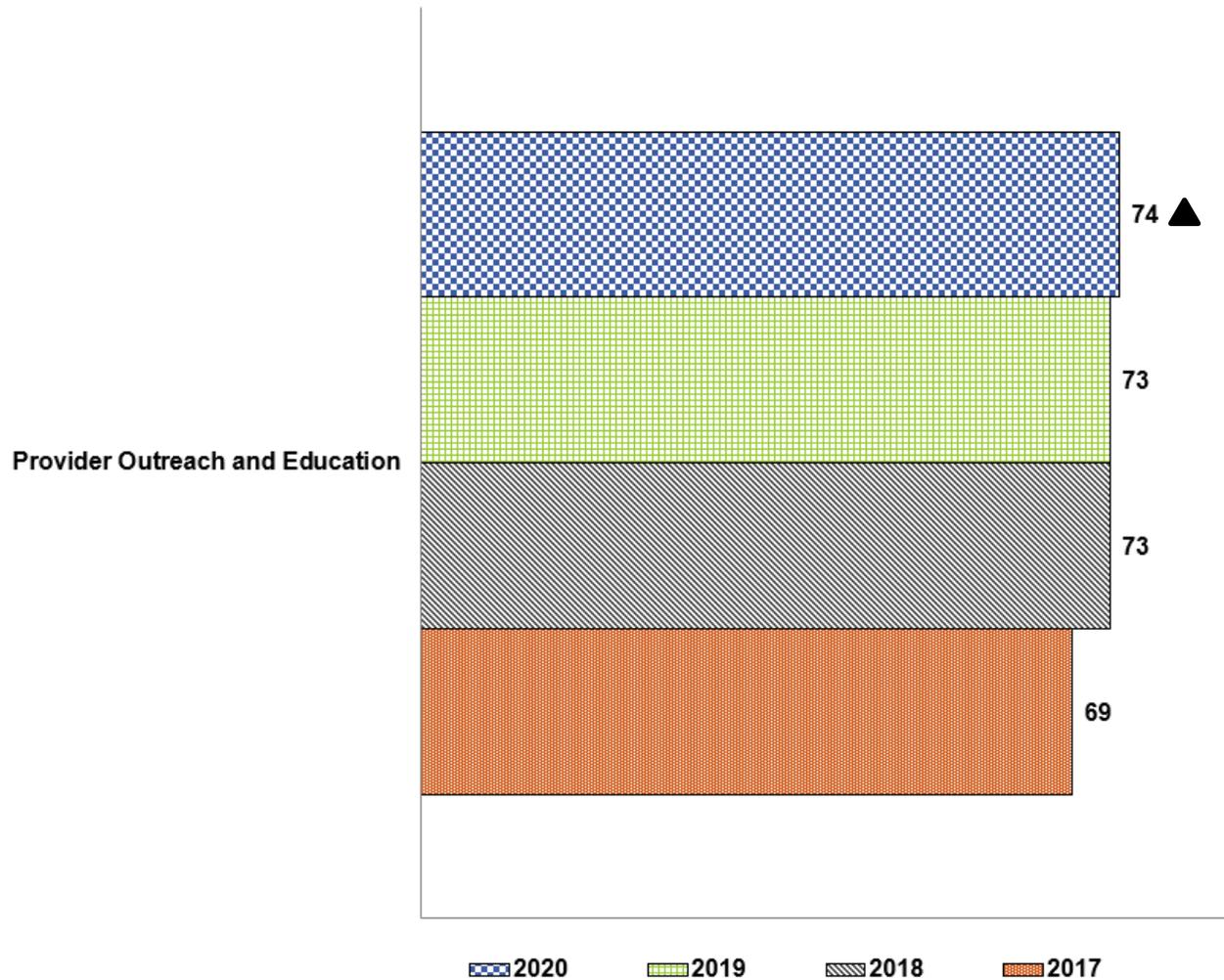


The following pages examine each component and its corresponding attribute scores in greater detail. The components are ordered according to their impact values, beginning with Provider Outreach and Education.

Drivers of Satisfaction

Provider Outreach and Education – Impact 1.2

The driver score for *Provider Outreach and Education* (74) improved by a significant one-point in 2020 while the level of participation in outreach and education programs (42%) remained relatively stable. This year the impact value for *Provider Outreach and Education* was 1.2, making it one of the two drivers with the highest impact on Customer Satisfaction at the aggregate level.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

Among those who choose to participate in outreach or educational activities available through their MAC, the largest percentage (32%) report participating 1-5 times during the previous six months. As reported in the past, those who participate in outreach activities report higher levels of satisfaction. As shown below, there is at least a four-point difference in the CSI score among those who have not participated in the past six months and those who have. However, with increased participation levels, the CSI scores only experience modest improvement.

