



MEDICARE DRUG BENEFIT AND C & D DATA GROUP

DATE: September 3, 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: Second 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 second plan preview will begin on September 4, 2015 and will end on September 15, 2015 at 5pm ET. We have made measure data revisions and technical note updates as a result of issues found during the first plan preview. Additionally, each contract's 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 [Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov) in October.

During this second plan preview, CMS expects Part C and D sponsors to again closely review their posted data for each measure, as well as their preliminary Star Rating assignments. 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. If issues are found during the plan preview, we will update the plan preview data in HPMS on a rolling basis. If you print the information from HPMS, please double check values online prior to submitting emails.

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 from 2015 Star Ratings and 1st plan preview:

- 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.

- 2) C30 - Plan Makes Timely Decisions about Appeals: During the first plan preview, we identified some contracts had incorrectly sent Part C dismissed appeals to Maximus, and as a result, those cases were included in the measure dataset. We have corrected this to exclude all dismissed appeals.

Please email comments or questions to the following mailbox:

PartCandDStarRatings@cms.hhs.gov .

To expedite review of your comments and questions, please include “Plan Preview #2”, Contract ID(s), and the issue/measure 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. ET on September 15, 2015. Please note if your organization has multiple contracts with the same type of issue you should group those contracts in one email. If your organization has questions about multiple measures, please separate those issues into separate emails.

Example:

Subject: Plan Preview #2 HXXX, HYYYY, SZZZZ – D15

Subject: Plan Preview #2 HXXX, HYYYY – C06

Please do not submit secure emails requiring CMS to login to access the questions as multiple staff triage your emails, and it is difficult to create and share login information. If you need to share personally identifying information (PII) with us, please contact us with an unsecure email to discuss a safe way to transfer the secure data.

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