

CAHPS Hospital Survey Podcast Series—Transcript

HCAHPS Service Line Benchmarks

Slide 1-HCAHPS Service Line Benchmarks for Top-Box Scores

Welcome to the CAHPS Hospital Survey Podcast Series. This podcast will cover the new HCAHPS service line benchmark tables for top-box scores.

Slide 2-Overview

This podcast will introduce the HCAHPS Service Line Benchmark tables and discuss CMS' motivation for calculating them; present the Benchmark tables on HCAHPS online; give step-by-step instructions for calculating service line specific scores and using the Service Line Benchmark tables; and cover an example calculation for an example hospital assessing their service line performance.

Slide 3-Introduction and Purpose of Service Line Benchmarks

The Service Line Benchmark tables permit a hospital to assess its performance in each service line relative to other hospitals. A hospital can gain more granular insights into their patients' experience of care and compare performance across service lines.

CMS developed the Service Line Benchmarks in response to requests for service line metrics for use in hospital quality improvement initiatives.

The Service Line Benchmark tables provide top-box percentile distributions, including means and standard deviations for publicly reported HCAHPS measures for each of the three HCAHPS service lines: Medical, Surgical, and Maternity.

Slide 4-Service Line Benchmark Tables on HCAHPS Online

The Service Line Benchmark tables are posted on the HCAHPS online website under the 'Summary Analyses tab.' As of October 2021, the tables posted on HCAHPS online include patients discharged between January and December 2019.

CMS plans to produce Service Line Benchmark tables for each calendar year going forward. However, the Public Health Emergency may delay results based on 2020 discharge quarters. Older tables will be archived, including calendar year 2018 benchmark tables, and will continue to be available on HCAHPS online.

Slide 5-Important Notes

It's important to note that the Service Line Benchmark tables are intended for informational and quality improvement purposes only.

Also, the service line benchmarks do not employ patient-mix adjustment within service lines, and thus are approximations.

Finally, the Service Line Benchmarks for a given service line are derived from hospitals with at least 30 completed surveys in the service line across a calendar year.

Slide 6-Using the Tables: Step 1

Now we will review the steps involved in utilizing the Service Line Benchmark tables. For each service line in which your hospital has at least 30 completed surveys across four quarters, use your hospital's patient-level HCAHPS data to compute the mean unadjusted top-box score for each measure in each service line.

When calculating top-box means, or averages, use hospital discharges from the same time period CMS used for the Service Line Benchmark tables. For example, use data from calendar year 2019 discharges when comparing with CMS' 2019 Benchmark tables.

Also, note that scores do not need patient-mix adjustment applied.

Slide 7-Using the Tables: Step 2

If your hospital uses the Mail Only mode of survey administration, go to Step 4. If your hospital uses the Telephone Only, Mixed Mode, or Interactive Voice Response mode of survey administration proceed to Step 3.

Slide 8-Using the Tables: Step 3

If your hospital employs the Telephone Only, Mixed Mode, or Interactive Voice Response mode of survey administration, adjust each top-box measure score using the HCAHPS mode adjustments found in the Mode Adjustment Table on the HCAHPS On-Line Web site.

Slide 9-Using the Tables: Step 4

For each measure within a service line, locate your new service line score among the national percentiles listed in the Service Line Benchmark tables on HCAHPS On-Line.

This will show how your hospital's performance compares to other hospitals in that service line. Please note that your score may fall between two of these percentiles. For example, your score may fall between the 50th and 75th percentile.

Slide 10-Example, Step 1: Maternity Service Line Unadjusted Top-Box Score

In this example, Hospital A has 105 completed surveys across four quarters in the Maternity service line. The unadjusted top-box average for each Communication with Nurses question is calculated.

As a reminder, to calculate top-box scores for nurse items, a patient response of “Always” translates to a value of 1 and responses of “Never,” “Sometimes,” or “Usually” translates to a value of 0. If a patient did not give a response to a question, it is not included in the average calculation.

For Hospital A, the Maternity-specific top-box average for item 1 is 90, for item 2 is 94, and for item 3 is 92. To calculate the unadjusted top-box average for Communication with Nurses for the Maternity service line, simply average the three item scores. This results in a value of 92.

To get more detailed information on calculating top-box scores for HCAHPS measures, visit the HCAHPS online podcast page and listen to “HCAHPS Score Calculations Part III: Top-Box Composite Scores.”

Slide 11-Example, Step 2: Determine Mode of Administration

Next, determine which mode of administration the hospital used in data collection. HCAHPS approved modes of survey administration includes Mail Only, Telephone Only, Mixed Mode or Interactive Voice Response. In this example, Hospital A uses the Telephone Only mode of administration.

