

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Quality: Prepare For Your Data To Go Public Once Again

#### COVID-inspired freeze on quality reporting is nearly over.

It may seem like not long ago that Medicare froze public reporting of quality measures, but it's now time to start up again - for some measures.

**Recap:** In March 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced it would not report any quality data from the first two quarters of 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. The last time CMS updated the Medicare Compare site was in October 2020.

Now CMS is set to update hospices' quality data in a February 2022 update of Medicare Compare, officials confirmed at the agency's Nov. 10 Open Door Forum for hospices. But the agency won't start reporting the claims-based Hospice Visits in Last Days of Life and Hospice Care Index Measures until the May 2022 refresh, CMS indicated in the hospice final rule this year. They will be based on the most recent six quarters of data.

CMS has placed preview reports for the February refresh in hospices' CASPER folders, the National Association for Home Care & Hospice notes in its member newsletter.



And in August 2022, CMS plans to begin publicly reporting star ratings for hospice Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems (CAHPS) measures, a CMS staffer added. In a "dry run" period, hospices can see their star ratings in the preview reports for both the February and May refreshes, she said, even though the CAHPS star ratings won't appear on the Compare site until August. That gives hospices the opportunity to become familiar with their ratings before they go public, she noted.

**Resource:** A Dec. 16 CMS HQRP Forum will address the CAHPS hospice survey and the introduction of star ratings. "CMS will also answer questions at the end of the webinar," the agency says in a notice to providers. Register for the session at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6804140110362859023>.

In response to a hospice question, another CMS official confirmed that CAHPS star ratings for hospices won't have half stars, but will rather be rounded up or down.

Some types of star ratings bestowed by CMS include half stars and some don't, agency reps acknowledged in the forum. HH CAHPS star ratings also don't include half stars, another CMS staffer noted.

And "hospices will see the star rating for each of the eight CAHPS measures in the preview reports but only the summary star will appear on Care Compare," NAHC reminds hospices.

**Meanwhile:** Plans to move HIS data submission to iQIES aren't happening any time soon. CMS will provide advance notice when that transition is ready, but that won't be in 2022, a CMS official confirmed in the forum.

Note: The CMS hospice public reporting tip sheet under COVID is at [www.cms.gov/files/document/hqrp-pr-tip-sheet081320final-cx-508.pdf](http://www.cms.gov/files/document/hqrp-pr-tip-sheet081320final-cx-508.pdf).