Hospice Quality Reporting Program

Quarterly Updates for January- March 2020

This document provides Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP)-related updates on events and guidance from the 1st Quarter of 2020 (January – March 2020).

Contents

Tips of the Quarter

COVID-19

Call to Action: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released a call to action for all health care providers to address the spread of the Novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). As part of these efforts, we are monitoring the impact COVID-19 may have on your hospice and participation in the HQRP.

We encourage you to subscribe to the Post-Acute Care listserv at https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCMS/subscriber/new?topic_id=USCMS_12265 to keep informed about hospice QRP updates.

Most of all know that we at CMS greatly value all that you do every day to care for hospice patients, their families, caregivers and loved ones and send our warmest regards especially now during this pandemic.

UPDATES RELATED TO COVID-19:

CMS actions in response to COVID-19, are part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, visit www.coronavirus.gov. For a complete and updated list of CMS actions, and other information specific to CMS, please visit the Current Emergencies Website

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NOTE: Information on the Coronavirus Waivers and Flexibilities is available at: https://www.cms.gov/about-cms/emergency-preparedness-response-operations/current-emergencies/coronavirus-waivers

HQRP Requirements:

- HQRP data collection requirements for both the Hospice Item Set (HIS) and CAHPS® Hospice Survey are defined for the **Calendar Year (CY): January 1-December 31.** To **comply** with the HQRP, hospices must submit and ensure acceptance of their HIS and CAHPS® Hospice Survey data, in accordance with HQRP requirements, each CY.
- **Payment** is impacted during the corresponding **Fiscal Year (FY): October 1-September 30**. Hospices are subject to a 2% reduction in their annual payment update (APU) if they fail to comply with the HQRP requirements. Hospices must be compliant with both HIS and CAHPS® in the CY to receive the full APU for the corresponding FY.
- Please review the November 14, 2019 Training called "Success with the HQRP: Putting the Pieces Together to Meet Compliance" at https://www.cms.gov/files/document/november-14-hospice-quality-reporting-program-webinar.pdf for more information on HQRP requirements.

Figure 1. Calendar Year Compliance Rules and Fiscal Year Payment Impacts

Table 1. Compliance Criteria for the HQRP

Reporting Requirement	Sample for FY 2022 APU Determinations	Compliance Criteria
HIS	HIS records with a target date 1/1/20 – 12/31/20	At least 90% of all HIS records must be submitted and accepted by QIES ASAP within 30 days of the target date.
CAHPS®	Patient decedents 1/1/20 – 12/31/20	Vendor submits data quarterly – each submission must be complete (have 3 months' worth of data) and must be submitted and accepted by the quarterly deadlines (second Wednesday of February, May, August, and November).

Exemptions related to Hospice QRP (note that the March 27, 2020 MLN provides the accurate quarters for Hospice QRP Exemptions for HIS and CAHPS):

Showing Our Thanks

CMS thanks the four hospices participating in the Pilot Test for the Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation (HOPE). These hospices are:

- Fairhope Hospice & Palliative Care, Inc.
- Treasure Valley Hospice, LLC
- Valley Hospice, Inc.
- Agrace HospiceCare

The purpose of the pilot test is to evaluate the field test procedures and materials, in preparation for the next phase of HOPE testing, the alpha test. The HOPE Pilot Test is in progress, and will continue through the spring of 2020.

CMS sincerely thanks these hospices for supporting the development of the HOPE.

Section 1: Updates, Announcements, and Resources

Updates and Announcements

Hospice QRP Requirements:

- **Fiscal Year Annual Payment Update (APU)**

The FY 2020 payment updates for HIS and CAHPS® data went into effect on October 1st, 2019 and reflect compliance with the HQRP Requirements in CY 2018. Data collected during CY 2019 will impact the FY 2021 APU. The upcoming data collection year, CY 2020, began January 1, 2020 and extends through December 31, 2020. Compliance with HQRP requirements in CY 2020 will impact the FY 2022 APU.

To stay informed about compliance with the HQRP Requirements, read the [Hospice Final Rules and](#) materials offered on the [Best Practices webpage](#), [Training and Education webpage](#), and [Reconsideration webpage](#)**.** Also, as stated above, please subscribe to the Post-Acute Care listserv at https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCMS/subscriber/new?topic_id=USCMS_12265 to keep informed about the COVID-19 related updates.

