

Delivering Care That Drives Outcomes

5-Star Best Practices



The Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) is one of two regular surveys that monitor patient satisfaction and can affect CMS star ratings. Below are a few HOS metrics and tips for providing 5-Star care.

5-Star Metric: Improving or Maintaining Mental Health

HOS asks patients:

- > During the past four weeks, have you had any of the following problems with your work or other regular daily activities as a result of any emotional problems (such as feeling depressed or anxious): Accomplished less than you would like? Didn't do work or other activities as carefully as usual?
- > How much time during the past four weeks have you: Felt calm and peaceful? Did you have a lot of energy? Have you felt downhearted and blue?
- > How much time during the past four weeks has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your social activities (like visiting friends, relatives, etc.)?

Tips for 5-Star Mental Health Care for Patients Age 65 and Up

- > Evaluate the patient with PHQ-2 and, when appropriate, PHQ-9.
- > For patients experiencing depression or anxiety, talk with them about ways to get help, including being referred to a specialist.
- > Reconcile medications at every visit to ensure the patient is taking the right medications in the right doses. Discuss and address issues of substance abuse and illegal drug use.

5-Star Metric: Reducing Risk of Falling

HOS asks patients:

- > A fall is when your body goes to the ground without being pushed. In the past 12 months, did you talk with your doctor or other health provider about falling or problems with balance or walking?
- > In the past 12 months, have you had a problem with balance or walking?
- > Has your doctor or other health provider done anything to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking?

Tips for 5-Star Care for Reducing Falling Risk

- > Ask patients if they have fallen or been off-balance recently. Discuss ways that they can reduce their risk of falling, such as exercises that increase leg strength and balance, annual eye exams and durable medical equipment.
- > For patients with limited mobility, consider referring to an occupational therapist for their homes to be evaluated and modified as needed for safety.
- > Review the patient's medications and consider withdrawing or modifying drugs that may increase the risk of falling.
- > Have information easily available in your office for patients to use as discussion starters for more sensitive topics. Contact SCAN for member-friendly materials to make available to your patients.
- > Assess for and manage bladder incontinence.

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5-Star Metric: Monitoring Physical Activity

HOS asks patients:

- > In the past 12 months, did you talk with a doctor or other health provider about your level of exercise or physical activity? For example, a doctor or other health provider may ask if you exercise regularly or take part in physical exercise.
- > In the past 12 months, did a doctor or other health provider advise you to start, increase or maintain your level of exercise or physical activity? For example, in order to improve your health, your doctor or other health provider may advise you to start taking stairs, increase walking from 10 to 20 minutes every day or maintain your current exercise program.

Tips for 5-Star Care for Monitoring Physical Activity

- > At each visit, assess the patient's activity level.
- > Based on needs found in the assessment, provide patients with appropriate educational materials and suggestions for gyms, fitness programs and other community resources.
- > For patients with limited mobility, consider referring them to physical therapy to learn safe and effective exercises.

5-Star Metric: Improving or Maintaining Physical Health

HOS asks patients:

- > In general, would you say your health is: Excellent? Very good? Good? Fair? Poor?
- > Does your health now limit you in activities you might do during a typical day, such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, playing golf or climbing a flight of stairs? If so, how much?
- > During the past four weeks, have you accomplished less than you would like or been limited in your work or other regular daily activities as a result of your physical health?
- > During the past four weeks, how much did pain interfere with your normal work (outside the home and housework)?

Tips for 5-Star Physical Health Care for Patients Age 65 and Up

- > Have your medical assistants assess patients' physical activity level before seeing the PCP.
- > During the annual wellness visit, talk with patients about their health, and document changes that have occurred in the past year.
- > Recommend appropriate physical activity, and provide educational materials, suggested exercises and information on fitness programs and other community resources.
- > Consider referring patients with limited mobility to physical therapy to learn safe and effective exercises.