

Patient-mix Coefficients for December 2009 Publicly Reported HCAHPS Results

As noted in the HCAHPS *Quality Assurance Guidelines V4.0*, prior to public reporting, hospitals' HCAHPS results are adjusted for the effects of both mode of survey administration and patient-mix. Generally speaking, HCAHPS adjustments for survey mode are larger than adjustments for patient-mix. The survey mode adjustments that are used in publicly reported HCAHPS results are reported in the paper entitled, "[Mode and Patient-mix Adjustment of the CAHPS[®] Hospital Survey \(HCAHPS\) April 30, 2008,](#)" which can be found on www.hcahpsonline.org. In order to derive the mode adjustment coefficients, it was necessary to conduct a randomized mode experiment. The resulting mode adjustment coefficients will not change as a function of the data used in public reporting. For more information on how the HCAHPS mode experiment was conducted and the survey mode and patient-mix adjustments were derived, please see, "Effects of Survey Mode, Patient Mix, and Nonresponse on CAHPS Hospital Survey Scores." Elliott, M.N., A.M. Zaslavsky, E. Goldstein, W. Lehrman, K. Hambarsoomian, M.K. Beckett, and L. Giordano. *Health Services Research*. 2009. 44: 501-518.

The mode experiment data were also used to develop and validate the HCAHPS patient-mix model (which is referred to as "case-mix" elsewhere in the CAHPS literature), as described in the document referenced above. However, in the case of patient-mix adjustment, a randomized experiment is not necessary to accurately estimate the coefficients of the model.

In order to estimate the exact patient-mix coefficients as accurately as possible, we employ the large sample size of each quarterly national publicly reported data set. This approach allows us to detect changes in the association of patient-mix adjustors and HCAHPS measures over time and then adjust accordingly. This approach is consistent with recommended CAHPS practice for case-mix adjustment (www.cahps.ahrq.gov <<http://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/>>).

Patient-mix adjustment is performed within each quarter of data after data cleaning and before mode adjustment. *Coefficients* obtained in linear regression models (not reported) estimate the tendency of patients to respond more positively or negatively. The *adjustments* needed to counter that tendency are obtained by multiplying the patient-mix *coefficients* by (-1.0). Tables 1 and 2 below report patient-mix adjustments for the "top" (most positive response) and "bottom" (least positive response) boxes, respectively, of the ten publicly reported HCAHPS measures (six composites, two stand alone items, and two global ratings), averaged across the four reported quarters.

As an example, patients aged 55-64 were 5.23% more likely to provide the most positive response ("Always") for items in the *Communication with Nurses* composite when compared to the reference group of patients 85 and older. Thus, the corresponding adjustment for patients aged 55-64 relative to patients 85 and older for that composite is a subtraction of 5.23%, reflected in the "-5.23%" entry in Table 1. Similarly, for each level of decreasing self-rated health status (where 5=poor, 4=fair, 3=good, 2=very good, and 1=excellent), the percentage of patients providing an "Always" response for *Communication with Doctors*

decreased by 5.17%. Thus, a patient in fair health (4) would have a $(4-1)*5.17\%=15.51\%$ lower chance of an “Always” response than a patient in excellent health (1), and the corresponding adjustment for a patient in poor health relative to a patient in excellent health would be +20.68%.

Publicly reported HCAHPS scores are adjusted to the overall national mean of patient-mix variables across all hospitals reporting in a given quarter (as reported in Table 3). Thus, whether the scores of a given hospital are adjusted upward or downward for a given measure depends not only on these patient-mix adjustments, but also on the patient-mix of that hospital relative to the national average of these patient-mix characteristics. Specifically, the total patient mix-adjustment for a given hospital is the sum of a series of products, where each product multiplies the adjustment in Table 1 (top box) or Table 2 (bottom box) by the deviation of the hospital’s mean on the corresponding patient-mix variable from the national mean on that patient-mix variable (from Table 3).

Four sets of numbers are needed to calculate final patient-mix adjusted scores for a given hospital: (1) Means of HCAHPS outcomes (top box proportions or bottom box proportions) for the hospital in question that have been adjusted for survey mode; (2) individual-level patient-mix adjustments from Tables 1 and 2 of this document; (3) that hospital’s means on patient-mix variables; and (4) national means on patient-mix variables from Table 3 of this document.

