

2016 Community Questionnaire Section Specifications – Note to Users

Overview

The Note to Users supports the 2016 Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) Community Questionnaire Section Specifications by summarizing design changes made to the Community questionnaire in 2016. The accompanying files contain separate PDFs for each Community questionnaire section administered in 2016 over the course of three rounds of data collection:

- Winter 2016 Round 74 (January – April 2016),
- Summer 2016 Round 75 (May – August 2016), and
- Fall 2016 Round 76 (September – December 2016)).

Questionnaire changes implemented in Rounds 74-76 included updates to question text, response options, skip logic, and text fills. The Note to Users summarizes changes made to the Community questionnaire.

Summary of Global Questionnaire Updates

Global questionnaire updates included aligning the MCBS Community questionnaire specifications with terminology used by other federally-funded surveys when referring to doctors. In any question asking about a specific health care visit, diagnosis, prescription, or other medical encounter, the word “doctor” was replaced with the term “doctor or other health professional”.

Summary of Item- and Section-Level Questionnaire Updates

In Fall 2016 Round 76, questions were revised to align the MCBS Community questionnaire specifications with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Data Council Recommended Guidance for Survey Questions and Preferred Practices in HHS Surveys for Selected Estimates. This effort resulted in the replacement of existing mental health questions with more standardized scales in the Health Status and Functioning (HFQ) questionnaire section and a new section on the use of nicotine products and alcohol. Questions about preventive care were moved from the Health Status and Functioning (HFQ) section to a new Preventive Care section (PVQ) to create a more modular design. Additional changes were made in Fall 2016 Round 76 to the Usual Sources of Care (USQ) questionnaire section, to revert the section to the version fielded in the Fall 2014 Round 70.

Nicotine and Alcohol Use (NAQ)

In Fall 2016 Round 76, existing items about tobacco and alcohol use were replaced with more standardized items, based on DHHS recommendations. Previously, tobacco and alcohol use questions had been asked as part of the Health Status and Functioning (HFQ) section. The updated nicotine and alcohol use items were placed in a new section, Nicotine and Alcohol Use (NAQ), to create a more modular approach.

Preventive Care (PVQ)

Existing items about the seasonal flu vaccine were moved from the Health Status and Functioning (HFQ) section and added to a new section – Preventive Care (PVQ)—beginning in the Winter 2016 Round 74. In Summer 2016 Round 75, two items were added to the Prevention (PVQ) section. One item, regarding

the shingles vaccine, (PV6-SHINGVAC) is a new item for MCBS, while the other item, about pneumonia vaccine, has previously been part of the Health Status and Functioning (HFQ) section. In Fall 2016 Round 76, screening questions about blood pressure, cholesterol, mammogram, Pap smear, digital rectum exam, prostate cancer that were previously asked in the Health Status and Functioning (HFQ) section were migrated to the Preventive Care (PVQ) to create a more modular design.