

Hospital CAHPS Podcast Series – Transcript

Successfully Transitioning to the New *Communication About Pain* Items on the HCAHPS Survey

Slide 1-Successfully Transitioning to the New Communication About Pain Items on the HCAHPS Survey

Welcome to the Hospital CAHPS Podcast Series. Hospital CAHPS is better known by the acronym H-CAHPS, so you will hear this acronym throughout the podcast. This podcast and the HCAHPS Podcast series were created for survey vendors and hospitals administering the HCAHPS survey, as well as for anyone who may be interested in learning more about the HCAHPS survey.

In this episode of the HCAHPS Podcast series, we will be talking about the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) plan to replace the three original *Pain Management* survey items with three new items that focus on *Communication About Pain*.

Slide 2- Transitioning to New Pain Items

During this podcast, you will learn about the new *Communication About Pain* measure items that are required to appear on the HCAHPS survey starting with January 2018 discharges. We will discuss the updates that should have been made to survey materials and submitted to the HCAHPS Project Team for review. You will learn about the necessary steps that all approved HCAHPS survey vendors and self-administering hospitals will need to take in order to successfully collect and submit patient responses for the new pain communication items. We will provide guidance on ways to trouble-shoot any data submission errors that may occur due to replacing the original survey items with the new ones, and let you know who to contact if you do end up with data submission errors. We will also cover the timeline for collecting and submitting new pain items. Finally, we will review dates of when *Communication About Pain* measure scores will be previewed and publicly reported for the first time.

Slide 3-Original Pain Items: Use through December 2017 Discharges

Here you see the original pain items that will be replaced with new ones starting with January 2018 discharges. These are currently questions 12, 13 and 14 in the HCAHPS survey. It is important for vendors and self-administering hospitals to continue collecting patient responses to these survey items through December 2017 patient discharges. The data submission deadline for Quarter 4 of 2017 is April 4, 2018, and will be the last data submission to include answers to these items.

Slide 4-New Pain Items: Begin with January 2018 Discharges and Forward

On August 2, 2017, in the FY 2018 IPPS Final Rule, CMS announced its plan to replace the *Pain Management* items, seen on the previous slide, with three new pain items. On slide 4 you can see the new pain items, which will be required on all surveys administered to patients discharged from January 1, 2018 and forward.

Rather than focusing on pain control, like the original *Pain Management* items, these three new items focus on *Communication About Pain* in the hospital setting, and make up questions 12, 13 and 14 in the updated survey. Question 12 is a screener question and asks: During this hospital stay, did you have any pain? Question 13 asks: During this hospital stay, how often did hospital staff talk with you about how much pain you had? Question 14 asks: During this hospital stay, how often did hospital staff talk with you about how to treat your pain?

Hospital scores for the new *Communication About Pain* composite measure will be comprised of patient responses to questions 13 and 14. Top-box scores for *Communication About Pain* will be calculated the same way as the *Pain Management* measure—using the most positive response category.

Slide 5-Successfully Collecting New Pain Items: Update Survey Materials

All HCAHPS survey vendors and self-administering hospitals were required to update their survey materials to include the new *Communication About Pain* items. This must have included updates for all modes in which you are approved to administer the HCAHPS survey, along with all survey translations utilized by your organization. Official, updated versions of all survey modes and translations can be found on www.hcahpsonline.org under the Survey Instruments section. These online versions must match your updated survey materials in order to successfully collect patient responses to the new pain items beginning in Quarter 1 2018.

Your updated survey materials must have been submitted to the HCAHPS Project Team for review by September 29, 2017. Your materials will be reviewed by the team for compliance and you will receive feedback from the team.

Once all your survey materials have been successfully updated and have been determined compliant by the HCAHPS Project Team, it will be important to enhance oversight activities to make sure patients discharged January 1, 2018 and later are being asked the new pain questions. This includes monitoring phone interviews and confirming mail surveys and CATI scripts contain the updated pain items. There will be a transition period in early 2018 where it is possible that different versions of the survey will be used depending on whether the patient was discharged *before* or *after* January 1, 2018. Original pain items must be used for patients discharged through December 2017, and new pain items must be used for patients discharged January 2018 and forward. Paying close attention to patient discharge dates during this transition period will be especially important to ensure successful HCAHPS data collection.