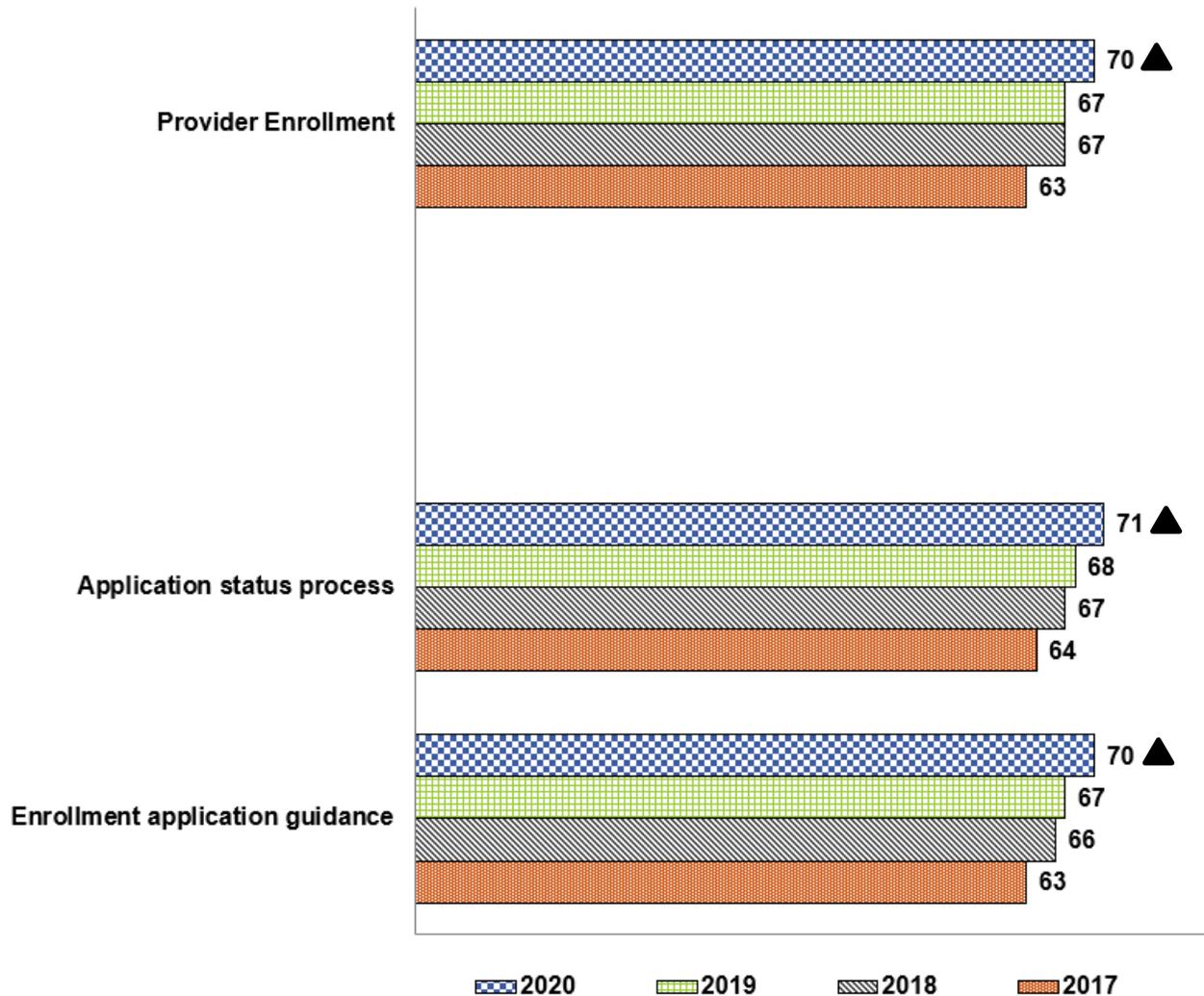
Times participated in outreach	2017			2018			2019			2020		
	%	N	CSI									
None in the past 6 months	51%	3,818	60	58%	3,395	63	57%	3,997	66	58%	3,747	67
1 - 5 times	38%	2,870	63	33%	1,954	68	32%	2,293	70	32%	2,031	71
6 - 10 times	7%	532	66	6%	326	68	7%	475	70	6%	373	72
More than 10 times	4%	299	66	3%	197	73	4%	303	71	4%	258	73
Number of Respondents	7,519			5,872			7,068			6,409		

Webinars continue to be considered the most effective resource with the largest percentage of respondents (46%) citing them as such. Up one percentage point from last year, the next highest percentage of respondents cite the MAC’s website as the most effective resource offered by their MAC (14%).

Most effective resource	2017			2018			2019			2020		
	%	N	CSI									
In-person training or education event	13%	493	64	13%	330	71	12%	366	68	10%	273	71
Teleconferences, including Ask-the-Contractor Teleconferences	9%	332	62	11%	269	69	8%	256	69	8%	223	73
Webinar(s)	45%	1,652	67	45%	1,108	70	43%	1,324	72	46%	1,219	73
Self-paced education	7%	251	60	7%	173	66	8%	241	69	7%	194	70
Electronic mailing list messages	6%	229	64	5%	134	70	6%	186	73	6%	154	73
MAC’s website	10%	366	66	10%	256	70	13%	403	72	14%	360	73
One-on-one training by MAC representatives	3%	126	52	3%	81	58	4%	117	65	3%	84	65
None	4%	152	44	3%	86	52	4%	124	49	4%	116	57
Other	3%	100	56	2%	40	67	2%	54	65	1%	39	65
Number of Respondents	3,701			2,477			3,071			2,662		

Provider Enrollment – Impact 1.1

Up three points from 2019, the *Provider Enrollment* driver score (70) improved significantly this year and is currently seven points higher compared to four years ago. As a lower scoring but higher impact driver, *Provider Enrollment* continues to be an area of opportunity for improvement. Both enrollment related attributes (application status process and enrollment application guidance) are up by three points compared to last year and seven points compared to four years ago.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

As reported in the past, one key to maintaining higher customer satisfaction scores is to employ a process that proactively keeps providers up to date without them having to reach out to the MACs. As shown below, providers that check on the status of their application more than once have notably lower CSI scores compared to those who report never checking or only checking on the status once.

Times checked app status	2017			2018			2019			2020		
	%	N	CSI									
None	36%	602	69	37%	526	75	38%	556	76	40%	572	77
Once	19%	321	68	20%	286	74	19%	283	76	20%	289	75
Twice	15%	241	65	15%	207	68	14%	208	66	15%	223	69
Three or more times	30%	491	46	28%	389	47	29%	430	48	25%	371	53
Number of Respondents	1,655			1,408			1,477			1,455		

This year, the percentage of respondents who checked on the status of their application in fewer than 15 days after submission increased from 24% in 2019 to 27% in 2020. Data cut by the time from submission to first follow up suggests that satisfaction drops as more time elapses without hearing from the MAC. In addition to employing a process that is proactive in updating providers about the status of their applications, setting realistic expectations on the time required for processing may serve to reduce frustration among those waiting longer periods of time.

