

## **Hospice Outreach Email – March 2026**

### **Email Subject**

Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP) – Important Reminders and Updates

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## Annual Payment Update Reminders

### FY 2028 Hospice Quality Reporting Reminder

For hospices to meet the Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP) requirements, the Hospice Outcomes, and/or Patient Evaluation (HOPE) (01/01/2026-12/31/2026) and the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) Hospice Survey must be submitted on time each year. Data collection for Calendar Year (CY) 2026 began on January 1, 2026, and impacts the Annual Payment Update (APU) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2028. Beginning in FY 2024, hospices that fail to meet HQRP requirements are subject to a 4% reduction in their payments.

- **Hospice Assessment:** The reporting threshold for HOPE is set at 90%. This means that 90% of all HOPE assessments must be submitted to, and accepted by, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) within 30 days of the patient’s admission, update visit, or discharge date. For HOPE admission, discharge, and/or HOPE Update Visit (HUV) assessments began reporting on October 1, 2025.
- **Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®):** All Medicare-certified hospices that are required to conduct the CAHPS® Hospice Survey must contract with an approved CAHPS® Hospice Survey vendor and conduct the survey over a 12-month period during each calendar year. For more information on CAHPS® Hospice Survey requirements, please visit the survey website: [www.hospicecahpsurvey.org](http://www.hospicecahpsurvey.org). The data collection quarters for CAHPS® are based on patient deaths occurring between January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026, inclusively.
- **Claims:** Administrative data collected from claims and hospices are automatically considered 100% compliant upon successful submission of this data.
- For more information on the HQRP and achieving compliance, refer to the [Hospice Timeliness Compliance Report Fact Sheet](#) and other useful documents under the [Requirements and Best Practices](#) webpage, or the [Training and Education Library](#) webpage.

#### **Provider-initiated requests for exemption or extension for extraordinary circumstances:**

If a hospice experiences an extraordinary circumstance, it can initiate a request for an extension or exemption. *Requests must be initiated within 90 days of the extraordinary circumstances event* and must be sent to CMS via email following the instructions provided on the [Extension and Exemption Requests](#) webpage.

### **UPDATED RESOURCES AVAILABLE: HQRP: Achieving a Full Annual Payment Update (APU) Training**

CMS is offering a recorded presentation that provides the latest information about the Annual Payment Update (APU) for the Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP), including what it is, the data submission requirements for Hospice Outcomes and Patient Evaluation (HOPE) and

CAHPS® data, how CMS determines HQRP compliance, and the steps you can take if you receive a non-compliance decision.

- To access the training, click on the following link: <https://youtu.be/x49Xtn5GpSc>
- The slides and transcript for this presentation can be found in the Downloads section at the bottom of this page.

## **CAHPS® Hospice Survey**

The CAHPS® Hospice Survey continues to collect data. The data submission deadlines for the CAHPS® Data Warehouse are on the second Wednesday of the month in February, May, August, and November. Vendors must receive patient/caregiver lists on time to meet the requirements for the HQRP.

## **HOPE**

### **HOPE Resources**

CMS is excited to announce that the HOPE assessment submission and reporting functionality was launched within the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES) on October 1, 2025.

All Medicare-certified hospice providers should note significant changes to the HQRP effective October 1, 2025:

- The HOPE tool replaced the current HIS as of October 1, 2025. HOPE includes a combination of existing HIS items, revised items, and new items.
- HOPE records must be submitted to CMS via iQIES instead of QIES.
- Hospice providers will be required to submit up to two HOPE Update Visits (HUVs), each at specified timeframes, depending on the length of the hospice stay.

### **HOPE Manual and Item Sets**

The HOPE Manual and HOPE Item Sets have been updated on the HOPE page.

- [HOPE-Guidance-Manual\\_v1.02 \(PDF\)](#)
- [HOPE-v1.02\\_Admission\\_508c \(PDF\)](#)
- [HOPE-v1.02\\_HOPE-Update-Visit\\_508 \(PDF\)](#)
- [HOPE-v1.02\\_Discharge \(PDF\)](#)
- [HOPE-v1.02\\_All-Item \(PDF\)](#)
- [HOPE v1.01 to HOPE v1.02 Guidance Manual and Item Set Change Table \(PDF\)](#)
- [HQRP QM User Manual Chapter - HOPE Measures 508c \(PDF\)](#)

Please visit the [HOPE](#) webpage to access the updated documents.

