

# MIPS CAHPS Communication Guidelines

The Merit-based Incentive Payment System Survey (MIPS CAHPS), like all patient surveying, is meant to provide unbiased feedback from your patients about the care they experienced. To help ensure that all group practices are being rated fairly based on the care they provide, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has created guidelines for communicating with Medicare beneficiaries both verbally and in written form about the survey. In addition, CMS has provided guidelines for administering other surveys in conjunction with the MIPS CAHPS survey.

The following communication guidelines are included in the MIPS CAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines published by CMS.

## Purpose of the MIPS CAHPS Survey

The CAHPS for MIPS Survey includes the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey (known as CGCAHPS) supplemented with additional survey items to meet the needs of CMS and the MIPS program. The CAHPS for MIPS Survey allows participating group practices the opportunity to assess the quality of care they are providing to their patients, helping ensure the patients get the right care at the right time.

## Use of MIPS CAHPS Survey with Other Surveys

Groups, survey vendors, and their agents are encouraged to avoid asking any CAHPS for MIPS survey items of beneficiaries with fee-for-service Medicare four weeks prior to, during, and four weeks after the CAHPS for MIPS survey administration for the 2017 performance period (generally anytime from October 11, 2017 to February 28, 2018).

This restriction doesn't apply to other CMS surveys. For example, HCAHPS surveys will still be administered if a group practice beneficiary has an eligible hospital discharge and is randomly selected to receive the survey.

## Communicating with Beneficiaries about the CAHPS for MIPS Survey

Survey vendors and group practices are allowed to notify beneficiaries that they may be asked to participate in the administration of the CAHPS for MIPS Survey. However certain types of communications promoting the survey (either oral, written or in the survey materials, such as cover letters and phone script) are not permitted, since they may introduce bias in the survey results.

Groups, survey vendors, and their agents are not allowed to:

- Attempt to influence or encourage beneficiaries to answer survey items in a particular way
- Imply that the group, its personnel or its agents will be rewarded or gain benefits for positive feedback from beneficiaries by asking beneficiaries to choose certain responses or indicate that the practice is hoping for a given response
- Offer incentives of any kind for participation in the survey
- Show or provide the CAHPS for MIPS survey materials (pre-notification letter, cover letter, or survey) to beneficiaries prior to the administration of the survey
- Indicate that the group's or provider's goal is for all beneficiaries to rate them a "10", "Yes", or "Always"