

July
2019

ICH CAHPS® Coordination Team Semi-Annual Review

Message from the ICH CAHPS Team

Welcome to the July 2019 issue of the In-Center Hemodialysis CAHPS (ICH CAHPS) Coordination Team Semi-Annual Review! These newsletters are posted on the ICH CAHPS website under the General Information Tab. Please visit the ICH CAHPS website for more information on the items mentioned in this newsletter: <https://ichcahps.org>

What's New?

- The Coordination Team supports the use of posters/flyers to encourage patients to participate in the ICH CAHPS Surveys, and has emailed to vendors a poster/flyer template that they can share with their client facilities if they would like, adding in their specific contact information. Remember: if a vendor or facility chooses to create their own poster/flyer, it must be approved by CMS prior to use.
- In preparation for the 2019 Fall Survey, please be reminded of the importance of registering and authorizing primary/alternate (P/A) CCN pairs on the ICH CAHPS website. More information on P/A CCNs can be found on the [ICH CAHPS website](#).
- The 2017 Fall/2018 Spring National and State Averages were posted on the ICH CAHPS website on 5/20/2019 and can be found on the [ICH CAHPS website](#).
- The Patient Mix Coefficients and Star Ratings for the ICH CAHPS Survey Results Publicly Reported in May 2019 can be found on the [ICH CAHPS website](#).

Upcoming 2019 Deadlines & Reminders

- 7/4—RTI International will be closed for the 4th of July Holiday
- 7/12—Data collection for the 2019 Spring Survey ends
- 7/31 at 5:00 pm EST—Deadline for vendors to submit their XML Data File to the ICH CAHPS Data Center (Please note the change in data submission deadline from 11:59pm EST to 5:00pm EST, which became effective starting with the 2018 Fall Survey period)
- 8/9—Deadline for submitting facility-specific questions for the 2019 Fall Survey
- 8/31—Deadline for authorizing a survey vendor for the 2019 Fall Survey
- 9/4—Deadline for vendors to alert Coordination Team of any vendor authorization issues for the 2019 Fall Survey

A Common or Interesting Technical Assistance (TA) Inquiry

Q: Is there a “blackout period” at any point in the year at which point a participating ICH facility cannot administer their own internal survey to patients?

A: There is no official blackout period. However, facilities cannot ask patients any additional survey questions that are the same as, or similar to, those included in the ICH CAHPS Survey questionnaire 4 weeks prior to and during the data collection period for each semiannual survey. As a reminder, the data collection period for the ICH CAHPS Survey is based on the mailing date of the prenotification letters. When deciding on internal surveys, facilities should keep in mind survey burden on their patients as well as the fact that additional surveys could affect their ICH CAHPS Survey response rate; we encourage facilities to monitor this.

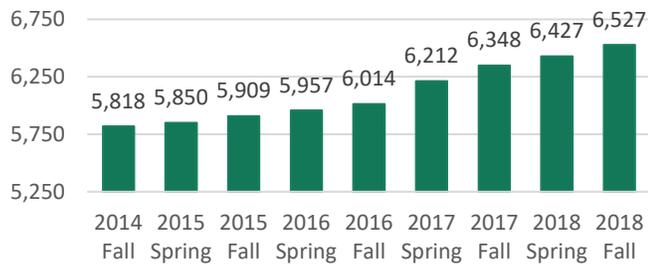
ICH CAHPS Tentative Data Collection Schedule Fall 2019

Activity	Date
Sampling Window	4/1/19–6/30/2019
Sample Files Uploaded on ICH CAHPS Website	9/27/2019
Vendors Attest to Receipt of Sample File	10/1/2019
Mail Prenotification Letter	10/18/2019
Mail 1st Questionnaire (mail only and mixed mode) /Begin Telephone data collection (phone only mode)	11/1/2019
Mail 2nd Questionnaire to mail only mode nonrespondents/Begin phone follow-up with mixed-mode nonrespondents	11/29/2019
Data Collection Ends	1/10/2020
Vendors clean/process final data and construct XML File	1/11/2020–1/28/2020
Deadline for Submitting XML Data File to ICH CAHPS Data Center	5:00 EST on 1/29/2020

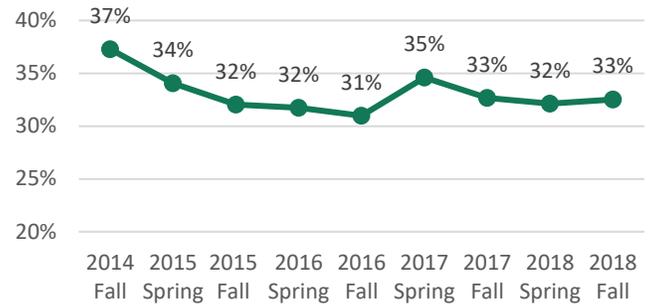
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Number of Unique CCNs that Submitted Survey Data



Overall Response Rate By Survey Period



Dialysis Facility Compare

ICH CAHPS Survey data was refreshed on the DFC in May (postponed from April)!

ICH CAHPS Survey results are typically refreshed on the DFC every April and October. The results that are presently on the DFC are based on survey response data from sample patients included in the 2017 Fall and 2018 Spring surveys.

We encourage vendors and facilities alike to view the ICH CAHPS Survey data for their facilities on the DFC! Learn more at

<https://www.medicare.gov/dialysisfacilitycompare>

Upcoming DFC Public Reporting Timeline

Survey Periods	Publicly Reported on DFC
2018 Spring/2018 Fall	October 2019
2018 Fall/2019 Spring	April 2020
2019 Spring/2019 Fall	October 2020

Star Ratings, Linearized Means, & Cut Points

ICH CAHPS star ratings use a 5-star scale that makes it easier for consumers to compare ICH facilities. More stars mean better rated quality care. Individual star ratings for each of the six ICH CAHPS measures are combined using a simple average and standard rounding rules to arrive at an overall summary star rating.

Responses to the ICH CAHPS Survey are converted to a 0-100 linear-scaled score. After being statistically adjusted for mode and patient-mix, each of the six publicly reported measures are assigned a star rating. The star rating is determined by applying a clustering algorithm. This clustering algorithm essentially works to ensure that scores of CCNs in the same star rating category are as similar as possible, and scores of CCNs in different categories are as different as possible.

The cut points (boundaries) for star assignments are derived from the range of individual measures per cluster. The star levels associated with each cluster are determined by ordering the means of each cluster. Cut points are recalculated for each reporting period.

More details on star rating methodology, including specific formulas used, can be found on the [ICH CAHPS website](#).