## **Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update, Hospice Conditions of Participation Updates, Hospice Quality Reporting Program Requirements, and Hospice Certifying Physician Provider Enrollment Requirements Final Rule (CMS-1835-F)**

On July 31, 2025, CMS issued a final rule (CMS-1835-P) that provides updates to the fiscal year (FY) 2026 HQRP and beyond. This rule corrects a technical error in the regulations text at § 418.312(j). This rule also reinforces updates on the HQRP and the HOPE instrument and public reporting, future quality measures (QMs), and the transition of hospice providers from the Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (QIES) to the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES).

The final rule is on display in the Federal Register and will be available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/current>.

For further information and to view the Final Rule, please visit the CMS.gov Hospice Center webpage here: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/enrollment-renewal/providers-suppliers/hospice-center>.

### **HOPE Coding Workshop Final Materials**

The slides and transcript from the live coding workshop held on August 5, 2025, are now available in the **Downloads** section of the [CMS HQRP Training and Education Library](#).

To access the training, click on the following link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fsh5np1wzg>

### **HOPE Implementation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

CMS answers Frequently Asked Questions about the transition from HIS to the HOPE tool and updated HQRP reporting requirements.

- To access the FAQ, select the following link: [HOPE Implementation Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- A PDF of the FAQs is also available in the **Downloads** section of the [CMS HQRP Training and Education Library](#) webpage.

### **NEW RESOURCES AVAILABLE: HOPE National Implementation Virtual Training Program-Course 1: Didactic Recorded Training Series**

CMS is offering a series of five self-paced recorded presentations and corresponding PDFs that highlight items that are new to HOPE, as well as the existing and updated items carried over from HIS.

To access the videos, select the following links:

- [Part 1: Training Overview and Introduction to the HOPE Tool](#)
- [Part 2: HOPE Section A. Administrative Information Didactic Training](#)

- [Part 3: HOPE Sections F. Preferences, and I. Active Diagnoses Didactic Training](#)
- [Part 4: HOPE Section J. Health Conditions Didactic Training](#)
- [Part 5: HOPE Sections M. Skin Conditions, N. Medications, and Z. Record Admin. Didactic Training](#)

The slides and transcripts for these presentations can be found in the **Downloads** section of the [CMS HQRP Training and Education Library](#) webpage.

### **Introducing the HOPE Tool Web-Based Training**

CMS is offering a web-based training course that provides an overview of the HOPE tool and its connection to the HQRP as outlined in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Hospice Final Rule. The training is intended for all hospice providers.

The course consists of five sections and includes interactive exercises to support understanding and application of the material. This "Train-the-Trainer" program is the first in a series of training on the HOPE tool. HOPE implementation and data collection began in October 1, 2025 (FY 2026). To access the training, click on the following link: [HOPE Web-Based Training](#). Additional HOPE trainings may all be found in the **Downloads** section on the [HQRP Training and Education Library](#) webpage.

### **HOPE Data Collection Timepoints Explainer Video**

CMS is offering a 4-minute, animated explainer video, titled Hospice Outcomes and Patient Evaluations (HOPE) Data Collection Timepoints, for hospice providers. This video provides an overview of HOPE, the timepoints, their data collection timeframes, and introduces the symptom follow-up visit (or SFV), if triggered during a HOPE timepoint.

HOPE data collection will be required for the HQRP beginning on October 1, 2025 (FY 2026). The video is now available through the following link: [HOPE Timepoints Explainer Video](#).

CMS continues to provide online education and training that is available 24/7, 365 days a year for convenient access on a variety of topics. Please check out the [HQRP Training and Education Library | CMS](#) and the [Provider and Stakeholder Engagement | CMS](#) webpages.

### **HOPE Technical Updates**

The [HOPE Technical Information](#) webpage is now available and provides updates and resources related to HOPE data submission specifications and other technical information.

- [HOPE data specs errata \(v1.00.3\) 01-16-2026 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Errata \(V1.00.2\) for HOPE Data Specs \(V1.00.1\) FINAL 05-22-2025 \(PDF\)](#)
- [CMS Hospice Vendor Training June 2025 \(PDF\)](#)

## **Data Submission and Provider Reports Web-Based Training**

CMS is offering an updated web-based training course that provides an overview of the HQRP submission process, including the submission of HOPE data to inform the CMS HQRP reports and quality measures (QMs). It also provides valuable information about available reports and resources to assist hospices in reviewing their submitted data to track progress, confirm accuracy, and ensure compliance with the HQRP.

- To access the course, select the following link: [HQRP Data Submission and Provider Reports](#)

## **iQIES**

The Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (QIES) has been upgraded to make the system more reliable, scalable, secure, and accessible. The enhanced system, referred to as the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES), aims to reduce the provider's burden and enhance the CMS' ability to serve our customers. CMS is excited to announce that the HOPE assessment submission and reporting functionality was launched within iQIES on October 1, 2025.

iQIES will require a new user management system because the virtual private network (VPN) and CMSNet are not needed to access the iQIES system. All users will have to create an account and establish credentials in the HCQIS Access Roles and Profile system (HARP), which is a secure identity management portal provided by CMS.

