

## Hospice Outreach Email – December 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

December 22, 2020

### Email Subject

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

### Welcome and Happy Holidays!

#### **COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (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 PHE 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 PHE, visit [www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov). For a complete and updated list of CMS actions, and other information specific to CMS, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).

Hospices are encouraged to review the [HQRP COVID-19 PHE Tip Sheet](#). This tip sheet provides practical guidance to address hospice quality data submissions for July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 and beyond since the temporary HQRP exemptions from the COVID-19 PHE ended June 30, 2020.

Hospices also should review the [HQRP COVID-19 Public Reporting \(PR\) Tip Sheet](#). 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 PHE. This Tip Sheet explains the CMS strategy to account for CMS quality data that were exempted from public reporting due to COVID-19 PHE, and the impact on CMS' Hospice Compare website refreshes.

#### **Hospice Quality Reporting Reminder**

**CMS has posted 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). You may view the list on the [HQRP Requirements and Best Practices webpage](#).

**Plan Ahead! The Calendar Year (CY) 2021 HQRP data impacts FY 2023 hospice payments.** The reporting of hospice quality data 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. Data from CY 2020 impacts your Annual Payment Update (APU) in FY 2022 and data from CY 2021 impacts your Annual Payment Update (APU) in FY 2023. 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 HIS, the quarters are based on submission of HIS admission or discharge assessments.
- **For CAHPS:** All Medicare-certified hospices that are required to conduct the CAHPS® Hospice Survey 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](http://www.hospicecahpsurvey.org). For CAHPS, the data collection quarters are based on patient deaths January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, inclusive.
- 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](#) or [Training and Education Library webpage](#).

### **Hospice Compare Updates**

**IMPORTANT!!!** Hospice Compare was discontinued December 1, 2020, but you can still find the same information about Hospices and other health care providers on [Care Compare on Medicare.gov](#). Care Compare is the recently launched, streamlined redesign of eight existing CMS health care compare tools on [Medicare.gov](#), including Hospice Compare. The [Provider Data Catalog](#) on CMS.gov also makes it easier for you to search & download our publicly reported data. **Start using these tools today and bookmark these webpages!**

- The November 2020 quarterly refresh for the Hospice Quality Reporting Program is now available on [Care Compare](#).
- [The Public Reporting: Background and Announcement webpage](#) has also been updated for Care Compare.

Please note that public reporting of hospices' data will freeze after November 2020 refresh, due to the temporary exemption to the HQRP data submission requirements in responding to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). This means that following the November 2020 refresh, the data publicly reported will be held constant through the November 2021 refresh. Further, no Provider Preview Reports will be issued for those refreshes that continue to display the constant or frozen data. For additional information on COVID-19 PHE data exemption, please refer to the [HQRP COVID-19 Public Reporting \(PR\) Tip Sheet](#).

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).

There are four phases of HOPE testing: cognitive, pilot, alpha and beta testing. HOPE is currently in alpha testing. Please visit the [HOPE webpage](#) for updates.

**HIS Measure Updates**

CMS has released the Hospice Visits When Death is Imminent (HVWDII) Measure Validity Testing Summary and Re-Specifications Report. This report includes the findings of the testing on HVWDII Measure 2, which led to further re-specification and measure testing towards the development of the claims-based Hospice Visits in the Last Days of Life (HVLDDL) measure. The report is available in the Downloads box of the [Current Measures webpage](#).

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*

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