



# Health Outcomes Survey Tip Sheet

Tips and recommendations to guide discussions with your patients about their health



## What is the Health Outcomes Survey (HOS)?

- ✓ An annual survey administered in August to a random sample of Medicare Advantage patients. The same patients are surveyed again two years later to assess change in physical and mental health status.
- ✓ A measurement of patients' perception of their physical and mental health and overall quality of life.
- ✓ Survey results impact Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Star Ratings.

Each Star HOS measure addresses a different aspect of patient care and patient-provider interaction. You can directly impact each of these five measures.

## HOS Star Measures



### Improving or Maintaining Physical Health

Assesses the percentage of patients whose physical health was the same or better after two years

RECOMMENDATIONS	DISCUSSION TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess your patients' pain and functional status using standardized tools.</li> <li>• Provide interventions to improve physical health, such as disease management, pain management, physical therapy, or care management.</li> <li>• Promote self-management support strategies, such as goal-setting, action planning, problem solving, and follow-up to help patients take an active role in improving their health.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask patients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How far can you walk? Do you need assistance, such as with a cane or walker?</li> <li>• Do you have trouble with stairs?</li> <li>• How well can you perform regular activities, such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, playing golf?</li> <li>• Does pain limit your activity?</li> </ul>



### Improving or Maintaining Mental Health

Assesses the percentage of patients whose mental health was the same or better after two years

RECOMMENDATIONS	DISCUSSION TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess your patients' symptoms of depression with appropriate screening tool.</li> <li>• Refer patients to mental health services or manage depression and anxiety treatment as indicated.</li> <li>• Use motivational interviewing to improve treatment, engagement, and mental and physical health outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask patients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe your energy level?</li> <li>• Do you get out to spend time with other people?</li> <li>• Does alcohol use cause any personal problems?</li> <li>• Have you felt calm and peaceful?</li> <li>• Have you felt down or blue?</li> </ul>



## Monitoring Physical Activity

Assesses the percentage of patients who discussed exercise with their doctor or other health care provider and were advised to start or continue physical activity

RECOMMENDATIONS	DISCUSSION TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss and assess your patients' physical activity level over the past year.</li> <li>• Discuss health benefits and advise patients to start, increase or maintain their level of physical activity as appropriate for their individual health status.</li> <li>• Develop physical activity plans with patients that match their abilities. Include these in the post-visit instructions.</li> <li>• Refer patients with limited mobility to physical therapy to learn safe and effective exercises.</li> <li>• Encourage participation in a gym, fitness and exercise programs and local community resources.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask patients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your daily level of exercise or physical activity?</li> <li>• What activities do you enjoy?</li> <li>• Do you feel better when you are more active?</li> </ul> <p>Discuss the benefits of activities that get people up and moving (walking, jogging or swimming) and strength training (bodyweight exercises, using small weights, tai chi, or gardening).</p>



## Reducing Risk of Falling

Assesses the percentage of patients with falling, walking or balance problems who received a recommendation for how to prevent falls or treat these problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS	DISCUSSION TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess fall risk by asking patients about falling, gait and balance problems.</li> <li>• Provide fall prevention interventions, such as promoting regular exercise and balance activities (tai chi, yoga).</li> <li>• Promote regular eye exams and hearing tests.</li> <li>• Review medications with fall risk in mind.</li> <li>• Consider a bone mineral density test.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate educational materials.</li> <li>• Promote home safety, such as: remove throw rugs and clutter; install handrails on stairs and grab bars in the bathrooms; use non-slip mats in the tub or shower; use night lights in hallways.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask patients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you had a fall in the past year?</li> <li>• What were the circumstances of the fall?</li> <li>• How do you think a fall could have been prevented?</li> <li>• Have you felt dizzy or had problems with balance or walking in the past year?</li> <li>• Do you have any vision problems? When was your last eye exam?</li> <li>• Do you have someone who can help make your home safe?</li> </ul>



## Improving Bladder Control

Assesses the percentage of patients with urinary incontinence (UI) who discussed the problem and treatment options with their health care providers

RECOMMENDATIONS	DISCUSSION TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess problems with UI in the last six months and document discussion in the post-visit instructions.</li> <li>• Assess the severity of the condition and the impact of UI on the patient's quality of life and daily activities.</li> <li>• Involve patients in decisions about treatment options that best work for them. These options include behavioral (such as bladder training and pelvic muscle rehabilitation), pharmacological and surgical therapies.</li> <li>• Have informative brochures and materials visible and available as discussion starters.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ask patients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you had leakage in the past six months?</li> <li>• How often and when does the leakage problem occur?</li> <li>• Has UI affected your daily life (such as social withdrawal, depression, or sleep interruption)?</li> <li>• Would you like help in controlling your UI?</li> </ul>