

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

This document is a reference tool that highlights the major changes from the HCAHPS *Quality Assurance Guidelines V16.0 to V17.0*. The HCAHPS *Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0* (QAG) applies to **July 1, 2022 patient discharges and forward**. This document is not a substitute for reviewing the QAG in its entirety. General format and minor wording revisions have occurred throughout the manual and are not included in this change matrix. Please contact HCAHPS Technical Assistance at hcahps@hsag.com for any specific questions.

QAG V17.0 Section	Summary of Key Changes
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revised V16.0 to V17.0 ○ Revised dates as necessary (e.g., 2021 to 2022) ○ Updated references to V.39 and V.40 MS-DRG codes ○ Updated to HCAHPS File Specifications Version 4.5 ○ Updated references to Care Compare on Medicare.gov ○ Revised lettering of the Appendices due to the inclusion of the Tagalog and Arabic Mail Surveys ○ Updated with minor wording revisions throughout the manual
Acknowledgements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated Official UB-04, Data Specifications Manual by permission, Copyright to reflect 2021 reference
I. Reader’s Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Included citation ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
II. Introduction and Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated HCAHPS Mode Experiment V information ○ Updated the HCAHPS Development, Data Collection and Public Reporting Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added data collection period for Mode Experiment V (April 2021) ▪ Added HCAHPS Podcast release date (July 2021) ▪ Added release date of Tagalog (July 2021) and Arabic (February 2022) translations for Mail Only mode ▪ Added FY 2022 IPPS Final Rule (August 2021) ▪ Added re-approved OMB with Expiration Date of September 30, 2024 ▪ Added HCAHPS Training (March 2022) and public reporting dates (January, April, July and October 2022) ○ Updated with minor wording revisions

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

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III. Program Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that short-term, acute care hospitals that are not IPPS hospitals, such as Critical Access Hospitals, Veterans Affairs hospitals or Department of Defense hospitals, may voluntarily participate in HCAHPS ○ Clarified rules of Participation to include hospital’s/survey vendor’s subcontractor(s)/partner(s) and any other organization(s) responsible for major functions of HCAHPS Survey administration ○ Clarified that HCAHPS approval status is based on the information provided at the time of application and that the HCAHPS Project Team must be notified of changes to the organization in a timely manner ○ Clarified minimum business requirements to define “recent” continuous experience and survey modes
IV. Communications and Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
V. Survey Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
VI. Sampling Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated Table of MS-DRG Codes and Service Line Categories to V.39 (effective October 1, 2021 patient discharges), and added reference to V.40 MS-DRG codes (effective October 1, 2022 patient discharges) ○ Included reference to “Hospital at home” inpatient eligibility ○ Updated with minor wording revisions

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

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<p>VII. Mail Only Survey Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Included references to the Tagalog and Arabic Mail Surveys ○ Updated with minor wording revisions ○ See Appendices A – I, HCAHPS Mail Materials • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that questionnaire section headings (e.g., YOUR CARE FROM NURSES, etc.) must be consistently formatted ○ Clarified that explanatory text must be placed after the mandatory transition statement and before any supplemental questions allowing the patient to voluntarily fill in their name/telephone number. Explanatory text must state the purpose for the patient to optionally provide the requested information. ○ Clarified that the signature on the cover letters must correspond with the organization on the letterhead ○ Clarified that the following sentences must be included verbatim on the initial and follow-up cover letters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Questions 1-29 in the survey are sponsored by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and should take about 7 minutes to complete.” ▪ “Your participation is voluntary and your answers will be kept private.” ▪ “Your responses will help improve the quality of hospital care and help other people make more informed choices about their care. You can see current survey results and find hospital ratings on Care Compare on Medicare.gov (www.medicare.gov/care-compare).” ○ Clarified that the return envelope may not include marketing or promotional text
<p>VIII. Telephone Only Survey Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See Appendices J – M, HCAHPS Telephone Scripts ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that explanatory text must be stated after the mandatory transition statement and before any supplemental questions asking the patient to voluntarily provide their contact information. Explanatory text must state the purpose for the patient to optionally provide the requested information.
<p>IX. Mixed Mode Survey Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See Mail Only and Telephone Only Survey Administration ○ See Appendices A – D HCAHPS Mail Materials and J – M HCAHPS Telephone Scripts ○ Updated with minor wording revisions

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

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X. Active Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Survey Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions ○ See Appendices N and O, HCAHPS Active IVR Scripts • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that explanatory text must be stated after the mandatory transition statement and before any supplemental questions asking the patient to voluntarily provide their contact information. Explanatory text must state the purpose for the patient to optionally provide the requested information.
XI. Data Specifications and Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified requirements of the “Total Inpatient Discharges” field required for data submission ○ Clarified that certain header record information cannot be modified once one month of data has been submitted and accepted in QualityNet
XII. Data Preparation and Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Included references to the Tagalog and Arabic Mail Surveys ○ Updated a note regarding the Review and Correct Period to state that no header record information can be modified during the Review and Correct Period ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
XIII. Oversight Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
XIV. Data Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated anticipated public reporting table of HCAHPS Survey results ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
XV. Exception Request / Discrepancy Report Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that Exception Requests for Determination of Service Line based on a single service must include <i>current</i> documentation, electronic or written
XVI. Data Quality Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

