

Provider Update

The Medicare Health Outcomes Survey

Background: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) uses the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) to assess the ability of Medicare Advantage (MA) organizations to maintain or improve the physical and mental health of their members over time. Members' responses to the questions posed on this survey contribute to each health plan's star rating, an annual score CMS assigns to health plans based on various performance indicators.

★ **What this means to you:** Your interaction with members has a direct impact on the Effectiveness of Care measures assessed on the HOS. The following table displays the Effectiveness of Care questions posed to members on the HOS. We hope your awareness of these questions will influence and guide appropriate discussions with members during office visits.

Effectiveness of Care Questions

Improving bladder control

Have you talked with your current doctor or other health provider about your urine leakage problem?

Urinary incontinence care in the past six months

There are many ways to treat urinary incontinence, including bladder training, exercises, medication and surgery. Have you received these or any other treatments for your current urine leakage problem?

Monitoring physical activity

In the past 12 months, did you talk with your doctor or other health provider about your level of exercise or physical activity? For example, a doctor or other health provider may ask if you exercise regularly or take part in physical exercise.

Improving or Maintaining Mental Health

In the past 12 months, did you talk with your doctor or other health provider about your mental health and well-being? For example, your doctor or other health provider may ask if you have been feeling depressed or if you are having trouble sleeping. Are you taking any medications or seeing another provider to help you maintain your well-being?

Physical activity care in the past 12 months

In the past 12 months, did a doctor or other health provider advise you to start, increase or maintain your level of exercise or physical activity? For example, to improve your health, your doctor or other health provider may advise you to start taking the stairs, increase walking from 10 to 20 minutes every day or maintain your current exercise program.

Reducing the risk of falling

A fall is when your body goes to the ground without being pushed. In the past 12 months, did you talk with your doctor or other health provider about falling or problems with balance or walking?

Fall risk management care in the past 12 months

Has your doctor or other health provider done anything to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking? Some things they might do include advising you to use a cane or walker, checking

your blood pressure when lying and standing, suggesting an exercise or physical therapy program, or encouraging you take a vision or hearing testing.

Osteoporosis testing

Have you ever had a bone density test to check for osteoporosis, also known as brittle bones? The test may have been done to your back, hip, wrist, heel or finger.

The Star Rating System

CMS's Star Rating System helps consumers, families and caregivers compare MA prescription drug plans. The HOS is one of the assessment tools used to determine a plan's star rating by evaluating members' physical and mental health, activities of daily living, and socio-demographic information. The survey also addresses problems associated with poor physical and mental functioning in the elderly, such as urinary incontinence, lack of physical activity, fall risk and poor bone health. Members who participate in this baseline survey are asked to complete a follow-up survey two years later to assess changes in their physical and mental health.

What if I need assistance?

If you have questions about this communication, please call the Dedicated Service Unit (DSU) at 1-866-805-4589. Also, feel free to suggest members call Member Services at the DSU, using the same number if they have any questions. Thank you for the quality health care you give our members.

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