



# Tips for the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey Measures



## What is the survey and why is it important?

The Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) is sent to Medicare enrollees each year. Questions center on physical and mental health status, activities of daily living, and overall quality of life. The survey is designed to measure functional and cognitive aspects of health that have a direct impact on overall well-being and quality of life. By proactively addressing these components, patients are more likely to live longer.

## Your role

The interactions patients have with their healthcare providers have a direct impact on their health and how they answer HOS questions. Each HOS measure addresses a different aspect of patient health and provider-patient interactions. The measures that the survey focuses on can help guide discussions with patients about these health topics.

## Using Annual Wellness Visits (AWV) to maximize your time

By promoting the Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) to your Medicare patients, which includes the Health Outcomes Survey measures, you'll be able to review these key components of care every year.

**Note:** An AWV can't take place within 12 months of a patient's initial "Welcome to Medicare" visit. However, after that, AWVs renew with the plan year, so one AWV can be scheduled each year.

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## Contact our Customer Service team

### Oct. 1 – Mar. 31:

8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.,  
seven days a week

### Apr. 1 – Sept. 30:

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.,  
Monday – Friday

## Phone

**888-863-3637**, TTY: 711.  
We accept all relay calls.

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# HOS measures and recommended actions to support them

## Mental health

- Assess your patient's symptoms of depression with appropriate screening tools.
- Routinely assess whether emotional problems (depression, anxiety, loneliness, addiction) negatively affect your patient's daily or social activities.
- Refer patients to mental health services or manage depression and anxiety treatment as indicated.
- Use motivational interviewing to improve treatment, engagement, and mental and physical health outcomes.

## Physical health

- Promote self-management support strategies, such as goal setting, action planning, problem-solving, and follow-up, to help patients take an active role in improving their health.
- Assess patient's pain and functional status using standardized tools.
- Provide interventions to improve physical health, such as pain management, physical therapy, care management, and disease management.

## Bladder control

- Assess the severity of the condition and the impact of UI on the patient's quality of life and daily activities.
- Involve patients in decisions about their treatment options that work best for them. Options include bladder training and pelvic muscle rehabilitation, as well as pharmacological and surgical therapies.
- Assess problems with UI in the last six months, and document discussion in the post-visit instructions.
- Have informative brochures and materials visible and available for patients to use as discussion starters for this sensitive topic.

**Note:** PacificSource members can get incontinence supplies through their over-the-counter spending allowance benefit (dollar amount and vendor vary).

## Physical activity

- Assess exercise level.
- Encourage patients to start small, for example with chair exercises at home or walking to the mailbox. Or suggest joining a gym or fitness program.
- Be realistic about what the patient can and will do.

**Note:** PacificSource Medicare plan benefits include a \$0 fitness benefit—the Silver&Fit® Healthy Aging and Exercise Program. It includes thousands of on-demand workout videos, home fitness kits (with a free fitness tracker option), customized workout plans, one-on-one coaching by phone, and more.

## Fall risk

- Assess fall risk by asking patients about falling, gait, and balance problems.
- Provide fall prevention interventions, such as promoting regular exercise and strengthening and balance activities (such as tai chi or yoga). Provide educational materials about fall prevention.
- Perform regular medication reviews to evaluate for medications that increase fall risk. Promote regular eye exams.
- Promote home safety, such as recommending removal of throw rugs and clutter to reduce tripping, installing handrails on stairways and grab bars in the bathrooms, use of non-slip mats in the tub or shower, use of nightlights to keep halls and bathrooms well lit, and keeping frequently used items within easy reach.

**Note:** PacificSource members can get bath and shower safety equipment through over-the-counter spending allowance benefit (dollar amount and vendor vary).

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