

CAHPS INSIDER

Insights and Updates for Effective Compliance

January 2026

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OAS CAHPS

Exemption for Size

Hospital Outpatient Departments (HOPDs) and Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs) that served fewer than 60 OAS CAHPS-eligible patients between January 1 and December 31, 2025 may request an exemption from participating in the OAS CAHPS Survey for the CY 2028 Annual Payment Update (APU) period. The exemption applies to the 2026 data collection year and is valid for one year. Facilities must reapply for exemptions annually.

The Participation Exemption Request (PER) form is available on the OAS CAHPS website here.

ASCs that served fewer than 240 Medicare Fee for Service patients for the same reference period are automatically exempt and do not need to submit an exemption request.



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HHCAHPS

Preview Reports

The HHCAHPS Survey Preview Reports for Q3 2024 – Q2 2025 (July 2024 – June 2025) are now live on the HHCAHPS website. These reports include star ratings for agencies with at least 40 completed patient surveys during the four-quarter period. Public reporting will begin later this month on Care Compare.

For guidance on Preview Reports, visit the HHCAHPS website and review Understanding the HHCAHPS Survey Preview Reports. To learn more about HHCAHPS star ratings and access FAQs, see Star Ratings Information on the HHCAHPS website.

Agencies are encouraged to review their reports promptly and reach out to the HHCAHPS Coordination Team at hhcahps@rti.org or 866-354-0985 with any questions.



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HHCAHPS

Coordination Team Quarterly Review

The January 2026 edition of the HHCAHPS Coordination Team Quarterly Review (CTQR) newsletter has been published, offering key updates for survey vendors and home health agencies.

This quarter there is an emphasis on improving response rates, including distributing the HHCAHPS Fact Sheet, which is available in English and Spanish. Agencies are encouraged to adopt these strategies to boost response rates.

The newsletter is available on the HHCAHPS website here.



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ICH CAHPS

Participation and Vendor Authorization

In-center hemodialysis (ICH) facilities that served 30 or more survey-eligible patients in calendar year 2025 are required to field ICH CAHPS in spring and fall of 2026 to be compliant with CMS quality reporting requirements. ICH facilities that served fewer than 30 eligible patients can participate voluntarily. A comprehensive list of eligibility requirements is available here.

Facilities participating in the 2026 ICH CAHPS Spring Survey must authorize an approved survey vendor by the February 28, 2026 deadline. Vendor authorization can be completed when logged in to the ICH CAHPS website and is only required if:

- → Your organization is participating in ICH CAHPS for the first time,
- → Your organization is changing to a new survey vendor, or
- → Fall 2025 is listed as the ending survey period in your existing vendor authorization.

If you have questions, please reach out to the ICH CAHPS Coordination Team at ichcahps@rti.org or 866-245-8083.



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ACO REACH

ACO REACH Model Concludes After 2026

CMS has confirmed the ACO REACH model will conclude at the end of 2026 as scheduled. The ACO REACH CAHPS Survey will still be conducted in 2026, and NRC Health will continue as a CMS-approved survey vendor, supporting our partners through the end of the program.

Looking ahead, CMS has announced a new 10-year accountable care model called LEAD, set to launch in 2027. LEAD aims to expand participation among small and rural providers, reduce administrative barriers, and introduce new care coordination features. More details on the LEAD model and its impact will be shared as they become available.



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External Submission Deadlines

	Q1 2025 Discharges	Q2 2025 Discharges	Q3 2025 Discharges	Q4 2025 Discharges
HCAHPS	*7/9/2025*	*10/8/2025*	1/14/2026	4/8/2026
Premier	*7/18/2025*	*10/17/2025*	1/23/2026	4/17/2026
Vizient	*7/18/2025*	*10/17/2025*	1/23/2026	4/17/2026
HHCAHPS	*7/17/2025*	*10/16/2025*	1/15/2026	4/16/2026
CAHPS Hospice	*8/13/2025*	*11/12/2025*	2/11/2026	5/13/2026
OAS CAHPS	*7/9/2025*	*10/8/2025*	1/14/2026	4/8/2026
ICH CAHPS	*7/30/2025 (Spring 2025)*		1/28/2026 (Fall 2025)	
ACO REACH		*1/12/2026 (2025)*		
CAHPS for MIPS		1/15/2026 (2025)		

**Activity COMPLETE*



If you have any questions regarding the information included in this edition of the CAHPS Insider, please contact NRC Health CAHPS Compliance at CAHPSCompliance@nrchealth.com.

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