

# 2017 HCAHPS Update

## Program Updates

### No Public Reporting if less than 25 Completed Surveys

Since December 2016, Hospital Compare no longer displays HCAHPS scores for hospitals with fewer than 25 completed HCAHPS surveys

- In their stead, “N/A” and Footnote 1 will appear
- Due to low reliability when there are less than 25 surveys

However, these hospitals will continue to see their HCAHPS scores on their Hospital Compare Preview Reports.

This refers to less than 25 completes for a rolling four quarters of data.

### Pain Management Dimension Removed from Hospital VBP

CMS will remove the pain management dimension from Hospital VBP in fiscal year 2018. However, the pain management measure will continue to be reported on Hospital Compare. CMS is developing new questions about pain management that will be implemented in future versions of the HCAHPS survey.



*Remember... it is the responsibility of the hospital to monitor the HCAHPS web site ([www.hcahponline.org](http://www.hcahponline.org)) as well as the QualityNet web site ([www.qualitynet.org](http://www.qualitynet.org)) for program updates, information and announcements regarding HCAHPS.*

## Program Reminders

### Use of Other Surveys in Addition to HCAHPS

To the extent possible, CMS accommodates hospital studies and quality improvement projects provided these do not disrupt, bias or undermine the HCAHPS survey.

These are a few of the CMS guidelines:

- Other surveys must not use HCAHPS-like questions, or HCAHPS-like answer scales.
- HCAHPS must be the **first** survey patients receive about their hospital experience.
- Patients must not be given any survey during their hospital stay or at discharge.

If your hospital would like to conduct an inpatient study, you must fill out an Exceptions Request at least eight weeks before implementation of the study. CSSI can help with that request - just let us know!

### Monitor the HCAHPS Website Weekly

CMS encourages hospitals to monitor the HCAHPS website at least weekly to be informed about changes about the survey or the process. That website is [www.hcahponline.org](http://www.hcahponline.org). At the homepage you will find a variety of useful links - one of the most important being the Quality Assurance blue tab on the left hand side. Version 12.0 of the HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines have been posted, and this manual will explain everything you need to know about the survey and protocols. We encourage you to give it a read!

## Deadline Dates (Yay!)

Most of you have been doing this long enough that the 5th of the month must be on your calendars by now. Thank you! And know that we really appreciate your efforts to continually provide us with your patient discharge list in a timely manner.

**Please note that we are only sending out one email reminder to upload your data. If you receive another reminder this means that we do NOT have your data. (So if you think you did your upload... there is a mistake!)**

The most common issue that we see is that you have not put your file in the CSSI - [Hospital Name] FOLDER. You cannot just place the file in your HCAHPS folder. In order for us to view the file it must be in the CSSI folder.

**We will assess a \$100 fee, on a monthly basis, to those hospitals that continue to miss the deadline.**

## Our response rates lead the nation...

During our HCAHPS Update training this year, we were informed about a study conducted in 2016 about HCAHPS response rates. The national average for response rates for the mail only mode for 2016 were 22%. **Our response rates for HCAHPS at Custom Survey Solutions were 36%!** We feel this is due to a variety of reasons: envelopes are hand stamped, our questionnaires are one single page and are very user friendly, as well as following strict CMS protocols. *Let's keep the trend going... please make sure to remind your admissions team to collect updated addresses from your patients, so we decrease those surveys returned for bad addresses!*

## Thanks for your referrals!

Our business has continued to grow since we started doing survey research in 1995! Thanks to you, as well as our other clients, our success has been driven by word-of-mouth, without marketing of any kind. For that, we thank each and every one of you.

## Yes! We do lots of other surveys too!

HCAHPS is only a small portion of our business; we conduct customer and employee engagement and satisfaction surveys for a wide variety of clients on a national basis. We have expanded our healthcare surveys to include hospital employee surveys as well as surveys for clinics, outpatients, and long-term care facilities. Give us a call if you would like a proposal for your next survey initiative!