Slide 6-Successfully Submitting New Pain Items: XML Users

Survey vendors and self-administering hospitals that submit HCAHPS data using XML file submission will need to update the XML elements for the new pain items for Quarter 1 2018 data submission. Please note that all HCAHPS vendors are required to submit data using XML file submission. XML File Specification Version 4.0 contains the updated XML elements that should be used for questions 12 through 14. If you do not update the XML elements for Quarter 1 2018 data submission, your XML file will be rejected and data will not be accepted into the warehouse.

Visit www.hcahponline.org , Technical Specifications, to find the updated version 4.0 XML File Specifications, the XML File Sample Layout and Data File Structure. Use these as examples to successfully prepare your Quarter 1 2018 XML file for submission through QualityNet.

Slide 7-Troubleshooting XML Submission Errors

The data submission deadline for Quarter 1 2018 is July 5, 2018. To ensure that data for your hospital(s) get submitted and accepted by the QualityNet data warehouse on time, please submit your files as early as possible to allow time to fix any potential errors or submission issues that occur. Please note that this submission deadline is following a Federal holiday so be sure to factor this into your data submission plans.

During the data submission process for Quarter 1 2018, if your XML file is rejected by the QualityNet data warehouse, first make sure you are using the correct XML elements for the new pain items. If you find that you have not correctly updated the pain XML elements for Quarter 1 2018 data submission, please update these elements and re-submit the XML file as soon as possible. If you cannot determine why your XML file is being rejected by the warehouse, then contact the QualityNet Help Desk at qnetsupport@hcqis.org. Let them know you are having issues submitting your XML file for HCAHPS data submission, and that you need to get the issue fixed before the HCAHPS warehouse deadline. Copy the HCAHPS Project Team Technical Assistance (HCAHPS@hsag.com) for any email correspondence with the QualityNet help desk during the Quarter 1 2018 submission process.

Slide 8-Successfully Submitting New Pain Items: Online Data Entry Tool Users

If you are a self-administering hospital you may use the Online Data Entry Tool to submit data. Please note that only approved self-administering hospitals are allowed to use the Online Data Entry Tool for data submission.

For Quarter 1 2018 data submission via the Online Data Entry Tool, carefully select the correct patient discharge month. Selecting January 2018 and forward will bring up the survey version containing new pain items, while selecting December 2017 and earlier will bring up the survey version containing original pain items. If you select a discharge month of January 2018 and forward, you will see each new pain item next to the patient response drop down. Look to see that the new pain items in the Online Data Entry Tool match the items that patients were asked. Please submit your data as early as possible to allow time for any unforeseen data errors to be identified and resolved.

Slide 9-If Incorrect Version of Pain Items was Used...

It is very important that the correct pain items corresponding to the correct patient discharge dates are collected and submitted to the data warehouse. For both XML and Online Data Entry Tool Users, if it is determined that patients were surveyed using the wrong version of pain items, then please contact HCAHPS Technical Assistance at HCAHPS@hsag.com as soon as possible.

Slide 10- Public Reporting of New Communication About Pain Measure

Pain Management measure scores will be publicly reported for the last time in October 2018. *Communication About Pain* measure scores will be publicly reported on Hospital Compare for the first time in October 2020. The October 2020 Public Report will contain data from patients discharged during calendar year 2019.

Communication About Pain measure scores will be available for hospitals to see for the first time starting with the Preview Report they receive for the October 2019 reporting period. The October 2019 reporting period is comprised of patients discharged during calendar year 2018.

For the Hospital Value-Based Purchasing Program, or HVBP, the *Pain Management* dimension is removed from the Patient Experience of Care Domain score starting with the FY2018 Performance Period.

Slide 11: HCAHPS Technical Support

For HCAHPS technical assistance or any questions you may have, you can email us at HCAHPS@hsag.com or call us at 1-888-884-4007.

Slide 12: For More Information

For more information about transitioning to the new pain items or for general information about the HCAHPS survey, you can visit the Hospital CAHPS website at: www.hcahponline.org. For a tutorial about using the HCAHPS Online Data Entry Tool on QualityNet please use the link provided on slide 12. Thank you for listening to the HCAHPS Podcast on Transitioning to the new *Communication About Pain* Composite Measure.

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