

Hospice Outreach Email – September 2020

Method of Communication

This message will be sent via email to hospices with email addresses in STAR and to providers whose email addresses Swingtech has obtained through the Help Desk.

Anticipated Distribution Date

September 17, 2020

Email Subject

Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP) – Important Reminders and Updates

Welcome and Good Day,

COVID-19 PHE Updates:

Most of all, know that we at CMS greatly value all that you do every day to care for hospice patients, their families, caregivers and loved ones and send our warmest regards especially now during this COVID-19 PHE.

CMS actions in response to COVID-19, are part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, visit www.coronavirus.gov. For a complete and updated list of CMS actions, and other information specific to CMS, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).

Hospice Quality Reporting Reminder

- ❖ **CMS will post the annual list of hospices compliant with the FY 2021 Hospice Quality Reporting Program.** These hospices met the Calendar Year (CY) 2019 hospice quality data reporting requirements that impact FY 2021 payment. Successful hospices receive their full annual payment update (APU). Once announced on the Spotlight page, then view the list on the [HQRP Requirements and Best Practices webpage](#).
- ❖ **Current HQRP: The Calendar Year (CY) 2020 HQRP data impacts FY 2022 hospice payments.** The reporting of hospice quality data began January 1, 2020 and runs through December 31, 2020 for hospices to meet the quality reporting requirements* that apply to BOTH Hospice Item Set (HIS) and the CAHPS® Hospice Survey requirements. Data from CY 2020 impacts your Annual Payment Update (APU) in FY 2022. To ensure your hospice achieves its full APU, please be sure to meet the quality reporting requirements:
 - **For HIS:** The threshold for HIS is 90%. This means that 90% of all HIS assessments must be submitted and accepted within 30 days of the admission or discharge date.
 - **For CAHPS:** All Medicare-certified hospices that are required to conduct the CAHPS® Hospice Survey Hospices must contract with an approved CAHPS® Hospice Survey vendor and conduct the survey for 12 months in each calendar year. For more information about the requirements for the CAHPS® Hospice Survey, please visit the survey website: www.hospicecahpsurvey.org.

* **Note:** Due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE), Medicare-certified Hospices are exempt from the reporting of data on measures, HIS data and CAHPS surveys, required under Hospice QRP for the following quarters:

- January 1, 2020–March 31, 2020 (Q1 2020)
- April 1, 2020–June 30, 2020 (Q2 2020)

For HIS, the quarters are based on submission of HIS admission or discharge assessments. For CAHPS, the quarters are based on patient deaths in 2020. This means that CY 2020 hospice quality reporting program data that impacts FY 2022 payment are data timely submitted from July 1-December 31, 2020.

The HQRP COVID-19 PHE Tip Sheet is now available here, [HQRP COVID-19 PHE Tipsheet July 2020 508-compliant \(PDF\)](#). This tip sheet provides practical guidance to address hospice quality data submissions starting on July 1, 2020 now that the temporary HQRP exemptions from the COVID-19 PHE ended. Hospices are expected to resume timely quality data collection and submission of CAHPS® Hospice Survey and HIS records. The CAHPS® Hospice Survey starts July 1 with July deaths. HIS also starts July 1 with all new HIS admission records and any HIS discharge records that occur on or after July 1, 2020. The CY 2020 data used for meeting the Hospice Quality Reporting Program requirements include July 1-December 31, 2020 since we exempted Q1 and Q2 of 2020 (January 1-June 30, 2020).

For more information about COVID-19 PHE, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).

❖ **Be Ready: The Calendar Year (CY) 2021 HQRP data impacts FY 2023 hospice payments.**

The reporting of hospice quality data for FY 2021 begins January 1, 2021 and runs through December 31, 2021 for hospices to meet the quality reporting requirements that apply to BOTH Hospice Item Set (HIS) and the CAHPS® Hospice Survey requirements. To ensure your hospice achieves its full APU, please be sure to meet the quality reporting requirements that are the same as those shown above for CY 2020 HQRP for both HIS and CAHPS.

For more information on the HQRP and achieving compliance, refer to the [Getting Started with the Hospice Quality Reporting Program tip sheet](#) and other useful documents under the [Best Practices webpage](#).

Hospice Compare Updates

The Hospice Provider Preview Reports for the November 2020 Hospice Compare Refresh are available in September. Providers will have 30 days to review their HIS and CAHPS results. For more information on Provider Preview Reports, please visit:

- [HIS Preview Reports and Requests for CMS Review of HIS Data](#)
- [CAHPS Preview Reports and Requests for CMS Review of CAHPS Data](#)

Due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, CMS made the decision not to publicly report Q1 and Q2 2020 quality data. The HQRP COVID-19 Public Reporting (PR) Tip Sheet is now available here, [HQRP PR Tip Sheet 08.13.20 FINAL cx 508 \(PDF\)](#). The purpose of this Tip Sheet is to help providers understand CMS' public reporting strategy for the PAC QRP in the midst of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). This Tip Sheet explains the CMS strategy to account for CMS quality data which were exempted from public reporting due to COVID-19, and the impact on CMS' Hospice Compare website refreshes.

For more information on these measures relating to public reporting, please visit the [Public Reporting: Background and Announcements webpage](#) and click on the Fact Sheet or Q&A document in the Downloads box. To track key dates related to public reporting, please visit the [Key Dates for Providers webpage](#).

HOPE Tool Update

CMS is developing a new patient assessment tool to be proposed in future rulemaking. As finalized in the [Fiscal Year 2020 Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update and Hospice Quality Reporting Requirements Final Rule](#), the hospice patient assessment instrument is identified as the Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation (HOPE).

The presentation slides, audio, and transcript for the August 2020 Hospice Quality Forum on the HOPE Update Webinar are available in the Downloads box of the [HOPE webpage](#).

There are four phases of HOPE testing: cognitive, pilot, alpha and beta testing. The HOPE pilot testing phase is complete. In the pilot test, four hospices evaluated the draft assessment and field test procedures. After the public call for hospices to participate in Alpha Testing, CMS started contacting providers to participate in the next phase of testing, the HOPE alpha test. Abt Associates, the CMS contractor for HOPE development and testing, will train participating hospices to complete the HOPE, and the hospice team will field test the HOPE with their patients beginning this October 2020.

NOW Available: Web-Based Course on Hospice QRP Education and Training Resources by Topic with Hotlinks for Easy Access

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) provides a web-based training course for hospices wanting a resource to the many trainings offered related to the Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP). The goal is to assist hospice staff to better determine and access those trainings and documents that meet their learning needs. This course is designed to provide a general overview of the HQRP and direct learners to a variety of hotlinks and resources from the HQRP website and especially the Education and Training Library webpage to access specific information by topic. Please navigate to the [HQRP Training and Education Library](#) webpage to access the Web-Based Course on Hospice QRP Education and Training Resources by Topic with Hotlinks for Easy Access.

Swingtech is contracted by CMS to provide outreach and share important reminders with providers for the IRF, LTCH, SNF, and Hospice Quality Reporting Programs.

Thank you,
The Swingtech Help Desk Team
Work performed under CMS Contract # 75FCMC19C0039

[Sign up for CMS Post-Acute Care Quality Reporting Updates](#)