

# ICHCAHPS

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: What is ICHCAHPS?**

**A:** ICHCAHPS refers to the In-center Hemodialysis Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey. The survey tool was designed to assess patient perceptions of care provided at dialysis facilities. The survey is 65 questions in length.

### **Q: Who developed ICHCAHPS?**

**A:** The survey was developed in 2003 by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) in collaboration with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Consortium. The survey was endorsed by the National Quality Forum in November 2007.

### **Q: What concept areas are included in ICHCAHPS?**

**A:** Items within the ICHCAHPS survey instruments include: nephrologists' communication and caring, quality of dialysis center care and operations, providing information to patients, global rating of kidney doctors, global rating of dialysis center staff and global rating of the dialysis center.

### **Q: What is the status of the ICHCAHPS implementation?**

**A:** CMS has implemented a value based purchasing program for facilities paid under the End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Prospective Payment System. The quality incentive program (QIP) penalizes dialysis providers that do not meet certain performance thresholds by withholding up to 2.0 percent of their payments beginning in 2012. In 2012 and 2013 ICH facilities had to attest to ICHCAHPS participation. Beginning in 2014, the ICHCAHPS survey must be administered by a third-party vendor approved by CMS and data must be submitted to CMS. Press Ganey is an approved survey vendor for ICHCAHPS.

### **Q: Is ICHCAHPS linked to payment?**

**A:** Dialysis centers have 2% of their reimbursement at risk each year as part of the Quality Incentive Program. Beginning with payment in 2014, participation in ICHCAHPS will be factored into the dialysis centers total performance.

### **Q: Which patients are eligible for the survey?**

**A:** Patients over the age of 18 receiving outpatient hemodialysis for at least three months are eligible for the survey.

### **Q: How many patients will be surveyed?**

**A:** CMS will randomly select 200 eligible patients to send to your survey vendor to be surveyed for each ICH facility.

### **Q: How will the survey be conducted?**

**A:** There are three survey methodologies available for administration in 2014. For mail methodology, Press Ganey will mail a pre-notification letter followed by two waves of mail surveys to each patient selected for the survey. For telephone methodology, Press Ganey will send a pre-notification letter followed by up to ten telephone attempts to each patient selected for the survey. For mixed methodology, Press Ganey will send a pre-notification letter followed by a mail survey and up to ten telephone attempts

to each patient selected for the survey. The telephone attempts will be made at different times of day, on different days of the week, and spread across different weeks of the month to maximize the likelihood that we will contact your patients.

**Q: Why should I use a vendor?**

**A:** Dialysis centers are required by CMS to use a third party to conduct the survey in an unbiased way. Press Ganey has professional and highly trained interviewers that will conduct the survey. While we take care of survey administration you can focus on improving the experience of your patients.

**Q: Why should I select Press Ganey as my vendor?**

**A:** Press Ganey is a leader in CAHPS survey administration. We have an on-site phone center with over 90 dedicated operators. We will also provide you with improvement resources and your own improvement manager to act as your guide.

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