- **HQRP requirements documents updated for FY 2020 and future years**

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Multiple resource documents summarizing HQRP requirements are updated to reflect the FY 2020 Hospice Payment Rate Update and Hospice Quality Reporting Program Final Rule. The HIS 90% threshold and the CAHPS requirements, covered in these documents, will apply to FY2020 and future years. These updated documents include:

- "Getting Started with Hospice Quality Reporting Program" provides detailed information on the HQRP requirements for the HIS and CAHPS® Hospice Survey. It is intended in particular for new providers and staff. It provides comprehensive detail on the background of each requirement, data submission deadlines, possible exemptions, tips for compliance, and links to useful resources, including Help Desks.
- "The Hospice Quality Reporting Program: Requirements for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 and Future FY Reporting Years fact sheet" contains information about requirements for HQRP for the fiscal year 2021 reporting year and future reporting years.
- "The Hospice Quality Reporting Program Quick Reference Guide" provides a brief background on the HQRP, frequently asked questions, contact information for the Help Desk, and helpful links.

These documents can be found on the HQRP Requirements and Best Practices page at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/HQRP-Requirements-and-Best-Practices.html.

To view the FY2020 final rule, please see CMS's Hospice Center at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/Hospice/Hospice-Regulations-and-Notices

- **Timeliness Compliance Threshold for HIS Submissions: Fact Sheet**

CMS has posted an updated fact sheet called the Timeliness Compliance Threshold for HIS Submissions to update the summary of timeliness compliance threshold requirements by reporting year.

The updated fact sheet is available in the Downloads section of the HIS page at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/Hospice-Item-Set-HIS.

HOPE Updates:

- **HOPE Information Gathering Report and Focus Group Addendum**

The Information Gathering Report summarizes the information CMS gathered for the development of the HOPE. Specifically, in this report, CMS presents the results of efforts to identify candidate domains and elements, with a focus on desired patient outcomes and processes that distinguish high quality hospice care for the purposes of quality improvement and accountability. As part of this work, CMS convened focus groups with hospice clinicians in August-September 2019. These focus groups helped expand and validate the evidence basis for draft assessment domains, and guided the focus and scope of subsequent cognitive testing. The Focus Group Addendum summarizes findings from these focus groups. The documents are available in the Downloads section of the Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation page at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/HOPE.

- **HQRP Forum**

The December HQRP Forum was held on December 4, 2019. The Forum provided an update on the development of the HOPE, including a summary of focus group findings and cognitive testing, an update on electronic health record vendor listening sessions findings, and a discussion of next steps. The slides are available in the Downloads section of the HOPE webpage at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/HOPE.

- **Recruitment Update – Alpha Test for the HOPE Assessment Instrument**

CMS has been recruiting hospice providers to participate in a HOPE field test (called an Alpha Test) of the HOPE. CMS posted a public recruitment announcement on the HQRP Provider Engagement website, and, on March 5th, held a webinar for interested hospice providers to learn more about what the Alpha Test will entail. To access webinar resources, please navigate to the HOPE page at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/HOPE.

- **Documents on the HOPE**

Two documents describing the HOPE are now available at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/HOPE. The first, HOPE Frequently Asked Questions, explains what the HOPE is and CMS's rationale for developing it as part of the HQRP. The second, HOPE Fundamentals, provides a visual for comparing the HIS and the HOPE.

Technical Expert Panel

In a follow-up to the November 2019 Technical Expert Panel (TEP) Meeting, the TEP reconvened in late March 2020. During this meeting, the TEP provided input on claims-based quality measure concepts that CMS might choose to develop, review the discussion from the previous in-person TEP, and plan for upcoming meetings.

Educational Trainings

The HQRP website includes an Education and Training Library webpage where you can find valuable educational and training materials.

HQRP Requirements Webinar

On March 3, 2020, CMS hosted a webinar to provide a general overview of the HIS and associated submission requirements based on frequently asked questions to the Help Desk. During the webinar, information on the following topics were discussed:

- A general overview of the Hospice Quality Reporting Program.
- CAHPS submission and exemptions.
- Basic instructions for completing the HIS.
- An update on data submission requirements.
- How to correct HIS records.
- How to access resources to assist providers in successfully completing and submitting the HIS.

Please find materials from the webinar on the Education and Training Library page at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/Hospice-Quality-Reporting-Training-Training-and-Education-Library.

