

How Focusing on the **Health Outcomes Survey (HOS)** Can Improve Your Practice



Each spring, the Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) assesses the ability of an organization to maintain or improve the current physical and mental health status of its members. Administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) between April and July, HOS interviews a random sample of a plan's Medicare members. The results help evaluate how members view their current health status and if providers addressed their health concerns.

But what does HOS mean to you?

You directly impact patients' lives! Your dedication in improving patients' health does not go unnoticed. We appreciate all the work you do to manage the health of our members.

HOS asks members to detail their interactions with their physicians. To better connect with patients, think about integrating these tips into your daily activities.

1 Improving or maintaining physical health

Engage with patients before they even check into the office by planning ahead. Implement a pre-visit checklist to better address past issues or concerns the patient has raised during previous visits. Dedicate time to review a patient's health history before his/her appointment time. Find out the patient's upcoming appointment schedule and have his/her lab work results available. By having results available during the appointment, patients can be part of the decision-making and are more likely to follow treatment recommendations. If you think recommending a specialist would benefit a patient, remember that a referral is required for specialist visits.

2 Improving or maintaining mental health

Consider using depression screening tools like the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) to identify early signs of depression. Ask questions to assess if a patient's mental health affects daily activities, such as, "Do you have a lot of energy?" or, "How much of the time has your physical or emotional health interfered with social activities?" When appropriate, refer HPP members to a behavioral health resource by calling Magellan at **1-800-424-3704**. *Please note that a referral is not required for behavioral health services.*

3 Monitoring physical activity

Implement a standardized functional assessment tool—an industry-wide survey tool or list of questions—to monitor patients’ physical activity. Ask pointed questions such as, “In the past seven days, did you need any help from others to perform everyday activities, like bathing or dressing?”



HPP members receive free or low cost annual memberships to participating fitness centers, including most area YMCAs. HPP’s Wellness Partners program also includes free events and activities for members, which can help increase socialization, reduce stress and enhance overall well-being, through:

- Free yoga classes offered through July at various locations
- A free walking group at the Fortaleza Fitness Center for eight weeks in May and June
- Free cooking classes in May, June and August; pre-registration required at freelibrarycook.eventbrite.com.

Learn more at hpplans.com/wellnesspartners

4 Improving bladder control

Initiate the discussion of bladder control with patients and ask if it has affected their daily life or sleep. Recommend exercises and discuss treatment options. Inform patients there are many ways to control or manage the leaking of urine, including bladder training exercises, incontinence products, medication and surgery. If you determine a patient would benefit from seeing a urologist, please note that a referral is required.



More details about HOS measures can be found at hosonline.org.
HPPlans.com/providers



For more information, contact the Providers Services Helpline at **1-888-991-9023** or contact your Network Account Manager (NAM).