



CENTER FOR MEDICARE

DATE: October 5, 2018

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

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

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Medicare Drug Benefit and C&D Data Group

SUBJECT: Availability of 2019 Medicare Star Ratings Marketing Template

The purpose of this memo is to update Medicare Advantage Organizations, Cost plans, and Part D Prescription Drug Plans (collectively referred to as Plans) regarding the 2019 Medicare Star Ratings Marketing template. The 2019 Medicare Star Ratings Template (Attachment A) will be available in HPMS along with the release of the 2019 Star Ratings on the Medicare Plan Finder (MPF) on October 10, 2018. Plans (or their employees) may not release information on their 2019 Star Ratings through any means until the ratings have been released publicly and are live on the MPF.

In accordance with the Medicare Communications and Marketing Guidelines (MCMG), plans are required to use their updated 2019 Star Ratings in all marketing materials that reference the 2019 benefit year within 21 days of the public release of this information. Plans must clearly identify which contract year their Star Ratings reference. This means that prior year Star Ratings must not be referenced (e.g., 2018 Star Ratings or earlier) when the marketing materials are for the upcoming benefit year (e.g., 2019). This would be misleading to the beneficiary, as the plan may achieve a different Star Rating from one contract year to the next. For further information on referencing Star Ratings in marketing materials, please reference section 40.6 and 40.6.1 in the MCMG.

Plans 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 plans' websites. Plans may add their logo. No other alterations are allowed to the Star Ratings marketing template (except to meet the translation requirements in Section 90.3 of the MCMG). These requirements are designed to prevent plans 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 MCMG at: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Health-Plans/ManagedCareMarketing/FinalPartCMarketingGuidelines.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]

2019 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 2019, **[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.

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).