



MEDICARE DRUG BENEFIT AND C & D DATA GROUP

DATE: August 6, 2015

TO: Medicare Compliance Officer, Part C and D Sponsors

FROM: Amy K. Larrick, Acting Director, Medicare Drug Benefit and C & D Data Group

SUBJECT: First Plan Preview of 2016 Star Ratings Data

This memo is to inform Part C and D sponsors that they can preview their Star Ratings data in the Health Plan Management System (HPMS) prior to display on the Medicare Plan Finder (MPF). The first plan preview will be held from August 7-18, 2015.

During this first plan preview, CMS expects Part C and D sponsors to closely review the methodology and their posted data for each measure. Sponsors should immediately alert CMS of any suspected data issues or errors in order to allow sufficient time to investigate and process any necessary data corrections.

Star Ratings assignments will not be available for the first plan preview. The second plan preview will be conducted in early September and will include any revisions made as a result of the first plan preview; in addition, CMS' preliminary Star Ratings for each measure, domain, summary score, and overall score will be displayed. Medicare beneficiaries will be able to view the final Star Ratings via the MPF on www.medicare.gov in October. Data for Medicare-Medicaid Plans (MMPs) are displayed in the first plan preview for informational purposes only. MMPs will not be included in the second plan preview when stars are shown.

Instructions for Accessing Preview Data

- To access the Part C and D Star Ratings preview in HPMS, select: "Quality and Performance," then "Performance Metrics," then "Star Ratings and Display Measures," then "Star Ratings," and then select 2016 for the report period.
- The Technical Notes for Part C and D are available via the "Technical Notes" link found on each page in the Master Table modules.

Changes to plan preview and Star Ratings:

- 1) As described on the August 5th User Group Call, changes made since last year's Star Ratings include removal of pre-set 4-star thresholds, contracts with 500 or more enrollees eligible for inclusion in Star Ratings, changes to CAHPS methodology, several returning measures, and the addition of a Medication Therapy Management Program Completion Rate for Comprehensive Medication Reviews measure.

Please email comments or questions to the following mailbox:
PartCandDStarRatings@cms.hhs.gov .

Please include “Plan Preview #1” and a Contract ID in the subject line. Comments and questions will be addressed on a rolling basis and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern time on August 18, 2015.

Thank you for your continued commitment to ensure the success of the Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug programs.