



Office of Research, Development, and Information

Date: December 1, 2008

To: All Part C Medicare Advantage Organizations

From: Timothy P. Love /s/
Director

SUBJECT: Medicare Health Outcomes Survey 2005-2007 Cohort 8 Performance
Measurement Electronic Data

On behalf of the entire Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) Team, I am pleased to provide notification that the Medicare HOS 2005-2007 Cohort 8 Performance Measurement beneficiary level data are available for those organizations which continue to participate in the Medicare Advantage program. The HOS measure is a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS[®])¹ outcomes measure for Medicare managed care.

The HOS 2005-2007 Cohort 8 Performance Measurement Electronic Data File and accompanying documentation are the seventh release of beneficiary level HOS data to individual Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs). The HOS data are intended to support MAO quality improvement activities and initiatives. Since CMS also uses the data for MAO program oversight, the HHS Office of General Counsel has advised that neither HIPAA nor the Privacy Act preclude the release of HOS data to participating MAOs.

Due to the extremely sensitive nature of these data, CMS previously consulted with industry representatives to identify an efficient process for disseminating these data while ensuring their security and confidentiality. As a result, each participating MAO may obtain their data from the Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG) by contacting the HOS Information and Technical Support telephone line at (888) 880-0077 or via e-mail at hos@azqio.sdps.org. Please be prepared to confirm your organization's designated recipient of these data, in addition to your plan's address, return telephone number, and CMS contract number(s). The data are available for distribution to MAOs at no cost, and will be provided on CD-ROM formatted as a fixed width (column delimited) ASCII file.

If you have any questions or require additional assistance, please contact HSAG at the telephone number or e-mail address listed above. Should you have a policy or program concern related to the HOS, please contact Chris Haffer, PhD, CMS HOS Program Director, at (410) 786-8764 or email at chris.haffer@cms.hhs.gov. For a general overview of the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey program, visit CMS' HOS web address (www.cms.hhs.gov/hos). A full description of the HOS program that includes links to research data files, data user's guides, uses of the HOS data, and additional information may be found at www.HOSonline.org.

¹ HEDIS[®] is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance