

COMMUNITY HEALTHCHOICES (CHC)

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM # 2023-03

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

TO: CHC Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)

FROM: Bureau of Policy Development and Communications Management

DATE: May 12, 2023

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 independently administer the HCBS CAHPS Survey. The CHC-MCOs are required to provide DHS with their selected survey vendor's point(s) of contact information, a signed copy of the current survey administration year contract with the selected vendor, and a copy of the survey vendor's current survey Quality Assurance Plan. The CHC-MCO's vendor must conduct the HCBS CAHPS Survey using the most current version of the survey instrument. Each CHC-MCO's vendor will administer the survey using the mode determined by DHS, 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. CHC-MCOs must ensure that the selected survey vendor has a process in place to report suspected participant abuse, neglect and/or exploitation to both the CHC-MCO and to DHS. The survey is based on a randomly selected sample of participants from each of the CHC-MCO's total HCBS population and summarizes satisfaction with the experience of care through ratings and composites. CHC-MCOs

are required to ensure that the selected survey vendor adheres to all report requirements and reporting timeframes as directed by DHS. Survey results must be reported to DHS electronically in an Excel file or in the format determined by DHS. The survey results must be reported separately for each Zone in which the CHC-MCO operates. Validated survey results must be submitted to DHS and DHS' External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) annually each calendar year unless otherwise specified by DHS.

DHS also requires that the CHC-MCOs:

- Provide Limited English Proficiency and Text Telephone services in support of the HCBS CAHPS Survey if requested by the survey participant.
- Include all supplemental state specific questions as directed by DHS to the HCBS CAHPS Survey.
- Must include all HCBS CAHPS Supplemental Employment Module questions in the survey.
- Submit validated HCBS CAHPS Survey results annually on November 15 unless otherwise specified by DHS.

The CHC-MCO shall submit to DHS the following 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.
- An electronic copy of the CHC-MCO plan-specific HCBS CAHPS Survey banner report 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 a 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 provide DHS a signed copy of the current survey administration year contract with selected survey administrator and a copy of the administrator's current Quality Assurance Plan by **April 21, 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs' survey administrator is to pull the survey participant sample in **June 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide DHS their survey participant sample and stratification plan regarding representation of their enrolled population by race and ethnicity of the geographic representation of the CHC waiver population by **June 30, 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide DHS the template of their pre-survey participant contact letter by **June 30, 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide DHS a copy of their survey administration instrument by **June 30, 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs are to send out their pre-survey participant contact letter by **July 21, 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs' survey administrator is to conduct the survey between **August 1 through October 31, 2023**.
- CHC-MCOs are to provide the following reports to DHS:
 - Weekly Status Reports starting **August 11 through November 3, 2023**.
 - First 25 Completed Surveys by **August 18, 2023**.
 - Survey Results Report by **November 15, 2023**.
 - Survey Results Banner Report by **December 8, 2023**.
 - Survey Narrative Report by **December 29, 2023**.
 - Survey Areas for Improvement Plan by **March 8, 2024**.

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.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: [Pennsylvania-Specific HCBS CAHPS® Survey Questions Calendar Year 2023](#)

Attachment 2: [2023 HCBS CAHPS® Survey Resources](#)