Section 2: What's Coming Up in the 2nd Quarter of 2020

In light of the ongoing public health emergency, CMS has decided to cancel all upcoming, live Hospice Open Door Forums and HQRP Forums. This decision will make it possible for hospices to remain focused on their patients and their response to COVID-19. CMS will continue to develop and provide information to hospices about the HQRP – including providing the spring HQRP Forum via a web-based recording. This will allow hospices to access information about the HQRP at any time when it fits your schedule. For updates about new resources or changes to the schedule, please check out the CMS website and sign up for the post-acute care ListServ, ODF's, and the MLN Weekly Newsletter on the HQRP website at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/index.html.

Section 3: Previous and Upcoming Public Reporting Dates

The section below includes key public reporting dates for the previous and upcoming Quarters. Providers should review the timeline to ensure they are familiar with important upcoming public reporting dates, and refer to the Public Reporting: Key Dates for Providers webpage at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/Public-Reporting-Key-Dates-for-Providers.html for more information.

First Quarter 2020 Reporting Dates

Hospice Compare Refresh: February 2020
- HIS quality measures updated to reflect patient stays discharged in Q2 2018 – Q1 2019
- CAHPS® Hospice Survey data updated to reflect quarters Q2 2017 – Q1 2019

Hospice Provider Preview Reports available: March 2, 2020
- HIS quality measure results from: Q3 2018 – Q2 2019
- Facility-level CAHPS® Hospice Survey results from quarters Q3 2017 – Q2 2019

Providers have 30-days to review their HIS and CAHPS® results (**March 2, 2020 through April 1, 2020**) prior to the **May 2020** Hospice Compare site refresh, during which this data will be publicly displayed.

Providers may request CMS review if they find denominator or other HIS quality metrics to be inaccurate, or if there are errors within the results from the CAHPS® Survey data. To request a review, providers should refer to the process outlined on the Public Reporting webpage:

- HIS Preview Reports and Requests for CMS Review of HIS Data webpage at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/Public-Reporting-HIS-Preview-Reports-and-Requests-for-CMS-Review-of-HIS-Data.html and;
- CAHPS® Preview Reports and Requests for CMS Review of CAHPS® Data webpage at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-

Quality-Reporting/Public-Reporting-CAHPS-Preview-Reports-and-Requests-for-CMS-Review-of-CAHPS-Data.html.

For more information on how to access these reports:

- HIS Preview Report Access Instructions at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/Downloads/Hospice-Provider-Preview-Report-Access-Instructions.pdf.
- If you have difficulty accessing your report after review of these instructions, please contact the Technical Help Desk E-mail:iqies@cms.hhs.gov. Phone: 1-877-201-4721 Hours: Monday-Friday 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Central Time.
- CAHPS® Hospice Provider Preview Reports Access Instructions at https://www.cms.gov/files/document/hospice-cahpsrprovider-preview-report-access-instructions-final-12-1-17.pdf
- Technical questions about the Hospice CAHPS® Survey should be directed to hospicecahpssurvey@HSAG.com or call toll free at 1-844-472-4621.

Upcoming Reporting Dates

Table 2. May 2020 Hospice Compare Refresh Schedule

Refresh Reflects Patient Stays Discharged for Quarters (HIS)	CAHPS Quarters included in Refresh (Dates refer to patients' dates of death)	HIS and CAHPS Provider Preview Reports Available in CASPER Folder	30-Day HIS and CAHPS Provider Preview Period *Requests for CMS review of HIS or CAHPS data must be submitted by 11:59:59 p.m. E.T. on day 30 of the preview period*
Quarter 3 2018- Quarter 2 2019	Quarter 3 2017- Quarter 2 2019	03/02/2020	03/02/2020-04/01/2020

Section 4: Questions and Answers

Question 1: How are the national average scores for HIS quality measures (QM) calculated on Hospice Compare?

Answer 1: As stated in the HQRP QM User's Manual, the national average for each QM is the sum of all the percent value scores for that QM across all hospices divided by the total number of hospices. All of the HIS-based QMs are rounded to one decimal. For more information, please see the HQRP QM Users' Manual in the Downloads section of the Current Measures page on the HQRP website: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/Current-Measures.

Question 2: Where is the list of compliant hospices posted?

Answer 2: CMS posts a list of compliant hospice providers on the CMS HQRP Requirements and Best Practices website around the start of each fiscal year (FY, October 1 – September 30), following each FY payment determination. The link to this webpage is: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/Hospice-Quality-Reporting/HQRP-Requirements-and-Best-Practices.html

Question 3: How do I request information about COVID-19?

Answer 3: For all questions related to COVID-19, please visit the Current Emergencies Website. For new questions not answered on that website, please contact the COVID-10@cms.hhs.gov mailbox.

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