

Summary of 2021 CAHPS® Hospice Survey Mode Experiment

In 2021, CMS conducted a mode experiment to test:

- A web-mail mode (email invitation to a web survey, with mail follow-up to non-responders),
- A revised survey version, which is shorter and simpler than the current survey, and includes new questions on topics suggested by stakeholders, and
- Modifications to survey administration protocols designed to improve overall response rates, such as a prenotification letter and extended field period.

Fifty-six large hospices participated in the mode experiment, representing a range of geographic regions, ownership, and past performance on the CAHPS Hospice Survey. A total of 15,515 decedents/caregivers were randomly sampled from these hospices. Sampled decedents/caregivers were randomly assigned to one of four modes of administration (mail only, telephone only, mail-telephone, web-mail); mail only cases were randomly assigned to be administered either the revised or the current survey. CMS found that:

- Response rates to the revised survey were 35.1 percent in mail only mode, 31.5 percent in telephone only mode, 45.3 percent in mail-telephone, and 39.7 percent in web-mail mode.
 - Response rates to web-mail mode were similar to mail only mode for those without email addresses (35.2 percent vs. 34.4 percent), but 13 percentage points higher for those with email addresses (49.6 percent vs. 36.7 percent).
- Response rates to mail-only administration of the revised and current survey were similar (35.1% vs. 34.2%).
- Mailing of a prenotification letter resulted in an increased response rate of 2.4 percentage points.
- Extending the field period to 49 days (from the current 42 days) resulted in an increased response rate of 2.5 percentage points in the mail only mode.

CMS will use mode experiment results to inform decisions about potential changes to administration protocols and survey instrument content. Changes will be proposed during future rulemaking.