

July
2021

ICH CAHPS® Coordination Team Semiannual Review

Message From the ICH CAHPS Team

Welcome to the July 2021 issue of the In-Center Hemodialysis CAHPS (ICH CAHPS) Coordination Team (CT) Semiannual 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?

- On January 29, 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) suspended Clinical Data, ICH CAHPS Attestation, and Clinical Depression Screening and Follow-Up Plan submissions in the End-Stage Renal Disease Quality Reporting System (EQRS) because of issues with the migration from CROWNWeb.
 - At this time, facilities are unable to enter data into EQRS until at least 8/31/2021.
 - We are working to finalize plans for the 2021 Fall Survey sample frame because of the lack of needed EQRS data.
- The CT is currently working on improving the ICH CAHPS website. New features will include a page for dialysis patients to learn more about the survey, a public reporting tab, a participation fact sheet for facilities, and additional resources added to the QuickLinks box. An announcement will be posted and emailed to vendors and facilities when the updated website is published.
- In response to stakeholder concerns about patient burden, we have been investigating how best to revise the ICH CAHPS Survey, if at all. To date, we have:
 - held a Technical Expert Panel with dialysis patients, patient advocacy group representatives, kidney doctors, ICH facility representatives, and other stakeholders;
 - conducted numerous psychometric analyses of the current survey questions and composites to determine which questions can be removed while maintaining reliability; and
 - held focus groups with dialysis patients to determine what is important to include in the survey from the patient perspective.If CMS decides to revise the ICH CAHPS Survey, we will follow a long and complex process before implementing the revised survey; this process may include a field test, OMB approval, cognitive interviews, and additional focus groups.

Upcoming 2021 Deadlines & Reminders

- 7/5— RTI International will be closed for the July 4th Holiday
- 7/9—Data collection for the 2021 Spring Survey ends
- 7/28 at 5:00pm EST—Deadline for vendors to submit their 2021 Spring XML data file to the Data Center
- 8/6—Deadline for submitting new facility-specific questions for the 2021 Fall Survey
- 8/31—Deadline for authorizing or changing a survey vendor for the 2021 Fall Survey
- 9/1—Deadline for vendors to alert CT of any vendor authorization issues for the 2021 Fall Survey

Tentative Data Collection Schedule 2021 Fall*

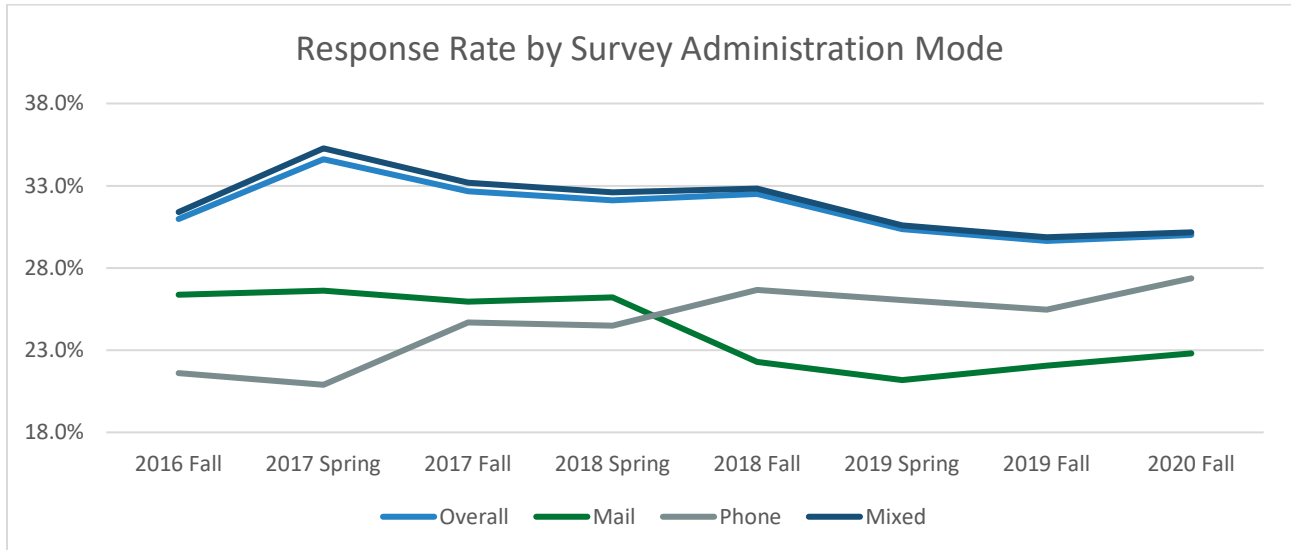
Activity	Date
Sampling window	TBD ¹
Sample files uploaded on ICH CAHPS website	9/24/2021
Vendors attest to receipt of sample file	9/28/2021
Mail prenotification letter	10/15/2021
Mail first survey (mail-only and mixed mode)/begin telephone data collection (phone-only mode)	10/29/2021
Mail second survey (mail-only nonrespondents)/begin phone follow-up with mixed-mode nonrespondents	12/1/2021
Data collection ends	1/7/2022
Vendors clean/process final data and construct XML File	1/7/2022 - 1/25/2022
Deadline for submitting XML data file to ICH CAHPS data center	1/26/2022

*Please note that these dates are subject to change

¹ Because of the notice regarding the suspension of users entering EQRS (formerly CROWNWeb) clinical data until at least August 31, 2021, the fall sampling window may deviate from the normal months for the 2021 Fall Survey.

July
2021

ICH CAHPS Coordination Team Semiannual Review



Response rates have generally declined over time, which is on par with the overall trend in survey research. However, there was a slight increase between 2019 Fall and 2020 Fall, which may in part be because of facilities using CMS-approved posters/flyers in their clinics. Vendors should continue to encourage their facility clients to use these posters/flyers! In addition, vendors and facilities should consider the significant increase in response rates when utilizing mixed-mode administration. *Please note that the 2020 Spring response rates were excluded from this graph because of the voluntary nature of that survey period.*

Public Reporting Schedule

- Typically, survey results from the two most recent survey periods are combined for each reporting period. For example, the results published in October 2020 were based on combined data from the 2019 Spring and 2019 Fall Surveys.
- The April 2021 refresh period, which would have included the 2019 Fall and 2020 Spring Survey Periods, was frozen because of the COVID-19 exemption allowing facilities to choose not to participate in the 2020 Spring Survey.
- Because of the EQRS issues mentioned above, the October 2021 refresh period will also remain frozen.
- CMS continues to monitor the EQRS issue to determine if data will be refreshed in April 2022.

Survey Periods of Combined Data	Month Data Are Publicly Reported on Care Compare
This refresh period was frozen and will continue to display data from the October 2020 refresh (2019 Spring and 2019 Fall)	April 2021
This refresh period will be frozen and will continue to display data from the October 2020 refresh (2019 Spring and 2019 Fall)	October 2021
2020 Fall and 2021 Spring	April 2022
2021 Spring and 2021 Fall	October 2022
2021 Fall and 2022 Spring	April 2023
2022 Spring and 2022 Fall	October 2023
2022 Fall and 2023 Spring	April 2024