Please refer to the [Hospice Providers News](#) webpage on the QIES Technical Support Office (QTSO) for updates.

## **Provider Security Official Recruitment**

Through HARP, the level of access for iQIES will be similar to the roles that exist in QIES but with the addition of a Provider Security Official (PSO). The individual designated as the PSO must work for the provider and will be responsible for approving or rejecting iQIES user access requests for their respective organizations, including vendors.

At a minimum, at least one PSO needs to be selected, but CMS highly recommends that at least two PSOs be designated so that there is a higher likelihood that there will be someone available to approve/reject iQIES access requests. A user will not be granted access unless a PSO approves the request. If possible, please utilize your work email address (associated with your provider) when requesting roles in iQIES to limit delays with the approval process.

*For your organization to receive access to iQIES, your organization must have completed the steps below prior to September 10, 2025:*

1. Identify at least one individual who will be the Provider Security Official (PSO), though CMS recommends at least two.

2. Register the PSO for iQIES login credentials within the Healthcare Quality Information System (HCQIS) Access Roles and Profile (HARP) system at: <https://harp.cms.gov/register>. *Note: CMS recommends utilizing the work email address associated with your provider to expedite the approval process.*
3. After Identity proofing and your MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) is complete, you can access iQIES at the following URL: <https://iqies.cms.gov/> using your HARP ID and password (completed in step 2 above) to initiate your Provider Security Official role request for YOUR specific provider CCN.
4. Once the PSO role request has been submitted AND approved, you will receive notification via email. At this point you will be one of the designated PSOs for your CCN and have the authority to approve/deny subsequent requests for access of various role types to your provider's CCN.

To comply with federal security mandates, CMS is initiating new security requirements for access control to CMS Quality Systems through Remote Identity Proofing (RIDP) via the Healthcare Quality Information System (HCQIS) Access, Roles, and Profile Management system. Users will create accounts in HCQIS Access Roles and Profile Management (HARP) to gain access to the iQIES system.

Additional information is available on QTSO at: <https://qtso.cms.gov/news-and-updates/iqies-hope-assessment-submission-and-reporting-launch-and-provider-security>.

### **How to Update Hospice Demographic Data**

The **How to Update Hospice Demographic Data** is available to help hospice providers with correcting demographic data. Here is a link to the page: [How to Update Demographic Data](#)

- Hospice providers should regularly review their reports to verify the accuracy of demographic data. The **Provider Preview Reports** reflect the quality measure data and hospice demographic information that will be posted to [Care Compare](#) in the next quarter.
- If any demographic information is incorrect, the hospice provider must complete the CMS-855A form in PECOS with the updated demographic information. After completing the form, the provider should contact their Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) and request that the completed form be forwarded to the appropriate State Agency along with a request to update the demographic data in the Internet Quality Improvement Evaluation System (iQIES). All PAC providers are responsible for ensuring their latest demographic data is updated and available in both the iQIES (Hospices) and PECOS systems.

***Note:** Demographic data does not occur in real time and may take up to 6 months to reflect on Care Compare.*

## **HQRP Quarterly Q&A**

The HQRP Quarterly Q&A for Q3 2024 is now available. This Q&A includes selected questions received by the Hospice Quality Help Desk between July 1, 2024, and September 30, 2024. A link to the document can be found in the **Downloads** section of the [HQRP Requirements and Best Practices](#) webpage.

## **Public Reporting Updates**

The most recent Hospice Care Compare data-refresh occurred on February 18, 2026. Provider Preview Reports for the February 2026 Refresh were released on November 2025. The February quarterly refresh is now available on the Care Compare tool at [Medicare.gov](#).

## **Getting Started with the Hospice Quality Reporting Program and Public Reporting**

CMS is offering web-based training that provides an overview of the HQRP and its associated quality measures. The training is designed to help hospices understand and comply with program requirements, recognize their role in public reporting, and track their own metrics to improve quality.

- To access the courses, select the following link: [Getting Started with the Hospice Quality Reporting Program and Public Reporting](#).

## **Questions**

If you have questions about accessing resources or feedback regarding training, please email the [PAC Training Mailbox](#). Content-related questions should be submitted to [HospiceQualityQuestions@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:HospiceQualityQuestions@cms.hhs.gov).

Thank you,

Swingtech Help Desk Team

Swingtech is contracted by CMS to provide outreach and share important reminders with providers for the IRF, LTCH, SNF, and Hospice Quality Reporting Programs.

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