

Hospice Outreach Email – June 2023

Email Subject

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

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Welcome

Annual Payment Update Reminder

We are reaching out to remind you of the upcoming reconsideration period for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 HQRP. If your hospice is non-compliant with the HQRP, you will be notified in two ways. You will receive a notification from your Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) and a notification in your facility's Certification and Survey Provider Enhanced Reports (CASPER) folder. Either notification is an official notice. We anticipate that letters notifying hospices of non-compliance will be distributed in early- to mid-July 2024. The letter will include instructions for submitting a reconsideration. If you receive a letter of non-compliance, you will have 30 days to file a reconsideration request. The start and end of the reconsideration period will be shared on the HQRP Spotlight & Announcements web page. For more information on your right to request a reconsideration and the CMS reconsideration process, please visit the Hospice [Reconsideration Requests webpage](#).

Note: If you submit a reconsideration, please be advised CMS will not review any reconsideration requests that contain protected health information (PHI).

Hospices that are compliant with APU will not receive any notification. Please note that this outreach message is not an official notification of APU compliance. We encourage all Hospices to check for a notification from your MAC and within your CASPER folder regularly in July.

FY 2024 Hospice Quality Reporting Reminder

For hospices to meet the HQRP requirements, both Hospice Item Set (HIS) and the CAHPS® Hospice Survey requirements must be submitted timely each year. The Calendar Year (CY) 2022 data collection began on January 1, 2022, and impacts your Annual Payment Update (APU) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024. Beginning with FY 2024, the payment penalty increased from 2% to 4% for hospices not meeting the HQRP Requirements.

- **Hospice Item Set (HIS):** The threshold for HIS is 90%. This means that 90% of all HIS assessments must be submitted to and accepted by CMS within 30 days of the admission or discharge date. For HIS assessments, the quarters are based on the submission of HIS admission or discharge assessments.
- **Consumer Assessments of Healthcare Providers and Systems (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. For CAHPS, the data collection quarters are based on patient deaths, January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, inclusive.
- **Claims:** Administrative data are collected from claims, and hospices are considered automatically 100% compliant with the submission of this data.
- 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 web page](#), or [Training and Education Library web page](#).

Provider-initiated requests for exemption or extension for extraordinary circumstances:

If a hospice experiences an extraordinary circumstance, it can initiate a request for extension or exemption. *Requests must be initiated within 90 days of the extraordinary circumstances event* and must be sent to CMS via email following the instructions provided on the Extension and Exemption Requests web page.

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) Updates

Based on current COVID-19 trends, the Department of Health and Human Services is planning for the federal Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 (PHE), declared under Section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, expired at the end of the day on May 11, 2023. More information can be found within the CMS transition forward [fact sheet](#).

HQRP Informational Updates

- The HQRP Quarterly Q&A for Q1 2023 is now available. This Q&A includes selected questions received by the Hospice Quality Help Desk during the first quarter of 2023

(January 1 to March 31). A link to the document can be found in the Downloads section of the [HQRP Requirements and Best Practices](#) page.

- On March 31, 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule (CMS-1787-P) that provides updates to the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP). This rule includes updates on HOPE and future quality measures, CMS efforts to close the health equity gap as it relates to last year's request for information (RFI) and provides updates to the Hospice CAHPS Survey mode experiment. Finally, this rule proposes to codify hospice data submission thresholds and discusses updates to hospice survey and enforcement procedures special focus program (SFP).

The proposed rule went on display at the Federal Register and will be available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/current>.

- For further information, see the hospice web page here: <http://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider- Type/Hospice-Center.html>.

HQRP and Health Equity

A new Hospice QRP Health Equity tab is now available on the HQRP website. This webpage contains information relevant to CMS's ongoing health equity efforts, as described in President Biden's [Executive Order 13985](#).

CMS will release the Home Health & Hospice Health Equity Technical Expert Panel (TEP) Report. This report provides a summary of the TEP's input on options for health equity measurement in the home health and hospice care settings. Specific topics include health equity in hospice and home health, social determinants of health, disparities in access to care and quality of care, and health equity measurement and monitoring.

- The Home Health & Hospice Health Equity TEP Report will be available in the "Related Links" section of the [Hospice QRP Health Equity](#) webpage.

Home Health, Hospice and DME Open Door Forums (ODF's)

The next Open Door Forums will be posted on the [Home Health, Hospice and DME Open Door Forum website](#).

Care Compare Updates

In May 2023, the Hospice Compare website was updated with the quarterly refresh of the data. The next quarterly refresh is scheduled for August 2023.

CAHPS Hospice Survey

The CAHPS Hospice Survey continues to collect data. Data submission deadlines for the CAHPS Data Warehouse are on the second Wednesday of the month in February, May, August, and November. Vendors must receive patient/caregiver lists on time to meet the requirements for the HQRP.

HOPE Update

HOPE Beta Test assessment data collection is now complete, and we are in the analysis phase. We anticipate that the analysis phase will conclude in late Spring 2023. CMS plans to convene a HQRP forum later this year that will cover analysis, future plans, and other HOPE-related topics. CMS thanks all participating hospices for their outstanding efforts and their contributions to the development of the HOPE tool!

NEW: Training and Education and Provider, and Stakeholder Engagement

UPDATED RESOURCE AVAILABLE: Introduction to the Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP) Web-Based Training

The Introduction to the HQRP Web-Based Training is a two-part training series for Hospice providers.

Course 1: Getting Started with the HQRP and Public Reporting Provides a general overview of the HQRP and reviews the program's use of three data sources: The Hospice Item Set (HIS), the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) Hospice Survey, and the Medicare claims.

Course 2: HQRP Data Submissions and Reports Provides an introduction to the HQRP data submission requirements and reports available to providers.

If you have questions regarding resources and training, please email the [PAC Training Mailbox](#). Content-related questions should be submitted to HospiceQualityQuestions@cms.hhs.gov.

CMS continues to provide online education and training that is available 24/7, 365 days a year for convenient access on a variety of topics. Please check out the [HQRP Training and Education Library | CMS](#) and the [Provider and Stakeholder Engagement | CMS](#) web pages.

Please refer to the [Hospice QRP Announcements & Spotlight | CMS](#) for additional updates.

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

Thank you,
The Swingtech Help Desk Team

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