Submission to first follow up	2017			2018			2019			2020		
	%	N	CSI	%	N	CSI	%	N	CSI	%	N	CSI
Less than 15 days	27%	286	66	32%	281	71	24%	216	71	27%	237	73
16 - 30 days	38%	395	59	35%	307	61	35%	319	63	35%	305	65
31 - 60 days	22%	230	54	21%	186	59	25%	232	59	26%	228	64
Greater than 60 days	13%	142	40	12%	108	35	16%	148	44	12%	110	45
Number of Respondents	1,053			882			915			880		

Provider Telephone Inquiries – Impact 0.9

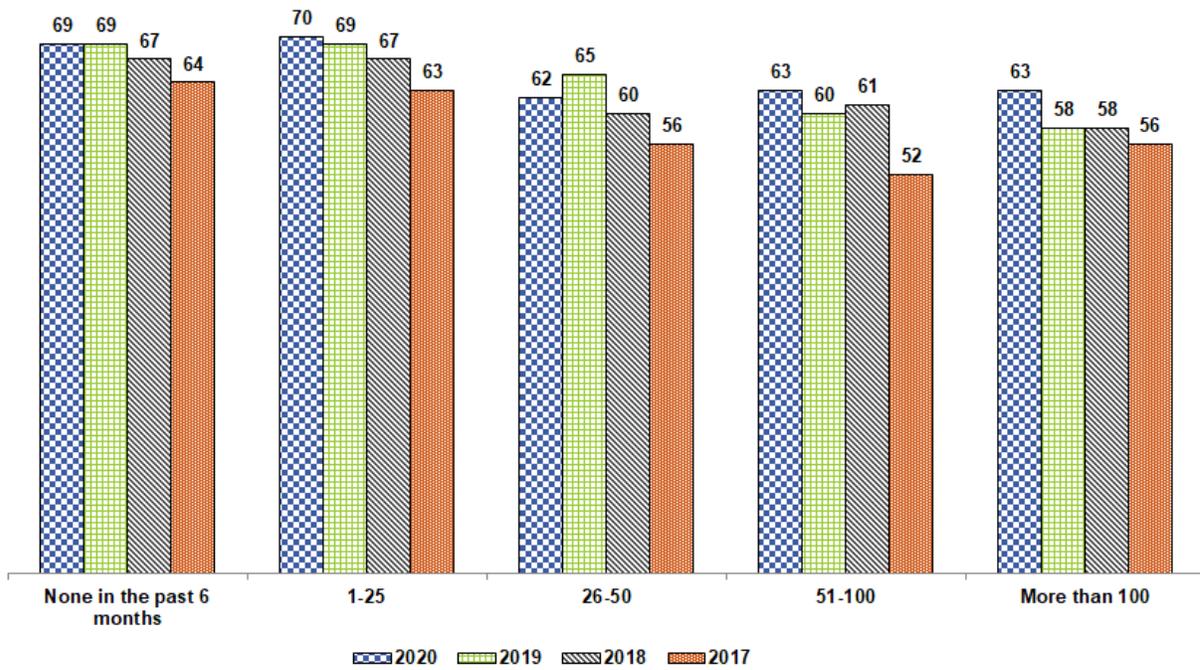
The *Provider Telephone Inquiries* score experienced a two-point increase this year. This driver has made impressive improvement over the life of the program. Consistent with the past three years, all *Provider Telephone Inquiries* attributes increased and contributed to improving the driver score. Continued improvement in this area will pay dividends for the MACs as this communication channel reaches large numbers of providers and the impact is relatively high. Similar to years past, about two thirds (67%) of providers responding to the survey reported having made at least one call to their MAC.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

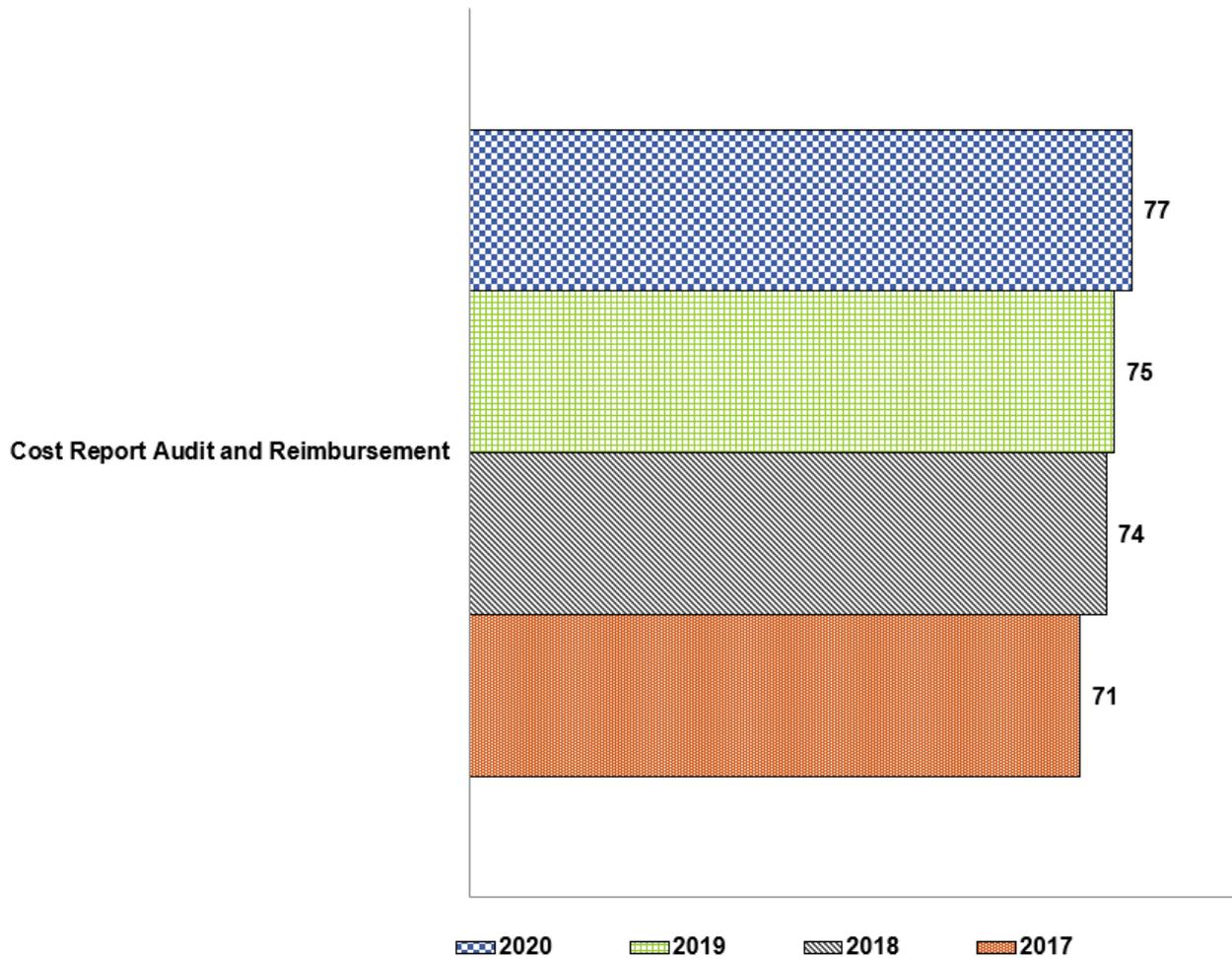
Even though performance for provider telephone inquiries is significantly improved, callers who contact their MAC contact center more than 25 times in the past six months report lower scores than those who report making fewer calls (63 vs. 70). It also should be noted that only about 14% of respondents report calling more than 25 times in the past six months.

Satisfaction by Number of MAC Provider Phone Calls



Cost Report Audit and Reimbursement – Impact 0.7

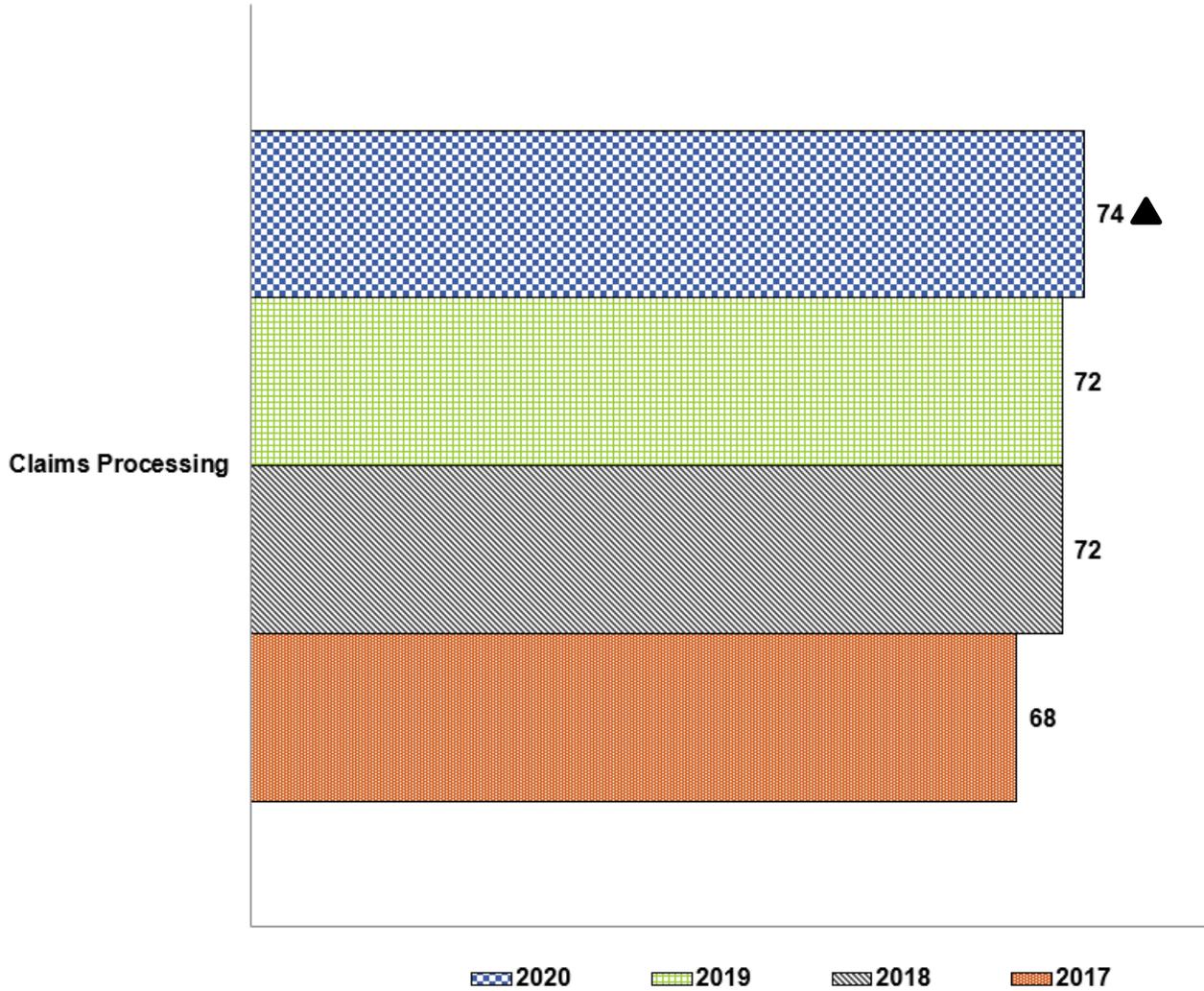
The *Cost Report Audit and Reimbursement* questions on the survey were asked only of Part A respondents. The rating of this component came only from those respondents who had submitted a Medicare cost report to their current MAC in the past 12 months. For the third year in a row, the driver score for *Cost Report Audit and Reimbursement* improved, this year the score is up two points to 77 placing it six points above the 2017 score of 71.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

