

Alameda Alliance Wellness Measure Tip Sheet



Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) and Health Outcomes Survey (HOS)

This tip sheet is part of the *Alliance Medicare Stars Guide: A Resource for Providers and Clinic Staff*. This tip sheet provides guidance on the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) and Healthcare Outcomes Survey (HOS), key components of Medicare Star Ratings that measure patient satisfaction, experience, and health outcomes.

For questions or more information, please email the Alliance Stars Team at DeptStarsTeam@alamedaalliance.org.

Overview

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) require the administration of the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) and Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) to:

- Assess patient satisfaction and experience with healthcare providers and plans.
- Help individuals make informed decisions when choosing providers or health plans.
- Measure how well plans and their contracted entities help members maintain or improve their physical and mental health.
- Provide data for organizations to improve the quality of care.

Please encourage patients to complete these surveys. Results of these surveys drive meaningful changes to improve how individuals engage with providers, receive services, and navigate the health care system, with the goal of enhancing continuity of care for better health outcomes.

For more information, please email the Alliance Medicare Stars team at DeptStarsTeam@alamedaalliance.org. Or you can visit cahps.ahrq.gov and hosonline.org.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question: Why is the Alliance sending out member experience surveys?

Answer: The Alliance is federally required to have CAHPS and HOS administered to a random sample of Alameda Alliance Wellness members. Survey responses account for a significant portion of our plan's Medicare Star Rating. Alliance Group Care and Medi-Cal members may also receive a member experience survey during the year. However, their responses do not contribute to the plan's Medicare Star rating.

Question: Why do health care providers need to know about CAHPS and HOS?

Answer: Care teams play a key role in patient experience. An individual's experience influences the provider-patient relationship, adherence to treatment plans, and retention within the health system.

Question: What if my practice administers our own patient experience survey?

Answer: This is great! However, we do ask that you delay from administering your surveys influenced by CAHPS when our official survey is administered, which is annually, from March through June.

Question: How can members complete the CAHPS and HOS survey?

Answer: Surveys may be completed over the phone or mailed. From March through June of each year, a random sample of Alameda Alliance Wellness members will receive the CAHPS survey. From July through November of each year, a random sample of Alameda Alliance Wellness members will receive the HOS. We highly encourage practices to inform their patients that they may receive these surveys and should complete them.

Question: Will the Alliance talk to members about CAHPS and HOS?

Answer: Members are informed that they may receive member experience surveys in the Welcome Kit and on our website. Between late February and June, we are prohibited from asking members questions that can influence their official survey responses.

How to Improve Your Stars Performance

- Hold appointment slots for sick visits and urgent needs. Inform patients of telehealth options, weekend appointments, alternative locations, and/or affiliated urgent care sites. The 24/7 Advice Nurse Line is **1.888.433.1876**.
- Confirm the patient's care team, including specialists, and review current medications during every encounter.
- Include functional, cognitive, and balance/gait assessments in standard screening questionnaires, especially during annual wellness visits.
- Explain lab orders and referrals, their purpose, and when follow-up may be needed.
- Proactively schedule follow-up appointments during check-out.

CAHPS Survey Questions

Annual Flu Vaccine

- Have you had a flu shot in the past year?

Getting Needed Care

- In the last six (6) months, how often was it easy to get the care you needed?

Getting Appointments and Care Quickly

- In the last six (6) months, how often did you get care as soon as you needed?
- In the last six (6) months, how often did you get an appointment for a routine visit when you needed it?

Rating of Health Care Quality

- From zero (0) to ten (10), with ten being best, in the last six (6) months, how would you rate the health care you have received?

Care Coordination

- In the last six (6) months, when you had a visit with your primary care provider, how often were they informed about your care and current treatments?
- In the last six (6) months, when you had a visit with your primary care provider, how often were they informed about your specialists?
- In the last six (6) months, when you had a visit with your primary care provider and they ordered a test for you, how often did someone from the office update you on your results?
- In the last six (6) months, did your primary care provider's office help manage the different healthcare providers you see or services you need?

HOS Survey Questions

Monitoring Physical Activity

- In the past 12 months, did your primary care provider or another health care provider recommend you exercise or take part in a physical activity?

Reduce the Risk of Falling

- In the past 12 months, did your primary care provider or another health care provider talk with you about falling or about your balance?
- Has your primary care provider or another health care provider recommended anything to help prevent falls or improve your balance? This may include:
 - o Cane or walker
 - o Exercise or physical therapy
 - o Vision or hearing test

Improving Bladder Control

- Have you ever talked with a health care provider about urinary incontinence?

Improving/Maintaining Physical Health

- During the past four (4) weeks, have you had any of these issues with your work or other regular activities because of your physical health?
 - o Did not accomplish as much as you would like.
 - o Were restricted in the type of work or other activities you were able to complete.
- During the past four (4) weeks, how much did pain interfere with your work inside and outside of your home?

Improving/Maintaining Mental Health

- During the past four (4) weeks, have you had any of these issues with your work or other regular activities because of any emotional problems?
 - o Did not accomplish as much as you would like.
 - o Did not do your work or other activities as carefully as usual.
- How much of the time during the past four (4) weeks:
 - o Did you feel calm and peaceful?
 - o Did you have a lot of energy?
 - o Did you feel downhearted or blue?