

# Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS)

Member Perception Star Measure

## Why is the Survey Important?

Five HOS measures (two functional health measures and three HEDIS® Effectiveness of Care measures) are included in the star rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)<sup>1</sup>.

The HOS collects self-reported health outcomes data to help support quality improvement activities and overall health of patients. Patients who are Medicare members are selected at random to participate. Two years after taking the initial survey, patients are offered a follow-up survey to measure how they perceive changes in their health.

## Survey Questions and Provider Opportunities

Review the table below to find out how the survey is measuring patients' self-reported health outcomes as well as recommendations for improvement where applicable.

Measure	Sample survey questions	Tips for providers
Improving or maintaining physical health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general, how would you rate your health?</li> <li>• Does your health now limit you in these activities?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moderate activities like vacuuming or bowling</li> <li>○ Climbing several flights of stairs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• During the past four weeks, have you had any of the following problems with your work or other regular daily activities as a result of your physical health?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accomplished less than you would like</li> <li>○ Were limited in the kind of work or other activities you were able to perform</li> </ul> </li> <li>• During the past four weeks, how much did pain interfere with your normal work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask patients if they have pain, and if so, whether it is affecting their ability to complete physical activities they would like to do in their daily lives. Ask about goals the patient has that better pain management would allow them to achieve. Then, identify ways to improve your patient's pain.</li> <li>• Determine if your patient could benefit from a consultation with a pain specialist, rheumatologist or other specialist.</li> <li>• Consider physical therapy, cardiac or pulmonary rehab when appropriate.</li> </ul>
Improving or maintaining mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the past four weeks, have you had any of the following problems with your work or other regular daily activities as a result of any emotional problems?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accomplished less than you would like</li> <li>○ Didn't do work or other activities as carefully as usual</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How much of the time during the past four weeks:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have you felt calm and peaceful?</li> <li>○ Did you have a lot of energy?</li> <li>○ Have you felt downhearted or blue?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• During the past four weeks, how much of the time have your physical or emotional problems interfered with your social activities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathize with the patient.</li> <li>• Discuss options for therapy with a mental health professional when appropriate.</li> <li>• Offer ideas to improve mental health such as taking daily walks, socializing, staying involved with family, owning a pet, doing crossword puzzles, volunteering, participating in a church, going to senior community centers or meditating.</li> <li>• Consider a hearing test when appropriate as loss of hearing can result in isolation.</li> </ul>

Source: <https://hosonline.org/en/>

Measure	Sample survey questions	Tips for providers
Monitoring physical activity	<p>In the past 12 months, did:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You talk with a doctor or other health care provider about your level of exercise or physical activity?</li> <li>A doctor or other health care provider advise you to start, increase or maintain your level of exercise or physical activity?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to patients about their physical activity and the health benefits of staying active. Studies show that having a patient fill out a questionnaire is not enough to gauge their activity level. Express interest in ensuring patients remain active.</li> <li>Offer physical activity suggestions based on the patient's physical ability.</li> <li>Offer ideas where patients can engage in activities and social interaction such as senior classes at the Area Agency on Aging, YMCA and community centers.</li> </ul>
Improving bladder control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the past six months, have you experienced leaking of urine?</li> <li>There are many ways to control or manage the leaking of urine, including bladder training exercises, medication and surgery. Have you ever talked with a doctor, nurse or other healthcare provider about any of these approaches?</li> </ul>	<p>Ask patients if they have any trouble holding their urine. If yes, ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When do you notice leaking (exercise, coughing, after urinating)?</li> <li>Is there urgency associated with the leaking?</li> <li>Do you have any issues emptying your bladder (incomplete, takes too long, pain)?</li> <li>How often do you empty your bladder at night? During the day?</li> <li>Do you have pain when you urinate?</li> <li>Have you noticed a change in color/smell/appearance/volume of your urine?</li> <li>How impactful are your urinary issues to your daily life?</li> </ul> <p>For men, ask all the same questions plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there any change in stream?</li> <li>Any sexual dysfunction (new, historical, or changing)?</li> </ul> <p>Communicate that urinary leakage problems can be common as we grow older, but there are treatments that can help. Discuss potential treatment options such as behavioral therapy, exercises, medications, medical devices and surgery.</p>
Reducing the risk of falling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the past 12 months, did you talk with your doctor or other health provider about falling or problems with balance or walking?</li> <li>Did you fall in the past 12 months?</li> <li>In the past 12 months, have you had a problem with balance or walking?</li> <li>Has your doctor or health provider done anything to help you prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking?</li> </ul>	<p>Ask patients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did you fall in the past 12 months?</li> <li>Have you had a problem with balance or walking?</li> </ul> <p>Suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of a cane or walker</li> <li>An exercise or physical therapy program</li> <li>A vision or hearing test</li> </ul>

