

December HCAHPS Executive Insight Letter

Welcome

December 2010

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

In December, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) refreshed the HCAHPS results on the Hospital Compare Web site (www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov). The new HCAHPS results are based on patients discharged between April 2009 and March 2010. Some highlights include:

- The December 2010 results are based on more than 2.6 million completed surveys from 3,798 hospitals
- The number of hospitals reporting their HCAHPS results has increased by 1,278 (50%) since the first public reporting in March 2008
- HCAHPS data for First Quarter 2009 rolled off of Hospital Compare while First Quarter 2010 results were rolled on

News and Notes from the HCAHPS Project Team

Since national implementation in October 2006, HCAHPS has grown to become what some call the 'industry standard' for measuring and reporting patients' experiences of hospital care. The broad reach of HCAHPS can be captured in a few simple statistics. Between April 2009 and March 2010, over 8.8 million patients (an average of more than 24,000 per day) were surveyed about their hospital experiences. We estimate that more than 95% of inpatients in the service lines included in HCAHPS receive care at hospitals that participate in HCAHPS. Put differently, the vast majority of inpatients hospitalized for medical, surgical or maternity care have a chance of sharing their hospital experiences through the HCAHPS survey and seeing those experiences reflected in HCAHPS public reporting.

In addition to its growing scope, HCAHPS results are finding their way to the public through diverse channels: from the official results that CMS posts on its Hospital Compare Web site, to rankings, ratings and descriptions produced by other organizations, to articles in the media, to the promotional materials produced by hospitals. The notion of using HCAHPS results to compare hospitals has even inspired artists: <http://vimeo.com/11788385>.

While we are pleased that the value of HCAHPS is being acknowledged and amplified by others, we would like to reiterate that the full, complete and official HCAHPS results are those publicly reported on Hospital Compare (www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov).

2010 has been eventful for HCAHPS, most notably because the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (P.L. 111-148) (<http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/ppacacon.pdf>) specifically includes HCAHPS as an element to be included in the Hospital Value Based Purchasing (Hospital VBP) program (see Section 3001), beginning with discharges in FY 2013 (October 1, 2012). CMS will provide more information about Hospital VBP closer to the time of the implementation of this program.

The HCAHPS Project Team has received numerous technical assistance inquiries pertaining to Hospital VBP and the role that HCAHPS may play in it, so we have issued a new bulletin. Please click [here](#) to view or download a copy of the HCAHPS Bulletin 2010-01, "HCAHPS and Hospital Value Based Purchasing."

We add a new feature to the HCAHPS On-Line Web site this month: HCAHPS Hospital Characteristics Comparison Charts. These charts depict hospital performance on ten publicly reported HCAHPS measures by hospital Region, Bed Size, Teaching Status, Ownership and Control, and Location. The charts allow users to see how hospitals that differ on specific characteristics perform on HCAHPS. You can learn more about the charts in Summary Analyses section of HCAHPS On-Line.

HCAHPS Tables

We have reorganized the HCAHPS Tables to make it easier to locate summary information on HCAHPS results, both current and past. A new button on the HCAHPS On-Line homepage, "*Summary Analyses*", is the gateway to tables containing state and national HCAHPS results, HCAHPS "top-box" and "bottom-box" percentiles, inter-correlations of the ten HCAHPS measures, and the new HCAHPS comparison charts, all of which are exclusive to HCAHPS On-Line.

As always, we encourage both hospitals and their survey vendors to regularly check our "*What's New*" button to keep abreast of the latest information on HCAHPS, such as dates for upcoming data submission. The HCAHPS Project Team continually analyzes HCAHPS data and our published research findings are listed in this *bibliography*, including a new article about trends in HCAHPS scores over the first two years of public reporting. Also, please note that we have updated the *HCAHPS Fact Sheet*, which can be found elsewhere in HCAHPS Executive Insight.

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

HCAHPS Executive Insight, December 2010. [hcahpsonline.org](http://www.hcahpsonline.org). Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Baltimore, MD. *Month, Date, Year the page was accessed*.
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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.

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