



COMMUNITY HEALTHCHOICES (CHC)

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #2020-05

SUBJECT: 2020 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 Communications Management

DATE: September 8, 2020

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. This includes using the Supplemental Employment Module specifically designed to be used alongside the HCBS CAHPS® Survey tool as well as the Pennsylvania-specific questions. [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 must provide to DHS the name of the selected vendor that will be used to administer the tool. The vendor must use computer-assisted interviewing software. When selecting a vendor to administer the survey tool, CHC-MCOs will ensure that they require the vendor have sufficient personnel to conduct recruitment of Participants as well as availability to schedule interviews to achieve the required minimum number of complete surveys. An interview shall be considered “complete” if

the respondent has provided a substantive response for at least 50% of the questions that all respondents are eligible to answer, not including the “About You” section.

The CHC-MCO must provide their HCBS CAHPS® vendor with a complete file of its HCBS population for use in selecting the statistically valid random sample. The CHC-MCO’s vendor must select a random sample as required below:

- For calendar year 2020 and beyond, if a minimum effective sample size is not specified by DHS, the CHC-MCO’s vendor must select a statistically valid random sample based on a 95% Confidence Level, \pm 5% Confidence Interval, and a 50% Distribution. DHS requires the CHC-MCO’s vendor to stratify the sample to assure equal race/ethnicity representation of the CHC waiver population. DHS requires the CHC-MCO’s vendor to stratify by region to assure geographic representation of the CHC waiver population.

CHC-MCOs must send a pre-notification letter to CHC Participants seven business days before the initial recruitment call. The CHC-MCO’s pre-notification letter must be reviewed and approved by DHS before dissemination to the Participants. A sample pre-notification letter as well as additional guidance on using pre-notification letters is in the Technical Assistance Guide for Administration of the CAHPS® Home and Community-Based Services Survey on the CMS webpage.

CHC-MCOs have the option of administering the HCBS CAHPS® Survey in person and/or by telephone. CHC-MCOs choosing to survey Participants only by telephone must meet the following requirements when a Participant declines to take the survey:

- The CHC-MCO’s vendor must ask the Participant “*Would you have preferred to take this survey in person? In that case, an interviewer would have come to where you live or another location you agreed on in advance.*”
- In the event the Participants decline to take the survey, the CHC-MCO’s vendor must summarize in the plan-specific HCBS CAHPS® Survey results the reasons why the Participants declined to take the survey.

The CHC-MCO’s vendor must obtain and record consent by Participants or their legal guardians, as well as consent by Participants when a legal guardian or proxy will be surveyed on their behalf. Consent can be verbal for phone interviews and written for in-person interviews.

DHS reserves the right to review the subsequent years' results and determine if an in-person interview will be required. DHS will notify the CHC-MCOs in advance of any change in the requirements.

The CHC-MCO shall submit to DHS the following three reports on 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:
 - o Title page
 - o Table of Contents
 - o List of Tables/Exhibits
 - o An Executive Summary
 - o Introduction
 - o Methodology, which is to include Survey Administration
 - o Results
 - o 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 \(AAPOR RR#3\)](#).
- 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 **July 2020**.
- 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 **7/3/2020**.
- MCOs are to provide DHS the template of the CHC-MCO's pre-survey participant contact letter by **7/3/2020**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide DHS a copy of the CHC-MCO's survey administration instrument by **7/3/2020**.
- CHC-MCOs are to send out the pre-survey participant contact letter by **7/24/2020**.
- CHC-MCOs are to administer the survey between **8/1/2020 and 10/31/2020**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide the below status checks for the Survey Administration to DHS:
 - o Weekly Status Reports starting **8/11/2020 thru 11/4/2020**.
 - o First 25 Completed Surveys by **8/14/2020**.
 - o Statewide Survey Results Report by **November 15, 2020**.

NEXT STEPS

1. Review this information with appropriate staff.
2. Submit CAHPS® HCBS 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: [CAHPS® Survey Resources](#)

Attachment 2: [2020 Pennsylvania-Specific CAHPS® HCBS Survey Questions](#)