



COMMUNITY HEALTHCHOICES (CHC)

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #2021-02

SUBJECT: 2021 CHC Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Survey

TO: CHC Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)

FROM: Bureau of Policy Development and Communication Management

DATE: September 14, 2021

PURPOSE

The CHC Agreement, in Exhibit F (Standards I, II, and III) and Exhibit W (2), requires CHC-MCOs to administer the HCBS CAHPS® Survey and provide the results to the Department of Human Services (DHS). This Operations Memorandum provides guidance to CHC-MCOs pertaining to administering the HCBS CAHPS® Survey. CHC-MCOs must comply with the HCBS CAHPS® Survey requirements indicated in the CHC Agreement.

PROCEDURES

CHC-MCOs are required to annually administer the HCBS CAHPS® Survey using the most current version of the instruments with program-specific terms provided by DHS and report survey results to DHS as required under the CHC Agreement. [The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) has published comprehensive information and resources on how to administer and analyze the data from the survey.

CHC-MCOs are required to contract with a vendor to administer the HCBS CAHPS® Survey. The CHC-MCO's vendor must conduct the HCBS CAHPS® Survey using the most current version of the survey instrument provided by CMS. Each CHC-MCO's vendor will administer the survey using the mode determined by the Department, which can be in person or via telephone. CHC-MCOs must contract with a vendor to administer the survey according to CMS survey protocol that is designed to produce standardized results. The survey is based on a randomly selected sample of Participants from the CHC-MCO and summarizes satisfaction with the experience of care through ratings and composites. Survey results must be reported to the Department both electronically and hardcopy in an Excel file in the format determined by the Department. The survey results must be reported separately for each Zone in which the CHC-MCO operates. Validated survey results must be submitted to the

Department and the Department's EQRO annually each calendar year unless otherwise specified by the Department.

The Department also requires that the CHC-MCOs:

- Must conduct the survey using the current version of the HCBS CAHPS® Survey.
- Must include all HCBS CAHPS® core questions in the survey.
- Must include all HCBS CAHPS® Supplemental Employment Module questions in the survey.
- Must add all supplemental state specific questions as directed by the Department to the HCBS CAHPS® Survey.
- Must forward HCBS CAHPS® Survey data to the Department both electronically and hardcopy in an Excel file in the format determined by the Department.
- Must submit validated HCBS CAHPS® Survey results annually on November 15 unless otherwise specified by the Department.

The CHC-MCO shall submit to DHS the following three reports on the HCBS CAHPS® Survey results in the applicable folder in DocuShare:

- An electronic copy of the CHC-MCO plan-specific HCBS CAHPS® Survey results issued by the vendor to the plan.
- CHC-OPS Report 035 which contains plan-specific data.
- A Narrative Report of the survey results. The report should contain, at minimum:
 - Title page
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Tables/Exhibits
 - An Executive Summary
 - Introduction
 - Methodology, which is to include Survey Administration
 - Results
 - Summary, which is to include:
 - Lessons Learned/Suggestions for Administration of the following year's HCBS CAHPS® Survey.
 - Recognizing that the HCBS CAHPS® Survey sample for CHC was designed to be representative at the state level, what plan-level findings about participant experience of care and quality of life caught the CHC-MCO's attention?
 - What steps is the CHC-MCO taking to further investigate the potential quality improvement opportunities identified by the HCBS CAHPS® Survey?
 - Provide timeframes for when the quality improvements will be achieved and how the improvements will be applied and measured.
 - Provide a representative sample of the CHC-MCO's enrolled population including a representative sample by race and ethnicity. What steps did the CHC-MCO take to ensure the survey includes a representative sample by race and ethnicity of the geographic representation of the enrolled population? What findings about participant-experience disparities by race

and ethnicity of the geographic representation was found through the survey results?

- Provide how the response rates were calculated and the various disposition codes for the calculations. Explain specifically how their Definition compares to the [American Association for Public Opinion Research \(AAPOR\)](#).
- Provide the 19 [National Quality Forum \(NQF\)](#)-endorsed measures derived from the HCBS CAHPS® Survey.
- Provide component item scores, what aspects are driving the composite, and how the CHC-MCO would focus their effort.

HCBS CAHPS® Survey Reporting Deadlines:

- CHC-MCOs are to pull their participant sample in **June 2021**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide DHS their stratification plan regarding representation of their enrolled population by race and ethnicity of the geographic representation of the CHC waiver population by **June 30, 2021**.
- MCOs are to provide DHS the template of the CHC-MCO's pre-survey participant contact letter by **June 30, 2021**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide DHS a copy of the CHC-MCO's survey administration instrument by **June 30, 2021**.
- CHC-MCOs are to send out the pre-survey participant contact letter by **July 16, 2021**.
- CHC-MCOs are to administer the survey between **August 1 through October 31 2021**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide the below status checks for the Survey Administration to DHS:
 - Weekly Status Reports starting **August 12 through November 4, 2021**.
 - First 25 Completed Surveys by **August 20, 2021**.
 - Statewide Survey Results Report by **November 15, 2021**.
 - MCO Narrative Report to be received by **December 10, 2021**.

NEXT STEPS

1. Review this information with appropriate staff.
2. Submit HCBS CAHPS® Survey results to DHS as indicated in this Operations Memorandum.
3. Contact the Bureau of Quality Assurance and Program Analytics if you have questions.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: [2021 CAHPS® Survey Resources](#)

Attachment 2: [2021 Pennsylvania-Specific CAHPS® HCBS Survey Questions](#)