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DATE: October 6, 2016

TO: Medicare Compliance Officers, Medicare Advantage Organizations and Part D Prescription Drug Plans

FROM: Kathryn A. Coleman  
Director, Medicare Drug & Health Plan Contract Administration Group

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Director, Medicare Drug Benefit and C & D Data

SUBJECT: Availability of 2017 Medicare Star Ratings Marketing Template

The purpose of this memo is to update Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAOs) and Part D Prescription Drug Plans (Part D sponsors) regarding the 2017 Medicare Star Ratings Marketing template. The 2017 Medicare Star Ratings Template (Attachment A) will be available in HPMS along with the release of the 2017 Star Ratings on the Medicare Plan Finder (MPF) on October 12, 2016. MAOs and Part D sponsors may not release information on their 2017 Star Ratings until the ratings have been released publicly and are live on the MPF.

In accordance with the Medicare Marketing Guidelines (MMG), MAOs and Part D sponsors are required to use their updated 2017 Star Ratings in all marketing materials within 21 days of the release of this information. MAOs and Part D sponsors must provide each contract's overall Star Rating in the Star Ratings Marketing template. This template and the Summary of Benefits must be included with all enrollment forms and must be available on all MAO and Part D sponsors' websites. MAOs and Part D sponsors also must include all applicable disclaimers from section 50 of the MMG. MAOs and Part D sponsors may add their logo. No other alterations are allowed to the Star Ratings marketing template. These requirements are designed to prevent MAOs and Part D sponsors from using Star Ratings in marketing materials in a misleading manner.

Failure to follow CMS' guidance may result in compliance action. Additional guidance on the use of Star Ratings in marketing materials may be found in the MMG at:

<http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Health-Plans/ManagedCareMarketing/FinalPartCMarketingGuidelines.html> and  
<http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovContra/PartDManuals.html>

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug programs. Please direct questions about the use of Star Ratings in marketing materials to your Account Manager.

## Attachment A

**[ORGANIZATION'S MARKETING NAME, CONTRACT ID]**

### 2017 Medicare Star Ratings\*

The Medicare Program rates all health and prescription drug plans each year, based on a plan's quality and performance. Medicare Star Ratings help you know how good a job our plan is doing. You can use these Star Ratings to compare our plan's performance to other plans. The two main types of Star Ratings are:

- 1) An Overall Star Rating that combines all of our plan's scores.
- 2) A Summary Star Rating that focuses on our medical or our prescription drug services.

Some of the areas Medicare reviews for these ratings include:

- How our members rate our plan's services and care;
- How well our doctors detect illnesses and keep members healthy;
- How well our plan helps our members use recommended and safe prescription medications.

For 2017, **[ORGANIZATION'S MARKETING NAME]** received the following Overall Star Rating from Medicare.

**[MARKETING STAR]**

We received the following Summary Star Rating for **[ORGANIZATION'S MARKETING NAME]**'s health/drug plan services:

Health Plan Services: **[PART C SUMMARY RATING]**

Drug Plan Services: **[PART D SUMMARY RATING]**

The number of stars shows how well our plan performs.

★★★★★	5 stars - excellent
★★★★	4 stars - above average
★★★	3 stars - average
★★	2 stars - below average
★	1 star - poor

Learn more about our plan and how we are different from other plans at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

You may also contact us **[PLAN TO INSERT HOURS OF OPERATION]** at **[PROSPECTIVE MEMBER NUMBER]** (toll-free) or **[PROSPECTIVE MEMBER TTY OR RELAY NUMBER]** (TTY).

Current members please call **[CURRENT MEMBER NUMBER]** (toll-free) or **[CURRENT MEMBER TTY OR RELAY NUMBER]** (TTY).