

CMS ANNOUNCES RECRUITMENT FOR THE HOSPICE OUTCOMES & PATIENT EVALUATION (HOPE) BETA TEST



CMS, as part of their overarching initiative to advance hospice quality, has contracted with Abt Associates and its partners to develop, modify, and test a draft hospice patient assessment instrument, called Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation (HOPE). With CMS and a wide range of hospice stakeholders, Abt has conducted multiple iterative phases of information gathering and initial testing of the HOPE assessment.

Abt Associates is now recruiting Medicare-certified hospice providers to participate in a beta test of the revised draft of the HOPE assessment. This is the HOPE beta test, the final testing phase to confirm HOPE assessment item reliability and validity. Hospice site selection and enrollment is planned for Summer 2021. Data collection is anticipated to begin in October 2021.

Background

The Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP)¹

was established by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. The Act requires that the Secretary establish quality reporting requirements for hospice programs. Currently, part of the requirement relies on patient medical record abstraction to satisfy the Hospice Item Set (HIS) portion of the HQRP. The HIS data are used in calculation of hospice process quality measures.

The planned future hospice assessment, HOPE, is a multidisciplinary patient-centered instrument that supports patient choice. At a minimum, the data from HOPE will be used to support the HQRP for quality measures, hospice providers for care planning, and patients, families and caregivers for engaging in the hospice care. Therefore, your participation in the beta test is a vital part of HOPE instrument development. Results from the beta test will inform CMS's proposal for HOPE data collection in hospice rulemaking, and when approved, will be followed by national implementation of HOPE.

Eligibility and Requirements



Participation in the HOPE beta test is completely voluntary. Providers who do not wish to participate will not be penalized in any way. Eligible providers will be contacted and invited to participate.

Recruitment and Selection

30 providers



The **HOPE beta test** will include approximately 34 Medicare-certified hospice providers, approximately 8-9 in each of the four Census geographic regions (Northeast, Midwest, West, and South). Recruitment begins 05/14/2021 and ends 06/14/2021.



We are seeking a **mix of hospices with a range of characteristics** including hospices of all sizes (small, medium, and large), ownership (profit, nonprofit), and rurality (urban, rural, both). Our goal is to include hospices that provide care for a wide range of patient populations, including people with cancer and non-cancer diagnoses, for example.

What Does Testing Involve?

HOSPICE PROVIDERS THAT PARTICIPATE IN THE BETA TEST WILL RECEIVE ONGOING, INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT FROM THE ABT RESEARCH TEAM, AND WILL BE REQUIRED TO:



Identify a staff member (such as a clinical manager or coordinator) to be the **hospice site liaison**. This is the primary point person at your hospice who is responsible for a) communication and coordination with the Abt research team and b) ensuring that data collection is completed. **Some hospices may prefer that two people share this role.**



Identify at least 4 registered nurses, 2 social workers, and 2 chaplains/spiritual care counselors, who routinely complete patient assessments, to **conduct joint visits** to complete HOPE assessments with their hospice patients who consent to take part in the beta test.



Complete **2-3 HOPE assessments per week** including admission, follow up symptom reassessment and discharge, during the data collection period October 2021 - July 2022.



Collect data electronically, using a **wi-fi enabled point of care device** such as a tablet, laptop, or smart phone. If your hospice lacks wi-fi enabled point of care devices, an alternative method for data collection will be provided.

16+
hours



Provide time for designated hospice staff to participate in approximately **16 hours of required HOPE assessment and field test procedures training, total**. Training will be a combination of e-modules that can be completed independently, and virtual webinars. Assigned staff will need access to a computer to complete the required training.



Reserve time for staff to participate in **periodic telephone discussions** with Abt research staff.

What's in it for Hospice Providers?

Hospice providers that participate in the HOPE beta test will have the opportunity to directly support efforts to transform the hospice care system to achieve CMS's vision of promoting effective, efficient, high-quality care for hospice beneficiaries. Each hospice provider will also receive a \$500 token of appreciation following data collection, and an official thank you letter and Certificate of Participation from CMS.

Thank you for considering this opportunity. If your hospice agency is selected to participate in the beta test, we greatly appreciate your support of this very important project. The HOPE development work is under CMS contract number 75FCMC18D0014 and task order number 75FCMC19F0001.

How to Apply to Participate in Beta Testing

Interested hospices should respond by completing the attached application with no more than 2-pages that explains your interest and how you meet what's involved in this testing as described in those bullets. Please return your completed application by **June 14, 2021** to: HospiceAssessment@CMS.hhs.gov

Questions? Email HospiceAssessment@CMS.hhs.gov

¹For more information about the HQR, please see the HQR website: <http://bit.ly/CMS-HQR>