

40.1 – General Rule

(Rev. 3, Issued: 09-05-08, Effective: 09-01-08, Implementation: 09-01-08)

Section 1860D-4(d) of the Act specifies that consumer satisfaction surveys be conducted for Part D in a manner similar to how they are conducted for MA plans. Accordingly, CMS will use the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and System (CAHPS®) Survey process established for Part C at 42 CFR 422.152(b).

The CAHPS® survey is conducted annually to assess the experiences of beneficiaries with the services they receive from their health plan. The CAHPS® survey is designed to provide information in a timely manner to Medicare beneficiaries in order to facilitate their plan choice which is normally made during the fall of the year. The survey is also used by CMS and MA organizations as a tool in assessing and benchmarking plan performance. Survey respondents are comprised of a randomly selected sample of plan enrollees who were members of a plan for at least 6 months.

The Medicare CAHPS® survey includes questions about prescription drug benefits in order to assess Medicare beneficiaries' experiences with Medicare prescription drug coverage. For Medicare Advantage plans, the questions relevant to Part D are asked only of those Medicare Advantage enrollees with prescription drug coverage, whereas stand-alone Part D plan enrollees are sent a separate survey. CAHPS® questions focus on beneficiaries' experience with getting needed information about their prescription drug plan and with getting the prescription drugs they need.

The results of the Medicare CAHPS® survey are compiled annually and disseminated to all Part D sponsors in January of each year. For purposes of display on the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder, elements of the CAHPS® survey are compared to a national average and assigned star ratings depending on their item or composite average. During annual enrollment, beneficiaries can review the star ratings as part of their overall decision making process about drug coverage for the upcoming contract year.