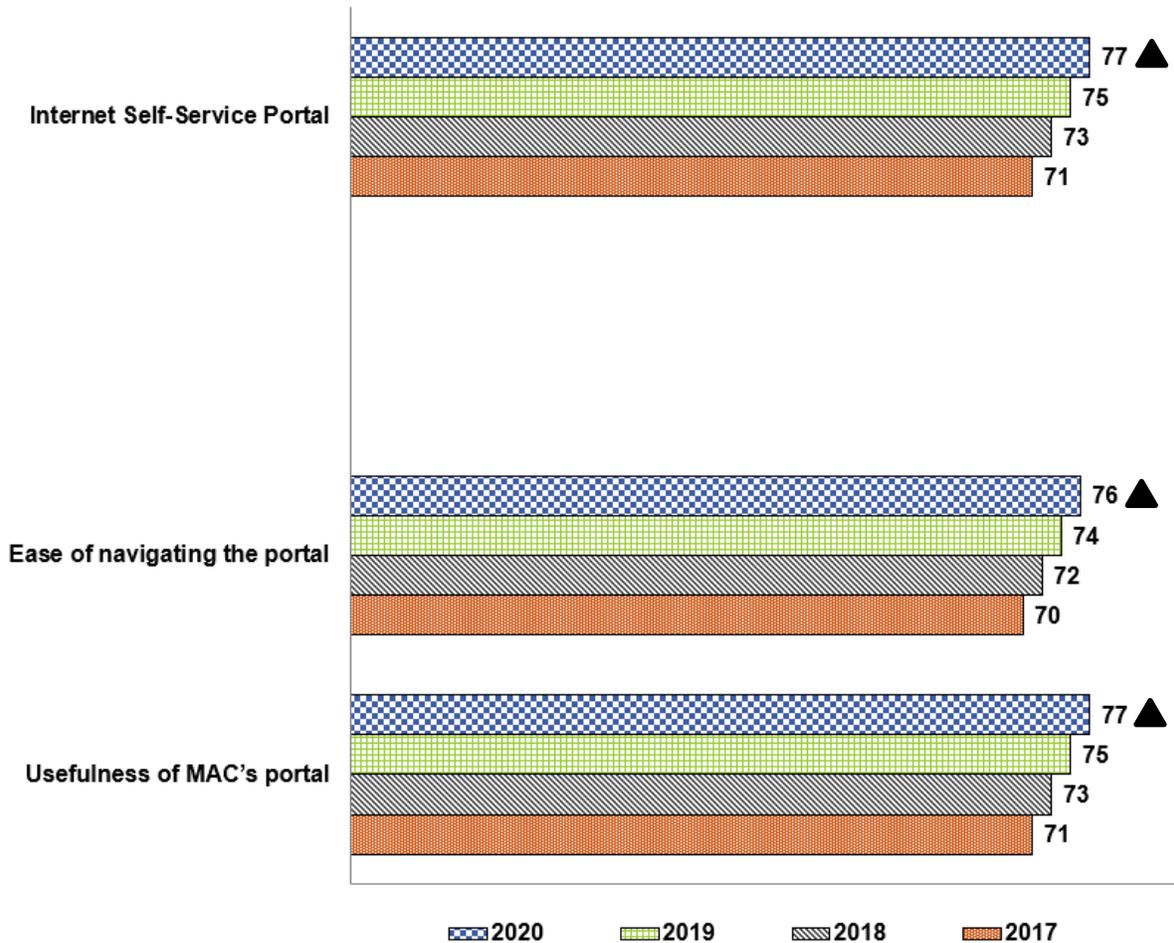
Claims Processing – Impact 0.6

Up two points from 2019, *Claims Processing* (74) improved significantly in 2020 and is currently six points higher than the performance score reported in 2017. This improvement is particularly notable because of the prevalence of claims processing. Consistent with previous years, 91% of survey respondents indicated they had at least one claim in the past six months.



Internet Self-Service Portal – Impact 0.6

Ratings of the *Internet Self-Service Portal* continue to improve with a two-point increase to 77 in 2020. Consistent with performance for several of the other drivers, the driver score for the Internet Self-Service Portal has trended upward every year since 2017. This improvement is the result of higher trending scores for both portal attributes which are both two points higher compared to last year and six points higher compared to 2017. Different from provider telephone inquiries, increased use of the portal appears to result in a higher CSI score. Despite the higher marks for the Self-Service Portal, there is still about one-third (34%) of respondents who report not using it during the past six months. Increasing awareness of the improved performance of the portal may help convince those who choose other methods of contact to try this cost-effective approach to getting the information they need.

