



CMS Hospice Outcomes Patient Evaluation (HOPE) Alpha Test: Hospice Recruitment Announcement

Abt Associates is currently recruiting hospice providers to participate in a field test (called an alpha test) of the new hospice patient assessment instrument, titled Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation (HOPE). Data collection is anticipated to begin in February 2020.

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 HQRP. The HIS data are used in calculation of hospice process quality measures. 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 new hospice patient assessment instrument. At a minimum, data from the assessment instrument will be used for care planning and outcome quality measures.

Abt Associates and its partners will develop, modify, and test items for inclusion in HOPE. This new hospice instrument will apply an interdisciplinary patient-centered approach that supports patient choice. At a minimum, the data from HOPE will be used to support the HQRP for quality measures and care planning. Therefore, your participation in the HOPE alpha test is an integral part of HOPE instrument development. The feedback from alpha test participants will inform the second wave of testing, the beta test (anticipated to begin late summer 2020). The beta test will be a larger, nationally representative field test of the final draft of HOPE version 1.0. Results from the HOPE beta test will inform CMS's proposal for HOPE data collection in hospice rulemaking, when approved, will be followed by national implementation of HOPE.

Eligibility and Requirements

Participation in the alpha test is completely voluntary. Providers who do not wish to participate will not be penalized in any way. Hospices are eligible to participate in the HOPE alpha test if:

¹ For more information about the HQRP, please see the HQRP website at: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/index.html>

- The hospice has sufficient capacity to support clinical staff time for training and data collection, and clinical manager, and support staff time for implementation, communication, and coordination with the Abt research team.
- The Abt research team is able to deploy research nurses to support in-person data collection at the hospice for interrater reliability testing.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment begins 11/22/2019 and ends 12/20/2019. We will process all applications for participation when the recruitment period has ended and use a multistage stratified sampling procedure to select a representative group of hospices. We will notify each applicant on or about 12/31/2019 whether they have or have not been selected to participate in the HOPE alpha test.

We are seeking a representative group of hospices with a range of characteristics including 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.

Requirements

Participation in alpha testing will require hospice providers to:

Identify a staff member (such as a clinical manager or coordinator) to be the field test coordinator who is the primary point person 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 registered nurses, social workers, and chaplains/spiritual care counselors who routinely conduct patient assessments to collect data by completing HOPE assessments of varying types such as a) admission, b) interim, and c) discharge assessments weekly.

Accommodate time for training of all roles mentioned above, in a combination of self-study modules and virtual training (e.g., webinars).

Accommodate research nurses as they accompany hospice staff to complete their own series of assessments for interrater reliability and validity of the assessment items.

Acknowledgement of Participation

Hospices that participate in the field testing will be provided an honorarium and will have the opportunity to support efforts to transform the hospice care system to achieve CMS's vision of promoting effective, efficient, high-quality care for hospice beneficiaries.

If your hospice agency is asked to participate in the alpha test, we strongly encourage your participation in this very important project.

The HOPE development work is under CMS contract number 75FCMC18D0014 and task order number 75FCMC19F0001.