QAG V17.0 Section	Summary of Key Changes
Appendices	
Appendices A - I HCAHPS Mail Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Added mail materials in Tagalog translation: Appendix H – HCAHPS Mail Survey (Tagalog) ○ Added mail materials in Arabic translation: Appendix I – HCAHPS Mail Survey (Arabic) ○ Cover Letters (all languages): Revised the following verbatim sentence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Your responses will help improve the quality of hospital care and help other people make more informed choices about their care. You can see current survey results and find hospital ratings on Care Compare on Medicare.gov (www.medicare.gov/care-compare).” ○ HCAHPS Questionnaire (all languages): Question 29 (Language Spoken at Home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated response options to incorporate Tagalog and Arabic and coding for “Some other language” ○ Spanish Survey Questionnaire: Updated with minor edits/corrections to Question 19 of the first questionnaire ○ Spanish Follow-up Cover Letter: Updated with minor edits/corrections to the first sentence ○ German Survey Questionnaire: Updated with minor edits/corrections to Question 10 and 15 skip pattern instruction verbiage in both questionnaires
Appendices J - M HCAHPS Telephone Scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HCAHPS Telephone Scripts (all languages): Question 29 (Language Spoken at Home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated scripts and interviewer instructions, response options to incorporate Tagalog and Arabic languages, and coding for “Some other language” ○ Spanish HCAHPS Telephone Script: Updated script with minor edits/corrections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Introduction Script verbiage: CALL BACK TO COMPLETE A PREVIOUSLY STARTED SURVEY section (CONFIRM PATIENT FOR A CALL BACK) and SPEAKING WITH SAMPLED PATIENT section (third paragraph of INTRO) ▪ Updated Question 19 to remove accent mark ○ Chinese and Russian HCAHPS Telephone Scripts: Updated scripts with minor edits/corrections to Question 28 response options
Appendices N and O HCAHPS Active IVR Scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HCAHPS Active IVR Scripts (all languages): Question 29 (Language Spoken at Home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated scripts and response choices to incorporate Tagalog and Arabic languages, and coding for “Some other language” ○ Spanish Active IVR Script: Updated with minor edits/corrections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Introduction Script verbiage: CALL BACK TO COMPLETE A PREVIOUSLY STARTED SURVEY section (CONFIRM PATIENT FOR A CALL BACK) and SPEAKING WITH SAMPLED PATIENT section (third paragraph of INTRO)

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

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Appendix P Interviewing Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated to address changes to Question 29, including interviewer instructions and response options to incorporate Tagalog and Arabic languages
Appendix Q Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions
Appendix R Sample Frame File Layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated references to V.39 and V.40 MS-DRG codes ○ Added Tagalog and Arabic to Patient Preferred Language options ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emphasized that CMS strongly recommends that hospitals/survey vendors collect all data elements whether or not they are required for data submission
Appendix S Data File Structure Version 4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated references to V.39 and V.40 MS-DRG codes ○ Added Tagalog and Arabic to Survey Language options and to Question 29 options, updated variable length and valid values ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that Determination of Service Line must be the same for all three months within a quarter
Appendix T XML File Specifications Version 4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated references to V.39 and V.40 MS-DRG codes ○ Added Tagalog and Arabic to Survey Language (<language>) options and to Question 29 (<language-speak>) options, updated maximum field size and valid values ○ Updated with minor wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified that Determination of Service Line must be the same for all three months within a quarter
Appendix U Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) Outline and Survey Material Checklist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revised the requirements for Item 22, description of the disaster recovery plan ○ Removed requirement to include survey materials with submission of QAP and added optional HCAHPS Survey Materials Checklist for hospital/survey vendor use when submitting survey materials to the HCAHPS Project Team ○ Updated with minor formatting and wording revisions

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0

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Appendices V-X Participation Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revised forms to align with updates to Minimum Business Requirements ○ Updated Appendix X to include that survey vendors will not be listed on the HCAHPS Web site until the QAP has been submitted and accepted ○ Updated with minor formatting and wording revisions • Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarified who should complete the Participation Forms
Appendix Y Exception Request Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Updates
Appendix Z Discrepancy Report Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Updates
Appendix AA Attestation Statement Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor formatting and wording revisions
Appendix BB Use of HCAHPS with Other Hospital Inpatient Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated with minor wording revisions to reflect changes to QAG chapters