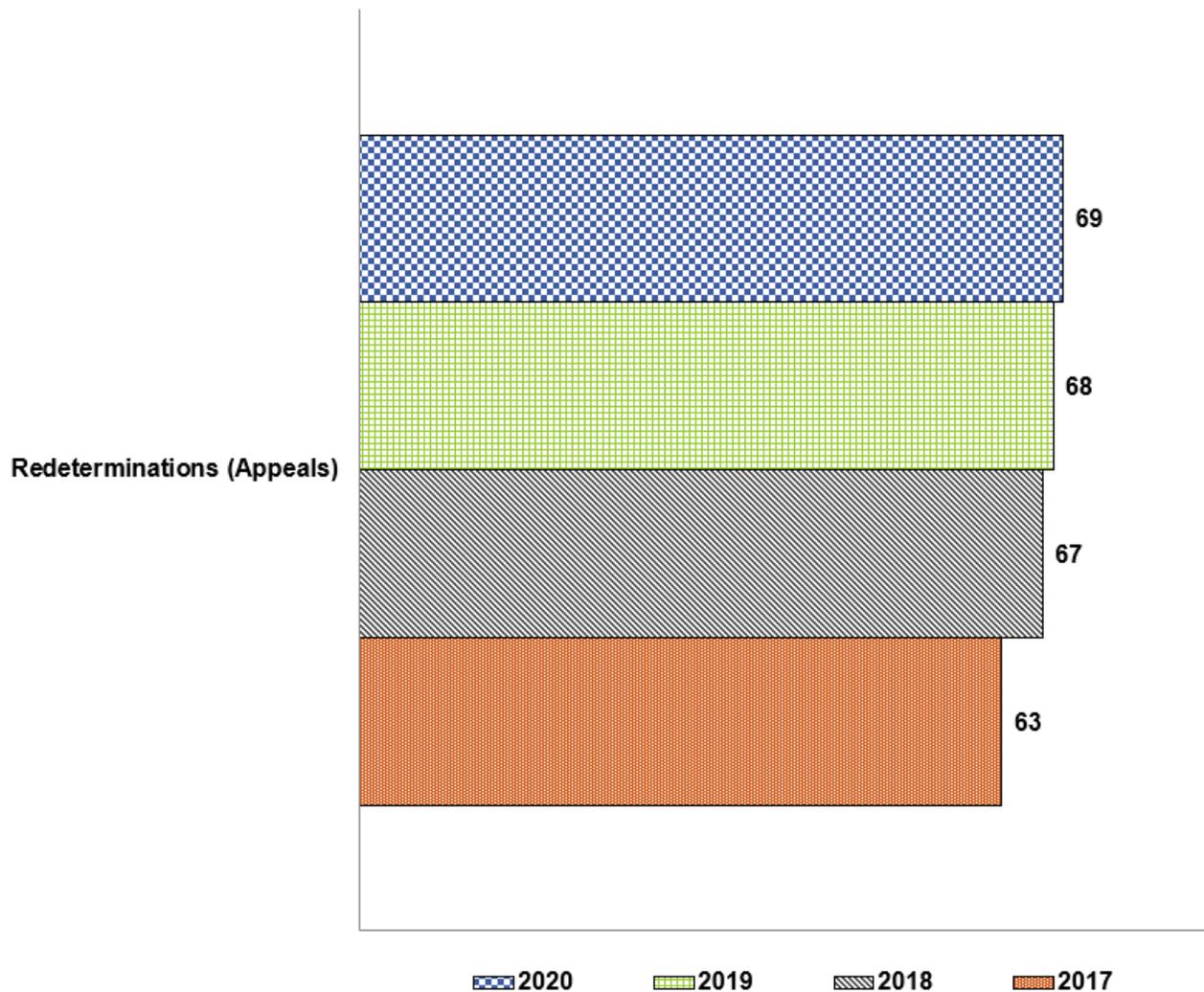


▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

Number of MAC portal logins	2017			2018			2019			2020		
	%	N	CSI									
Have not used	34%	2,533	60	39%	2,275	64	35%	2,487	65	34%	2,154	66
1 - 25 times	36%	2,688	62	35%	2,038	66	34%	2,385	68	35%	2,219	69
26 - 50 times	10%	753	62	9%	534	67	11%	751	69	10%	653	71
51 - 100 times	8%	564	65	7%	404	68	7%	524	68	8%	497	70
More than 100 times	13%	981	64	11%	621	67	13%	921	70	14%	886	72
Number of Respondents	7,519			5,872			7,068			6,409		

Redeterminations (Appeals) – Impact 0.5

In 2020, 45% of respondents indicated they submitted redeterminations during the previous six months and were asked to rate their MAC's performance based on their experience. The driver score based on their responses is 69, one point higher compared to last year but six points above the 2017 score. Although performance has improved during the past four years, this continues to be among the lowest scoring drivers. While less than half of respondents experience the Redeterminations process, efforts to continue improving it will serve to improve the CSI score for those who are subject to the appeals process.

