

Information for Providers



An Introduction to the Quality Programs for Medicare Patients

Recent changes in Medicare have further intensified the need for Providers and Health Plans to ensure quality of care for their patients. New financial incentives for meeting quality measures have been put in place to encourage quality and prevention. This information guide will help you in meeting the required measures to maximize patient and financial outcomes.

Enclosed in this packet is a guide for the Medicare and Medicaid 5-Star Rating Program. For the Medicare Advantage patients, the Stars Rating Program incorporates 37 measures divided into 5 domains. For patients also on the Prescription Drug Plan, there are 51 measures divided into 9 domains. It is important to strive for a 4 or 5 Star Rating in order to realize the best financial incentive. The measures are congruent with the Institute of Health's Triple Aim for better care, better health, and decreased costs.

Several of the measures in the Stars Rating Program are gathered by sources such as the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) and the Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) in which the data is collected directly from the patient by survey. The remaining measures are gathered through medical record documentation and reported to the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) as part of Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) program. The HEDIS report is used in conjunction with CAHPS and HOS survey outcomes to determine the Star Rating.

One important recent focus for Medicare is on preventive care and providing an Initial Preventive Physical Exam (Welcome to Medicare Exam) in the first 12 months of Medicare eligibility followed by an Annual Wellness Visit. Costs for both of these are now covered by Medicare. We have included quick reference guides outlining required elements at these visits. One significant element includes completing a Health Risk Assessment (HRA). Also included in this information is a template for completing the required components of the HRA. You may use this as provided in paper format or incorporate these elements in your current documentation system.

We hope this information will be helpful. Please contact us with any questions.

Karen Snyder, RN, MSN
Quality Improvement Specialist
423-952-2187
snyderkw@msha.com

Kristi Hammonds
Corporate Director Network Operations
423-952-2180
HammondsKJ2@msha.com