Slide 12-Example, Step 3: Adjust Maternity Scores for Survey Mode

Since Hospital A uses the Telephone Only mode of administration, mode adjustments must be applied to the hospital’s top-box Maternity scores.

Using the HCAHPS mode adjustment table found on HCAHPS online, a mode adjustment of minus 4.2 should be applied to the Communication with Nurses top-box measure score of 92.

After the mode adjustment is applied, Hospital A has a Communication with Nurses top-box score of 87.8 in the Maternity service line.

Slide 13-Example, Step 4: Maternity Service Line Benchmark Table

Using the Maternity Service Line Benchmark table, Hospital A finds that “87.8” falls between the 50th and 75th Percentile columns for this measure. This means that Hospital A exceeds the performance of 50%-75% of hospitals in the Maternity service line on this measure.

Slide 14-Example, Step 1: Medical Service Line Unadjusted Top-Box Score

Now we will move onto the Medical service line. In this example, Hospital A has 200 completed surveys across four quarters in the Medical service line. The unadjusted top-box average of each Communication with Nurses item is calculated.

For Hospital A, the Medical-specific top-box average for item 1 is 88, for item 2 is 96, and for item 3 is 92. To calculate the unadjusted top-box average for Communication with Nurses for the Medical service line, simply average the three item scores, which results in a value 92.

Slide 15-Example, Step 2: Determine Mode of Administration

Next, determine which mode of administration the hospital used in data collection. As shown earlier in the example, Hospital A uses the Telephone Only mode of administration.

Slide 16-Example, Step 3: Adjust Medical Scores for Survey Mode

Since Hospital A uses the Telephone Only mode of administration, mode adjustments must be applied to the hospital's top-box Medical scores. Using the HCAHPS mode adjustment table found on HCAHPS online, a mode adjustment of negative 4.2 should be applied to the Communication with Nurses top-box measure score of 92.

After the mode adjustment is applied, Hospital A has a Communication with Nurses top-box score of 87.8 in the Medical service line.

Slide 17-Example, Step 4: Medical Service Line Benchmark Table

Using the Medical Service Line Benchmark table, Hospital A finds that "87.8" falls between the 90th and 95th Percentile columns for this measure. This means that Hospital A exceeds the performance of 90% to 95% of hospitals in the Medical service line on this measure.

Slide 18-Example, Step 1: Surgical Service Line Unadjusted Top-Box Score

In this example, Hospital A has 150 completed surveys across four quarters in the Surgical service line. The unadjusted top-box average of each Communication with Nurses item is calculated.

For Hospital A, the Surgical-specific top-box average for all three nurse items is 92. To calculate the unadjusted top-box average for Communication with Nurses for the Surgical service line, simply average the three item scores resulting in 92.

Slide 19-Example, Step 2: Determine Mode of Administration

Next, determine which mode of administration the hospital used in data collection. Recall in this example, Hospital A uses the Telephone Only mode of administration.

Slide 20-Example, Step 3: Adjust Surgical Scores for Survey Mode

Since Hospital A uses the Telephone Only mode of administration, mode adjustments must be applied to the hospital's top-box Surgical scores.

Using the HCAHPS mode adjustment table found on HCAHPS online, a mode adjustment of negative 4.2 should be applied to the Communication with Nurses top-box measure score of 92.

After the mode adjustment is applied, Hospital A has a Communication with Nurses top-box score of 87.8 in the Surgical service line.

Slide 21-Example, Step 4: Surgical Service Line Benchmark Table

Using the Surgical Service Line Benchmark table, Hospital A finds that “87.8” falls between the 75th and 90th Percentile columns for this measure.

This means that Hospital A exceeds the performance of at least 75% of hospitals but has performance lower than the top 10% (90th percentile) of hospitals in the Surgical service line on this measure.

Slide 22-Summary of the Example

In summary, Hospital A has a mode-adjusted top-box score of 87.8% for the Communication with Nurses measure in all three service lines, but in the Maternity service line it is doing better than 50% of hospitals, while in the Medical service line it is doing better than 90% of other hospitals, and in the Surgical service line better than 75% of other hospitals.

Slide 23-Resources

Please contact HCAHPS Technical Support for any questions you might have using the email address or telephone number displayed on the slide.

Thank you for listening to our podcast on HCAHPS Service Line Benchmarks for Top-Box Scores. We hope this podcast provides useful information for hospitals to assess their performance in each service line.

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