Welcome

March 2010

Welcome back to *HCAHPS Executive Insight*, the gold button on www.hcahpsonline.org.

In March, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) refreshed the HCAHPS results on the *Hospital Compare* Web site (www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov). This is the ninth time that HCAHPS results have been publicly reported, truly now a regular event. These new HCAHPS results are based on patients discharged between July 2008 and June 2009. Some highlights include:

- The number of hospitals reporting their HCAHPS results has increased by 1,255 (50%) since the first public reporting in March 2008

- The March 2010 results are based on 2.4 million completed surveys from 3,775 hospitals

- We rolled off HCAHPS data from Second Quarter 2008, while rolling on data from Second Quarter 2009

A summary table of the most recent state and national HCAHPS results, and information on how to interpret them, can be found below at Summary of HCAHPS Results.

News and Notes from the HCAHPS Project Team

In early March, the HCAHPS Project Team (HPT) conducted several days of webinar-based HCAHPS training which was attended by hundreds of individuals from hospitals, survey vendors, and other organizations interested in HCAHPS. We also revised the HCAHPS manual, *HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V5.0*, which can be downloaded through a link on www.hcahpsonline.org.

In December 2009, *HCAHPS Executive Insight* introduced a table of inter-correlations of the ten HCAHPS measures: *Patient-Level Correlations of HCAHPS Measures*. These patient-level, Pearson correlations are based on 2.2 million completed surveys from patients discharged between July 2007 and June 2008. The patient-level correlations are calculated from linear means of the ten HCAHPS measures. For this analysis, we created patient-level equivalents of the six hospital composite measures; the remaining four measures are single items.

The patient-level inter-item correlations can be helpful in quality improvement efforts by identifying "key drivers." For instance, "key driver" analyses sometimes use patient-level associations to predict global items, such as ratings and recommendations, from more specific patient experience measures, such as composites and stand-alone items. We plan to refresh the patient-level correlation matrix annually.

Last year we also introduced the *HCAHPS "Top-Box" Percentiles table* to make it easier to understand where individual hospitals stand on each of the ten publicly reported HCAHPS measures. In March 2010, we refreshed this table using the most recent HCAHPS scores. This table displays the national "top-box," or most positive response category, scores for the 5th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 95th percentiles of hospitals whose HCAHPS results were publicly reported on Hospital Compare in March 2010. The "top-box" response category is "*Always*" for five HCAHPS composites ("Communication with Nurses," "Communication with Doctors," "Responsiveness of Hospital Staff," "Pain Management," and "Communication about Medicines") and two individual measures ("Cleanliness of Hospital Environment" and "Quietness of Hospital Environment"). The "top-box" response is "*Yes*" for the sixth composite, "Discharge Information," "*9 or 10*" for the "Overall Hospital Rating" item, and "*Definitely recommend*" for the "Recommend the Hospital" item.

Since CMS first released HCAHPS results in March 2008, HCAHPS scores have appeared in a wide variety of publications and have been incorporated in a number of hospital rating tools. We are pleased that the value of HCAHPS is being acknowledged by others, but would like to reiterate that the full, complete and official HCAHPS results are those publicly reported on Hospital Compare. Hospital Compare (www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov) had an average of 1.14 million page views per month in 2009.

CMS and the HCAHPS Project Team continue to analyze HCAHPS data. Recently we published several research papers in the journal *Medical Care Research and Review*. To make locating our HCAHPS research easier, we have added a bibliography of publications from the HPT.

As ever, we encourage both hospitals and their survey vendors to be well aware of the dates for data submission. For the latest, please see Key Upcoming Date below. Also, take note that Quality Assurance Plans, both those that are new and those that are annual updates, are due to the HPT on April 16. Finally, note that the HCAHPS Release 3.2 file specifications go into effect for discharges from July 1, 2010, and forward.

We invite you to share (and re-share) the material presented on *HCAHPS Executive Insight*. When you do, please include the following citation:

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Thank you for visiting *HCAHPS Executive Insight,* and please continue to do so as we report updates and add new content. If you have comments or suggestions for HEI, please send us an email at hcahps@azqio.sdps.org.

Bill Lehrman and Liz Goldstein, Co-editors

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Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Key Upcoming Date

Data collected for the HCAHPS survey must be submitted to the HCAHPS warehouse, via My QualityNet, by or before the deadline posted on www.hcahpsonline.org. It is imperative that data be *submitted correctly* by the deadline in order for hospitals to meet RHQDAPU requirements. Once the warehouse closes, *data cannot be submitted or changed in any way*. CMS strongly suggests that data be submitted at least 48 hours prior to the deadline, which should allow time for resubmission if there were an error in the original submission. Hospitals are strongly encouraged to promptly inspect their *Data Submission Report* and/or *HCAHPS Feedback Reports* to confirm their data were accepted into the data warehouse.

Reminder: The deadline for submission of HCAHPS data for October, November and December 2009 discharges is April 14, 2010.

Summary of HCAHPS Results

A summary table of HCAHPS results for patients discharged between July 2008 and June 2009 is available through the link below. This table contains the average scores of participating hospitals in the most positive, or "top box," category for each of the ten publicly reported HCAHPS measures. For example, the column labeled **"Comm. with Nurses"** displays the percent of patients who reported that their nurses **"Always"** communicated well. Also shown is the number of participating hospitals and the survey response rate for hospitals in each state and in the nation.

To view and/or download the table please click here. Summary results from all previous HCAHPS public reporting can be found below in the Archive section.

To view the full set of current results on each HCAHPS measure, and find brief information on survey administration, methodology, etc., please visit the *"Survey of Patients' Hospital Experiences"* section of the *Hospital Compare* website (http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/Hospital).

Archive: Summary Table of HCAHPS Results
Date of Public Reporting - Months Included
March 2008 - October 2006 through June 2007
Summer 2008 - October 2006 through September 2007
September 2008 – January 2007 through December 2007
December 2008 – April 2007 through March 2008
March 2009 – July 2007 through June 2008
June 2009 – October 2007 through September 2008
September 2009 – January 2008 through December 2008
December 2009 – April 2008 through March 2009

Archive: HCAHPS "Top-Box" Percentiles
September 2009
December 2009