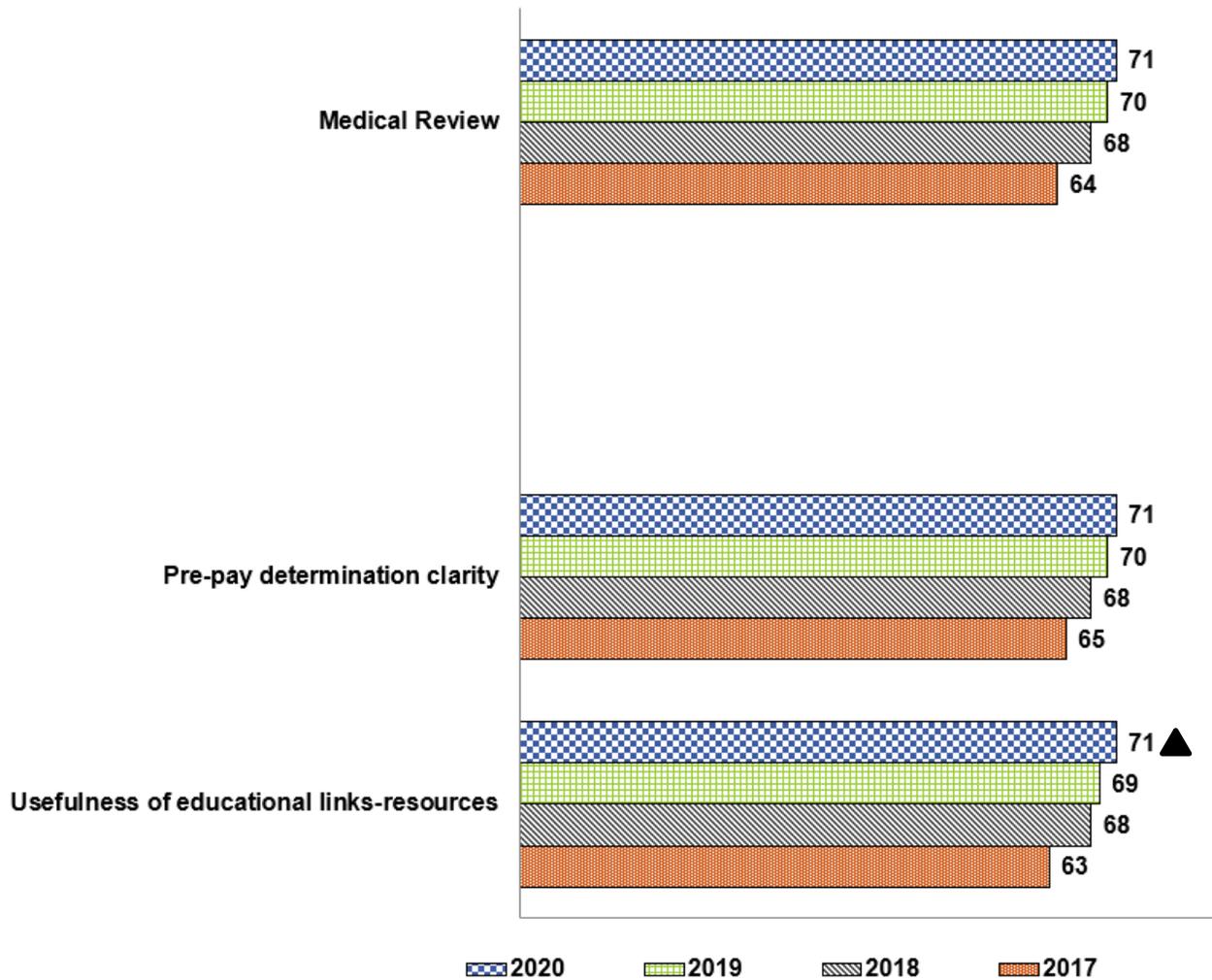


▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

Medical Review – Impact 0.3

Performance in the area of *Medical Review* continued its upward trend for the fourth year in a row with a one-point increase to a score of 71. This consistent improvement in performance places the driver score an impressive seven points higher than 2017. When interpreting these results, it should be noted that one of the three *Medical Review* attributes that have been measured in the past was eliminated from the survey in 2019. As a result, the driver score is not precisely comparable to results from the three previous years.

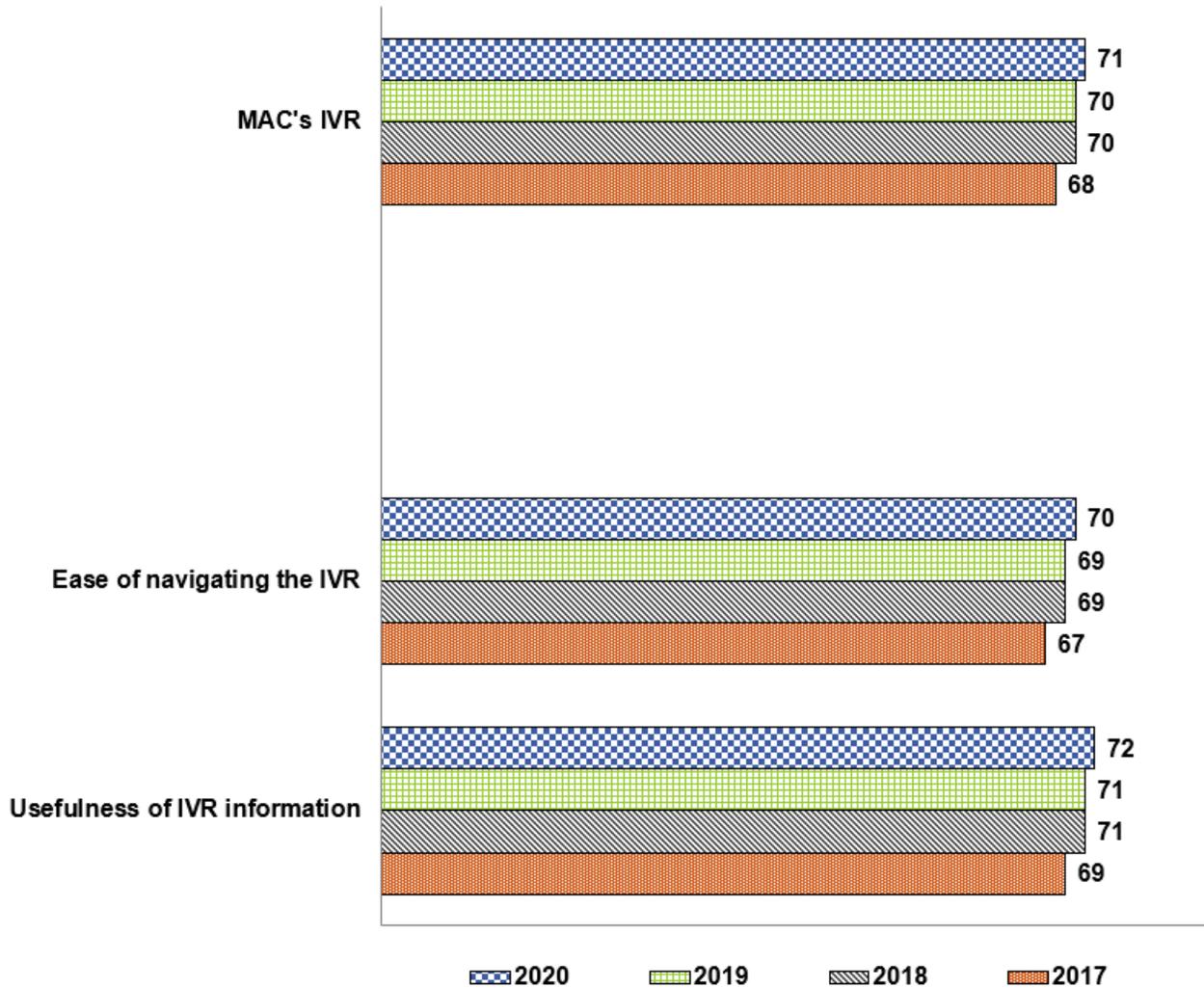
Both remaining attributes related to *Medical Review* have increased over time and score similarly year over year. Usefulness of educational links-resources saw significant improvement this year, up two points to 71.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

