

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 (i.e. feeling depressed or anxious): Accomplished less than you would like? Didn't do things as carefully as usual?
- During the past four weeks: Have you felt calm and peaceful? Did you have a lot of energy? Have you felt downhearted and blue?
- During the past four weeks has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your social activities (i.e. visiting friends, relatives, etc.)?

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

- Annual depression screening (PHQ-2 or PHQ-9) can be incorporated into any visit.
- Hearing tests when appropriate, as loss of hearing can feel isolating.
- Provide patients the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline information (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK).
- Talk to patients experiencing depression or anxiety about ways to get help and specialist referrals.
- 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: 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? I.e., a health provider may ask if/when you 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 (i.e. start taking stairs, increase walking from 10 to 20 minutes daily 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 for effective exercises.

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?
- Has your 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 (i.e. exercises to increase leg strength and balance, annual eye exams and durable medical equipment).
- For patients with limited mobility, consider referring to an occupational therapist for home evaluation and safety modifications.
- Review the patient's medications and consider withdrawing or modifying drugs that may increase the risk of falling (i.e: benzodiazepine, antihypertensives, and diuretics).
- Have information easily available in your office for patients to use as discussion starters for more sensitive topics. Contact SCAN for member-friendly materials.
- Assess for and manage bladder incontinence.

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 been limited in your work or daily activities as a result of your physical health?
- During the past four weeks, how much did pain interfere with your work (outside the home)?

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.
- Recommend appropriate physical activity, and provide educational materials, suggested exercises and information on fitness programs and other community resources.
- Consider referring limited mobility patients to physical therapy to learn effective exercises.

5-Star Metrics: Improving Bladder Control

HOS asks patients:

- Have you had leakage of urine in the past six months?
- How often and when does the leakage problem occur?
- Has UI affected your daily life (i.e. social withdrawal, depression, or sleep interruption)?
- Have you ever talked with a doctor, nurse, or other health care provider about urine leakage?
- Have you ever talked to a nurse, doctor, or other health care provider about ways to control or manage urine leakage including, medication, bladder training exercises, and surgery?

Tips for 5-Star Care for Improving Bladder Control

- Assess problems with UI in the last six months and document discussion in the post-visit instructions.
- Assess the severity of the condition and the impact of UI on the patient's quality of life and daily activities.
- Involve patients in decisions about treatment options that best work for them. These options include behavioral (such as bladder training and pelvic muscle rehabilitation), pharmacological and surgical therapies.