Home Health Agencies (HHAs) Urged to Establish Access to the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES) By December 23, 2019

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Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters Article is for Home Health Agencies (HHAs) billing Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

Provider Action Needed

Special Edition (SE) article SE19025 notifies HHAs that they need to onboard to the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES) by establishing a Healthcare Quality Information System Access, Roles, and Profile System (HARP) account and selecting an iQIES role. Please see the Background and Additional Information sections for more on this topic.

Please note that failure to obtain access to iQIES by December 23rd will impact your agencies' ability to submit assessment data needed for claims matching purposes after January 1, 2020. Claims that cannot be matched to assessments will be returned to the HHA, delaying Medicare payment.

Background

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is upgrading the current Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (QIES) to make the system more reliable, secure, accessible, and scalable. The enhanced system, referred to as iQIES, reduces provider burden and enhances CMS' ability to serve customers.

The rollout of iQIES will not require providers or vendors to change current processes related to submission of data. However, iQIES will require a new user management system because Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) and CMSNet are no longer needed to access this system. All users will have to create an account and establish credentials in HARP, which is a secure identity management portal provided by CMS.

Registering for iQIES

HHAs should be aware that the following steps are required to successfully register for iQIES:

1. Register in the HARP system at https://harp.cms.gov/register/profile-info. HARP uses Experian to remotely verify a user's identity by applying the data that a user provides, such as date of birth and social security number, to generate a list of personal questions for the user to answer to verify his or her identity.

   Note: Some users who attempt to register in HARP may receive an error message stating that their email address already exists. This most likely means that you have completed some level of identity proofing in the past and that you have an Enterprise Identity Management System (EIDM) account. If this is the case, you will need to login to HARP using your EIDM login information. If you don't remember your login information, you will need to contact the QualityNet Help Desk at qnetsupport@hcqis.org, or call (866) 288-8912.

2. After you register in the HARP system (or login if you are an EIDM user), you will be directed to set up two-factor authentication, which requires an extra layer of security, like something that you have (for example, a smart phone). If you are an EIDM user, you will then need to login to HARP a second time; this will ensure that you are able to access iQIES to request your role (see Step 3).

3. Request your role in iQIES by logging in to iQIES at https://iqies.cms.gov using your HARP User ID and password (EIDM login information if you are an EIDM user). Verify your account using two-factor authentication and then select, "Submit." **Note:** For a better user experience, we recommend using Chrome or Firefox to access iQIES.

4. Select "Request User Role" on the Welcome to iQIES page. Table 1 below lists iQIES User Roles There are four steps to request an iQIES role:

   a. Select the "User Category"

   b. Select a "User Role." **Note**: If your organization has not yet selected and registered a Security Official, you will not be able to request a role. CMS requests HHAs establish at least two provider security officials for each facility that would be responsible for approving users to ensure a smooth transition.

   c. Select your Organization(s). Requests for the Vendor or Provider categories include the requirement to add one or more CMS Certification Numbers (CCNs). This enables access to those providers. As CCNs are entered, those providers are added to the list of permission requests. An error message will be displayed on the screen if you enter an invalid CCN.

d. Once you provide all required data, select, "Submit Request." A "Role Request Submitted" message will display on the My Profile page stating that your approval status will be emailed to you after your request is reviewed.

Table 1: iQIES User Roles

iQIES User Role	User Role Capabilities
Assessment Submitter	Uploads and submits patient assessments (XML/zip files) and also generates and views reports.
Provider Administrator	Creates and manages patient profiles. Creates, manages, submits, modifies, and inactivates patient assessments. Generates and views reports. **Note**: Cannot upload patient assessments.
Provider Assessment Coordinator	Creates and manages patient profiles; creates, manages, and submits patient assessments. Generates and views reports. **Note**: Cannot upload patient assessments.
Provider Assessment Viewer	Limited to finding and viewing patient profiles and their assessments. Generates and views reports. **Note**: Cannot upload patient assessments.
Provider Security Official	Approves or rejects iQIES user access for organizations in HARP. Uploads, creates, manages, and submits patient assessments; creates and manages patient profiles; and generates and views reports.

Table 2 presents a matrix that relates actions or functions to user roles and privileges for HHAs in iQIES.

Table 2: iQIES User Roles Matrix

Action	Assessment Submitter	Provider Administrator	Provider Assessment Coordinator	Provider Assessment Viewer	Provider Security Official
Upload XML files	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
Generate and view reports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Approve iQIES role requests	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
Add patient record	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes

Action	Assessment Submitter	Provider Administrator	Provider Assessment Coordinator	Provider Assessment Viewer	Provider Security Official
Modify/delete patient records	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes
View patient records	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create, edit, and delete assessments	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
Modify and inactivate assessments	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes
View assessments	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Submit assessments (from user tool)	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes

Timing: CMS strongly encourages HHAs to request iQIES access now, **even though assessment submission and reporting functionality will not be available until January 1, 2020.** Failure to obtain access to iQIES by December 23, 2019, will impact your ability to submit assessment data needed for claims matching purposes. Additional communications notifying HHAs when iQIES will be available for assessment submission and reporting will be sent soon.

Additional Information

HHAs can find an introduction to iQIES, how to onboard, and what steps are required to initiate a HARP account (among other information) in the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES) Onboarding Guide, which is available at https://qtso.cms.gov/system/files/qtso/iQIESOnboardingGuide-WebVersion_0.pdf.

HHAs may find it helpful to first review the iQIES training video How to Create an Account that demonstrates this process available at https://go.cms.gov/iQIES_Training.

To watch a video detailing the HARP registration process, visit https://youtu.be/G1zj8JqxWg4.

To watch a video explaining HARP manual proofing, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYioFNNvtD0

To view a fact sheet on HARP Identity Proofing, visit https://qtso.cms.gov/news-and-updates/remote-identify-proofing-requirements-internet-quality-improvement-evaluation

To review frequently asked questions related to HARP, go to https://harp.cms.gov/login/help.

For assistance with HARP onboarding, users can call the QTSO Helpdesk at (800) 339-9313 or e-mail help@qtso.com. If you have any questions related to iQIES, please send them to iQIES_Broadcast@cms.hhs.gov .

Remember only certified HHAs will be onboarded to iQIES.

Document History

Date of Change	Description
November 18, 2019	Initial article released.