MAC IVRs - Impact 0.3

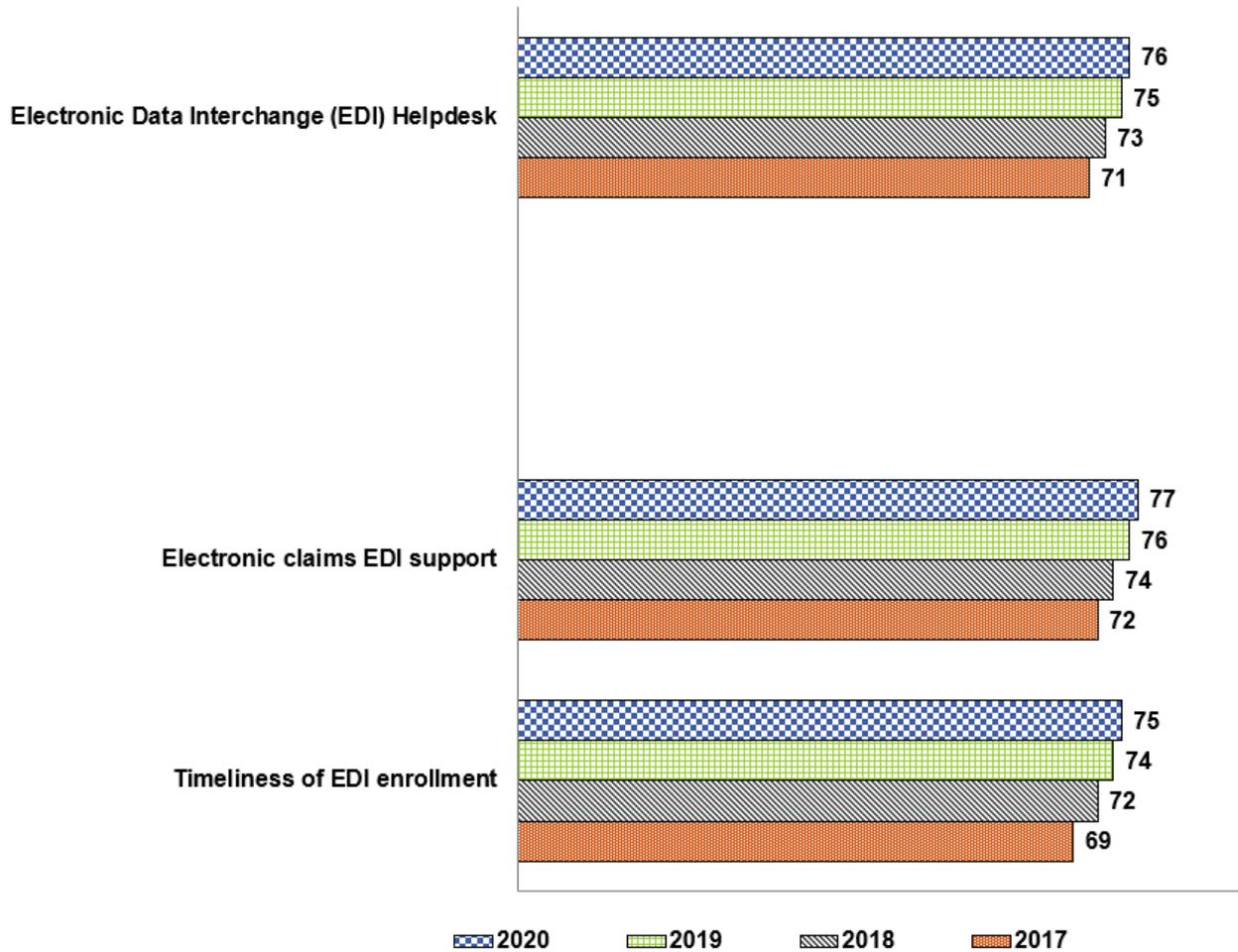
Up one point from 2019, the MAC's IVR score in 2020 is 71. As noted in the past, this level of performance is relatively high compared to public and private sector IVR benchmarks. With minimal impact on satisfaction, prioritizing improvement efforts related to the IVR would not result in meaningful change in the aggregate level CSI score.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Helpdesk – Impact 0.0

The *EDI Helpdesk* set of questions applied to Part A and Part B MAC respondents only. Consistent with previous years, just over one-third (35%) indicated they interacted with the EDI helpdesk during the past 6 months. After two consecutive years of two-point growth, the score improved again this year, up one point to 76. The EDI helpdesk continues to be one of the highest rated MAC interactions for Part A and Part B respondents. Maintaining this level of performance is prudent, however, additional investment would do little to move the overall CSI score higher.



▲ denotes statistically significance difference in 2020 vs. 2019 at a 90% level of confidence

Score/Impact Analysis

Areas that have a high impact on satisfaction and are lower performing relative to other areas should be the primary focus of improvement initiatives. The graphic below shows the recommendations based on overall results. MAC-level recommendations are given in individual reports. For many of the MACs, the overall findings and recommendations are very comparable.

Provider Enrollment and *Provider Telephone Inquiries* can be found in the Top Priorities corner of the graphic given their relative high impacts and lower scores. These two drivers have been identified as areas where additional gains are achievable and will have a relatively high impact on satisfaction if their performance is improved.

Provider Outreach and Education has the highest impact value (1.2) and is among the higher scoring provider touchpoints. Its current score at the aggregate level is higher than that of the previously mentioned drivers, making it a relative strength. At an improved score of 74, there remains room for further improvement. Resources invested in this area will pay strong dividends in terms of continuing the upward trend of the CSI score.

Claims Processing performance has improved to match the level of *Provider Outreach and Education* but has a more moderate impact value relative to the other key components. Representing a core function of the MACs, maintaining this improved level of performance will be important for maintaining the improved CSI score. With continuous improvement in mind, *Claims Processing* should remain an area of focus by leveraging best practices and technology.

The *Internet Self-Service Portal* and *Cost Report Audit and Reimbursement* have relatively moderate impacts but have improved to scores of 77. Maintaining this high-performance level is important for maintaining the gains achieved in the CSI score. However, investment in these areas will have more tempered results in terms of moving the CSI score higher.

The *Electronic Data Interchange Helpdesk* has minimal impact on the CSI score but those who interact with the helpdesk report satisfaction levels that have been trending upward during the past four years. As one of the top performing provider touchpoints, maintaining this high level of service will help avoid decline in the upward trending CSI score.

The *Medical Review*, *IVR*, and *Redeterminations (Appeals)* components remain Areas of Concern due to their relatively low performance scores. Like the performance scores for most components, the scores for these aspects of provider experience have trended upward but remain on the lower end of the range. Although efforts towards improving on these experiences will have less impact on the CSI score, low cost investments in these areas will contribute to the overall satisfaction of providers and have a positive impact on their view of the MACs.

