HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V18.0
Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

This document is a reference tool that highlights the major changes from the HCAHPS *Quality Assurance Guidelines V17.0 to V18.0.* The HCAHPS *Quality Assurance Guidelines V18.0* (QAG) applies to **July 1, 2023 patient discharges and forward**. This document is not a substitute for reviewing the QAG in its entirety. General format and minor wording revisions have occurred throughout the manual and are not included in this change matrix. Please contact HCAHPS Technical Assistance at hcahps@hsag.com for any specific questions.

QAG V18.0 Section	Summary of Key Changes

Miscellaneous	• **Updates:**
	  o Revised V17.0 to V18.0
	  o Revised dates as necessary (e.g., 2022 to 2023)
	  o Updated references to V.40 and V.41 MS-DRG codes
	  o Updated to HCAHPS File Specifications Version 4.6
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions throughout the manual

Acknowledgements	• **Updates:** o Updated Official UB-04, Data Specifications Manual by permission, Copyright to reflect 2022 reference
I. Reader's Guide	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor wording revisions

II. Introduction and Overview	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated HCAHPS Fact Sheet reference
	  o Added CMS developing HCAHPS 2.0 for anticipated release in 2025
	  o Updated the HCAHPS Development, Data Collection and Public Reporting Timeline
	    ▪ Added HCAHPS Podcast entitled "Improving Representativeness of the HCAHPS Survey" (July 2022)
	    ▪ Added FY 2023 IPPS Final Rule (August 2022)
	    ▪ Added updated survey mode adjustments applied to January 1, 2023 and forward patient discharges (January 2023)
	    ▪ Added HCAHPS Training (March 2023) and public reporting dates (January, April, July and October 2023)
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions

III. Program Requirements	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated Exception Request guideline for remote survey operations
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions

IV. Communications and Technical Support	• **Updates:** o Updated the QualityNet Help Desk email address to qnetsupport@cms.hhs.gov

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V18.0
Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

QAG V18.0 Section	Summary of Key Changes

V. Survey Management	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated Exception Request guideline for remote survey operations
	  o Added data security requirement for hospitals/survey vendors who are approved for remote operations
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions

VI. Sampling Protocol	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated Table of MS-DRG Codes and Service Line Categories to V.40 (effective October 1, 2022 patient discharges) and added reference to V.41 MS-DRG codes (effective October 1, 2023 patient discharges)
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions

VII. Mail Only Survey Administration	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated Exception Request guideline for remote survey operations
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions
	  o See Appendices A – I, HCAHPS Mail Materials

VIII. Telephone Only Survey Administration	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated Exception Request guideline for remote survey operations
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions
	  o See Appendices J – M, HCAHPS Telephone Scripts
	• **Emphasis:**
	  o Clarified that silent monitoring capability must include the ability to monitor calls live, both on-site and from remote locations and that all staff conducting HCAHPS interviews must be included in the monitoring

IX. Mixed Mode Survey Administration	• **Updates:**
	  o See Mail Only and Telephone Only Survey Administration
	  o See Appendices A – D, HCAHPS Mail Materials and J – M, HCAHPS Telephone Scripts

X. Active Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Survey Administration	• **Updates:**
	  o Updated Exception Request guideline for remote survey operations
	  o Updated with minor wording revisions
	  o See Appendices N and O, HCAHPS Active IVR Scripts
	• **Emphasis:**
	  o Clarified that silent monitoring capability must include the ability to monitor calls live, both on-site and from remote locations and that all staff conducting HCAHPS interviews must be included in the monitoring

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V18.0
Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

QAG V18.0 Section	Summary of Key Changes
XI. Data Specifications and Coding	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor wording revisions • **Emphasis:** o Clarified that certain Header Record information cannot be modified once two months of data have been submitted
XII. Data Preparation and Submission	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor wording revisions
XIII. Oversight Activities	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor wording revisions
XIV. Data Reporting	• **Updates:** o Updated Anticipated Public Reporting table of publishing HCAHPS Survey results o Updated with minor wording revisions
XV. Exception Request / Discrepancy Report Processes	• **Updates:** o Updated Exception Request guideline for remote survey operations o Updated with minor wording revisions
XVI. Data Quality Checks	• **No Updates**
Appendices	
Appendices A - I HCAHPS Mail Materials	• **Updates:** o Portuguese Survey Scannable Instrument: Updated with minor edit to Question 25 to underline the word "saude." See Appendix F – HCAHPS Mail Survey (Portuguese) o German Survey Instrument: Updated with minor edit to survey instructions skip pattern language example to revise from "mit" to "zu." See Appendix G – HCAHPS Mail Survey (German) o Tagalog Follow-up Cover Letter: Updated with minor edit to the sentence stating the sponsor of the survey and length of time to complete the questions to revise from "aabot" to "aabutin." See Appendix H – HCAHPS Mail Survey (Tagalog) • **Emphasis:** o Clarified required verbatim language on cover letters o Clarified placement of optional Reply-by Date on follow-up cover letter
Appendices J - M HCAHPS Telephone Scripts	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor wording revisions • **Emphasis:** o Clarified programming notes with minor formatting changes

HCAHPS Quality Assurance Guidelines V18.0
Change Matrix: Updates and Emphasis

QAG V18.0 Section	Summary of Key Changes

Appendices N and O
HCAHPS Active IVR Scripts
	• **Updates:**
	   o Updated with minor wording revisions
	• **Emphasis:**
	   o Clarified programming notes with minor formatting changes

Appendix P Interviewing Guidelines	• **No Updates**
Appendix Q Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	• **No Updates**

Appendix R
Sample Frame File Layout
	• **Updates:**
	   o Updated references to V.40 and V.41 MS-DRG codes
	   o Updated with minor wording revisions

Appendix S
Data File Structure Version 4.6
	• **Updates:**
	   o Updated references to V.40 and V.41 MS-DRG codes
	   o Updated with minor wording revisions

Appendix T
XML File Specifications Version 4.6
	• **Updates:**
	   o Updated references to V.40 and V.41 MS-DRG codes
	   o Updated with minor wording revisions

Appendix U Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) Outline and Survey Material Checklist	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor formatting and wording revisions
Appendices V-X Participation Forms	• **Updates:** o Updated with minor formatting and wording revisions

Appendix Y
Exception Request Form
	• **Updates:**
	   o Added new Exception Request category to include remote survey operations
	   o Updated with minor wording revisions

Appendix Z Discrepancy Report Form	• **No Updates**
Appendix AA Attestation Statement Form	• **No Updates**
Appendix BB Use of HCAHPS with Other Hospital Inpatient Surveys	• **No Updates**