The formula for applying patient mix adjustment is as follows:

If y is the mode-adjusted hospital mean of an HCAHPS outcome (top box or bottom box)

$a1$ - $a16$ are the individual-level adjustments from Table 1 or Table 2 for the 16 rows other than reference categories (in proportion rather than percentage form)

$m1$ - $m16$ are the national means for the PMA variables in the same rows in Table 3

$h1$ - $h16$ are the PMA means for the hospital in question in the same form as in Table 3,

then $y' = y + a1(h1-m1) + a2(h2-m2) + \dots + a16(h16-m16)$ is the patient-mix and mode-adjusted hospital score for that outcome.

Please note: The information presented here will permit a hospital to closely approximate the effect of patient-mix adjustment on its HCAHPS results. However, *exact replication* of published HCAHPS results may not be possible because of (1) the effects of data cleaning and (2) small differences between the effects of quarterly patient-mix adjustments and the 4-quarter averages presented here.

For each future public reporting period, Tables 1, 2 and 3 will be updated and will be posted on www.hcahponline.org.

HCAHPS Patient-mix Adjustments

Four Quarter Average for December 2009 Public Reporting

Table 1

Top Box Adjustments

Patient Mix Adjustment (PMA)	Comm. with Nurses	Comm. with Doctors	Responsiveness of Hosp. Staff	Pain Management	Comm. About Medicines	Cleanliness of Hosp. Env.	Quietness of Hosp. Env.	Discharge Information	Overall Hospital Rating	Recommend the Hospital
Education (per level) (1 = 8th grade or less and 6 = More than 4-year college degree)	2.21%	1.79%	2.62%	2.62%	3.24%	2.17%	3.87%	1.02%	3.35%	1.24%
Self-Rated Health (per level) (1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)	5.66%	5.17%	6.62%	7.02%	5.54%	4.32%	4.34%	1.49%	6.71%	5.86%
ER admission	1.46%	4.62%	2.27%	2.24%	2.70%	0.25%	1.92%	3.45%	1.95%	2.01%
Response Percentile (per 1% of response percentile)	0.21%	0.17%	0.23%	0.16%	0.16%	0.07%	0.03%	0.00%	0.19%	0.17%
Non English Primary Language	0.01%	-0.37%	-0.09%	-1.03%	-1.23%	0.25%	-6.05%	-2.75%	-8.11%	-6.63%
AGE										
Age 18-24	4.48%	4.59%	3.15%	5.84%	-8.74%	4.95%	-7.43%	-1.16%	18.66%	16.68%
Age 25-34	1.26%	1.48%	-4.04%	2.01%	-10.03%	5.36%	-7.57%	-2.39%	14.49%	11.54%
Age 35-44	-0.95%	-0.75%	-5.96%	-0.38%	-11.10%	4.85%	-4.77%	-2.88%	10.72%	8.98%
Age 45-54	-3.07%	-2.25%	-6.58%	-2.67%	-11.29%	3.61%	-1.88%	-3.32%	6.37%	5.71%
Age 55-64	-5.23%	-4.44%	-8.03%	-6.11%	-11.66%	2.83%	-1.79%	-4.07%	1.37%	1.91%
Age 65-74	-5.16%	-5.19%	-7.20%	-6.53%	-9.85%	3.15%	-0.96%	-3.36%	-1.07%	0.42%
Age 75-84	-2.89%	-2.50%	-3.91%	-3.43%	-4.87%	1.97%	0.49%	-1.34%	-1.49%	-0.03%
Age 85 + (REFERENCE)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
SERVICE LINE										
Maternity	-5.57%	-10.59%	-12.80%	-9.73%	-10.69%	3.96%	-11.07%	-8.02%	-10.57%	-11.99%
Surgical	2.21%	-7.98%	2.66%	-0.76%	-0.01%	0.36%	0.78%	-5.83%	-3.49%	-2.76%
Medical REFERENCE	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
INTERACTIONS										
Surgical Line * Age ¹	-0.12%	0.91%	-0.40%	-0.49%	0.12%	-0.09%	-0.07%	-0.04%	0.43%	0.34%
Maternity Line * Age ¹	0.93%	1.49%	1.95%	1.42%	1.90%	-0.25%	1.57%	1.44%	1.67%	2.04%

¹ Age takes on the values of 1 to 8, as follows: (1: 18 to 24); (2: 25 to 34); (3: 35 to 44); (4: 45 to 54); (5: 55 to 64); (6: 65 to 74); (7: 75 to 84); and (8: 85+).

