

DATE: November 1, 2024

TO: All Medicare Advantage Organizations

FROM: Martin Mendoza, PhD
Director, Office of Minority Health

Meagan Khau, MHA
Director, Data and Policy Analytics Group, Office of Minority Health

SUBJECT: Release of Medicare Advantage Health Equity Summary Score (HESS)
Dashboard and Registration for an Upcoming Webinar on the HESS Dashboard

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is launching a new **Health Equity Summary Score (HESS) Dashboard** where Medicare Advantage (MA) organizations can access and view their organization's performance on the HESS for Patient Experience and HESS for Clinical Care. **The HESS Dashboard is scheduled to be released on November 1, 2024.** We welcome your participation and engagement with the new HESS Dashboard.

CMS will hold a training webinar for MA organizations shortly following the launch of the HESS Dashboard to orient end users of the HESS Dashboard to its layout and functions. **The webinar for MA organizations will be held on November 14, 2024, from 4-5pmET.**

To register for the HESS Dashboard training webinar, click here:

<https://ncqa-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcsc-2srTgvGtJhLlkU9wdyefgNejOEErwr>

The HESS was designed to give MA organizations **confidential** information about how their contracts are performing for members who are disproportionately burdened by social risks to health. In particular, the HESS assesses the quality of care that MA contracts provide to racial or ethnic minority enrollees and to enrollees who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid or LIS recipients. It is intended to provide information to MA contracts that may be useful to their health equity and quality improvement efforts.

Several changes have been made to the HESS and the way that HESS performance data is displayed on the HESS Dashboard since the pilot phase to increase its usefulness to MA organizations. First, the HESS has been simplified so that a contract's performance is based solely on current performance relative to the overall national average performance on each outcome measure and no longer incorporates improvement in performance over time. Second, the HESS has been updated with the latest available performance data, using HEDIS and CAHPS data from Reporting Years 2022 and 2023. Third, the criteria for determining reportability on the HESS have been modified to increase the proportion of MA contracts that receive a score on the HESS while still ensuring the accuracy of scores. Last, the set of HEDIS

measures included in the HESS for Clinical Care has been expanded to cover more areas of clinical care. More information about these changes can be found in the FAQ and methodology documentation available on the HESS Dashboard.

CMS's Office of Minority Health has developed a Dashboard in the Health Plan Management System (HPMS) that will allow MA organizations to view *confidential* HESS performance data on demand for their contracts. Using the HESS Dashboard, MA organizations can examine their contracts' overall performance on the HESS for Patient Experience and HESS for Clinical Care, as well as performance on the specific CAHPS and HEDIS measures that make up the HESS for Patient Experience and HESS for Clinical Care, respectively, compare their contracts' performance to the performance of other similar contracts, and (eventually) examine performance trends over time. The HESS Dashboard also provides links to publicly available resources that may be useful to MA organizations' health equity and quality improvement efforts.

- To access the HESS Dashboard in HPMS, users will logon to HPMS and navigate to HPMS → Quality and Performance → Performance Metrics → Reports → HESS Dashboard.
- The methodology used in computing the HESS for Patient Experience summary scores and HESS for Clinical Care summary scores can be found at HPMS → Quality and Performance → Performance Metrics → Reports → HESS Dashboard → Download File(s) → HESS Methodology.
- Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the HESS Dashboard can be found at HPMS → Quality and Performance → Performance Metrics → Reports → HESS Dashboard → Download File(s) → FAQ Document.

For questions regarding this memo, please contact Granger Petersen at granger.petersen@cms.hhs.gov or Jess Maksut at jessica.maksut@cms.hhs.gov. For technical assistance, contact the HPMS Help Desk at 1 (800) 220-2028 or at HPMS@cms.hhs.gov. For health equity-focused technical assistance, please contact the CMS OMH Health Equity Technical Assistance Program at HealthEquityTA@cms.hhs.gov.