

September HCAHPS Executive Insight Letter

Welcome

September 2010

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

In September, 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 January and December 2009. Some highlights include:

- The September 2010 results are based on more than 2.5 million completed surveys from 3,792 hospitals
- The number of hospitals reporting their HCAHPS results has increased by 1,272 (50%) since the first public reporting in March 2008
- HCAHPS data for Fourth Quarter 2008 rolled off of Hospital Compare while Fourth Quarter 2009 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 January and December 2009, over 8.5 million patients (an average of more than 23,000 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 recently enacted *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (P.L. 111-148) (<http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/ppacacon.pdf>) specifically includes HCAHPS as an element in the Hospital Value-Based Purchasing (VBP) program (see Section 3001), which is to begin with discharges in October 2012. CMS will provide more information about Hospital VBP closer to the time of the implementation of this program.

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, and inter-correlations of the ten HCAHPS measures. In addition to refreshing these tables (which are exclusive to HCAHPS On-Line) on a regular basis, we plan to add new tabular information in the future, so watch this space!

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*. 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:

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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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