HCAHPS Patient-mix Adjustments

Four Quarter Average for December 2009 Public Reporting

Table 2 Bottom Box Adjustments

Patient Mix Adjustment (PMA)	Comm. with Nurses	Comm. with Doctors	Responsiveness of Hosp. Staff	Pain Management	Comm. About Medicines	Cleanliness of Hosp. Env.	Quietness of Hosp. Env.	Discharge Information	Overall Hospital Rating	Recommend the Hospital
Education (per level) (1 = 8 th grade or less and 6 = More than 4-year college degree)	-0.11%	-0.32%	-0.30%	-0.40%	-2.07%	-0.23%	-1.44%	-1.02%	-0.79%	-0.64%
Self-Rated Health (per level) (1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)	-2.11%	-1.93%	-3.10%	-2.69%	-4.00%	-1.90%	-1.98%	-1.49%	-3.12%	-1.90%
ER admission	-0.75%	-1.98%	-1.25%	-1.08%	-2.23%	-0.24%	-1.33%	-3.45%	-1.23%	-0.84%
Response Percentile (per 1% of response percentile)	-0.05%	-0.05%	-0.08%	-0.04%	-0.10%	-0.01%	0.00%	0.00%	-0.06%	-0.03%
Non English Primary Language	0.00%	0.52%	-1.27%	0.81%	2.83%	0.02%	2.60%	2.75%	3.72%	2.73%
AGE										
Age 18-24	-5.06%	-5.68%	-8.63%	-8.83%	1.16%	-7.02%	-3.06%	1.16%	-9.40%	-7.95%
Age 25-34	-3.76%	-4.36%	-5.39%	-7.20%	2.30%	-6.77%	-2.52%	2.39%	-7.41%	-6.49%
Age 35-44	-2.87%	-3.25%	-4.20%	-5.86%	3.22%	-6.62%	-3.90%	2.88%	-5.97%	-5.39%
Age 45-54	-1.60%	-2.01%	-2.58%	-4.27%	3.55%	-5.76%	-4.79%	3.32%	-4.16%	-3.80%
Age 55-64	0.05%	-0.17%	-0.05%	-1.44%	4.96%	-4.34%	-2.87%	4.07%	-1.49%	-1.93%
Age 65-74	0.78%	0.86%	1.15%	0.02%	5.36%	-3.10%	-1.74%	3.36%	-0.04%	-0.62%
Age 75-84	0.73%	0.66%	1.15%	0.33%	3.41%	-1.40%	-1.09%	1.34%	0.54%	0.11%
Age 85 + (REFERENCE)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
SERVICE LINE										
Maternity Service Line	4.19%	6.12%	8.24%	7.03%	8.33%	-0.21%	6.86%	8.02%	8.02%	6.02%
Surgical Service Line	-0.22%	4.85%	-0.97%	2.34%	0.36%	-0.27%	-0.56%	5.83%	2.09%	1.78%
Medical Service Line (Reference)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
INTERACTIONS										
Surgical Line * Age ¹	-0.01%	-0.61%	0.25%	-0.12%	-0.02%	0.09%	0.10%	0.04%	-0.30%	-0.31%
Maternity Line * Age ¹	-0.70%	-0.90%	-1.28%	-1.09%	-1.54%	-0.15%	-1.02%	-1.44%	-1.33%	-1.01%

¹ Age takes on the values of 1 to 8, as follows: (1: 18 to 24); (2: 25 to 34); (3: 35 to 44); (4: 45 to 54); (5: 55 to 64); (6: 65 to 74); (7: 75 to 84); and (8: 85+).

Table 3

**Means of PMA Variables
December 2009**

Patient Mix Adjustment (PMA)	National Means
Education (mean level) (1 = 8 th grade or less and 6 = More than 4-year college degree)	3.622
Self-Rated Health (mean level) (1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)	2.825
ER admission (proportion)	0.426
Response Percentile (%)	16.7%
Non English Primary Language	0.053
AGE	
Age 18-24 (proportion)	0.046
Age 25-34 (proportion)	0.105
Age 35-44 (proportion)	0.078
Age 45-54 (proportion)	0.117
Age 55-64 (proportion)	0.169
Age 65-74 (proportion)	0.208
Age 75-84 (proportion)	0.195
Age 85 + (REFERENCE)	0.082
SERVICE LINE	
Maternity (proportion)	0.165
Surgical (proportion)	0.327
Medical (REFERENCE)	0.507
INTERACTIONS	
Surgical Line * Age ¹	1.732
Maternity Line * Age ¹	0.462

¹ Age takes on the values of 1 to 8, as follows: (1: 18 to 24); (2: 25 to 34); (3: 35 to 44); (4: 45 to 54); (5: 55 to 64); (6: 65 to 74); (7: 75 to 84); and (8: 85+).