

Qualis[®]

INTELLIGENT DME[®] SOLUTIONS

How **90%** of Qualis
Clients Achieved Above
National and State
Average CAHPS Scores





FRAMEWORK

In 2012, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) began the process of developing the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey. It was created with the goal of providing a consistent survey tool for care givers to score experiences related to how well the hospice served their patient and themselves. This publicly reported information was to assist those considering hospice alternatives, aid hospices identify areas of needed improvement, and provide CMS with information for monitoring care provided. (Price et al., 2016)

Ten years later, the CAHPS survey is in full use and reshaping how many hospices are providing care. There are forty-seven questions, comprised of six multi-item composites and three single-item indications: Hospice Team Communication, Getting Timely Care, Treating Your Family Member with Respect, Providing Emotional Support, Getting Help for Symptoms, Hospice Care Training, Information Continuity, Support for Religious and Spiritual Beliefs, and Understanding the Side Effects of Pain Medication.

Of the 47 questions, 40% of the questions are something the hospice's Durable Medical Equipment solution directly impacts. These 19 questions relate to how the care giver perceives quality of care for their loved one. Specific to DME, there are six categories in the Family Care Giver Experience section of the CAHPS survey that are directly affected by the hospice's DME vendor: Communication with Family, Getting Timely Help, Treating Patient with Respect, Training Family to Care for the Patient, Rating of the Hospice, and Willingness to Recommend the Hospice.

In August 2022, CMS began providing a star rating based on CAHPS survey results. This five-star rating allows prospective patients and care givers to quickly review a visual indication of quality. Equally important is to consider the near future as the hospice industry transitions from a fee-for-service model to a value-based model. As the hospice industry transitions to a more value-based model, CAHPS ratings will be paramount to participation.



KEY FINDINGS

Qualis Clients Score Higher than their National and State Competitors

Qualis assists clients achieve higher CAHPS scores in the following ways:

- ✓ Promoting a network of DME vendors, rather than locking into one. We believe this is the most proactive approach to ensuring timely deliveries, pickups, and access to equipment
- ✓ Dedicated staff to assist those closest to maximize their time serving patients instead of dealing with DME issues
 - Our Quality Improvement team looks at every order, note, and pickup request to ensure accuracy. We intervene when necessary to simplify DME ordering, and limit time spent on data entry and paperwork.
 - If there are any issues with DME, our team jumps in to solve them, avoiding disruptions to your daily operations.
- ✓ Vendor training in hospice patient and care giver interaction
- ✓ DME order, tracking, and reporting software to enhance communications, timeliness, and accuracy of DME deliveries
- ✓ Clinical education CE/CME courses specific to DME in a hospice setting
Tailored data/ reports for continual service improvement

The results are significant. Comparing performance in general of Qualis clients relative to averages and further analyzing the six categories DME most directly impacts, the data is staggering.

90% of Qualis clients score above the national and state averages. On average, Qualis clients score an average of 6% higher than the national average of the six categories most impacted by their DME vendor(s). CAHPS scores vary significantly by state, and so examining a given hospice relative to its state peers assists in providing a frame of reference. On average, Qualis clients score 4% higher than their state peers on these six key categories:

CATEGORY	Higher/(Lower) to National Ave	Higher/(Lower) to State Ave
Communication with Family	6%	3%
Getting Timely Help	9%	6%
Treating Patient with Respect	2%	2%
Training Family to Care for Patient	4%	2%
Rating of Hospice	8%	6%
Willingness to Refer Hospice	9%	5%

Qualis helps CAHPS Scores Improve

While a vast majority of these excellent survey results of Qualis clients are the result of outstanding hospices themselves, there is a positive impact of quality of service when great hospices choose to work with great vendor partners. A comparison of pre- vs current Qualis service is warranted and requires a different statistically valid sample. Especially considering surveys based on perception of service as time has progressed well beyond when the services were rendered is challenging. A report by Optum on this topic summarizes the difficulty of hospices improving CAHPS scores well, “Improving CAHPS scores relative to other measures has proven to be difficult.” (Optum, Best Practices for Improving your CAHPS scores. 2016).

Analyzing the CAHPS scores in these five categories pre-Qualis and comparing them to CAHPS scores once Qualis begins to serve such hospices, the results are as follows: Clients experienced an improvement of 4% over National Averages and 4% over their State Peers.

CATEGORY	Higher/(Lower) to National Ave	Higher/(Lower) to State Ave
Communication with Family	4%	4%
Getting Timely Help	4%	5%
Treating Patient with Respect	2%	2%
Training Family to Care for Patient	5%	5%
Rating of Hospice	4%	5%
Willingness to Refer Hospice	2%	2%





CONCLUSION

The method used for this analysis is a statistically valid sampling of clients and comparing Qualis client data to CMS published data on a longitudinal basis. (CMS, 2022). The results are Qualis clients have higher CAHPS scores and these scores improve while Qualis serves these clients.

Such improvement is achieved due to Qualis proprietary tools, and a Partnership approach to serving clients while working with DME vendors.

As referral sources, managed care vendors, and the public become increasingly cognizant of CAHPS survey results and star rankings, it is imperative that hospices begin considering vendors with whom they partner. Qualis is simply not a good fit for some hospices, but those mission-driven, outcomes-oriented, cost-conscious, and employee-served find our service an integrated facet of their service. Good CAHPS scores, rankings, and positive trending of CAHPS is the result of Qualis' partnership approach to serving outstanding hospices.

REFERENCES

- Price, R., Qigley, D., Bradley, M., Teno, J., Parast, L., Elliott, M., Hass, A., Stucky, Mingura, B., & Lorenz, K. (2022). Hospice Experience of Care Survey: Development and Field Test. Rand Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR657.html
- Optum® Best Practices for Improving Your CAHPS® Scores. (2016). https://cdn-aem.optum.com/content/dam/optum3/optum/en/resources/white-papers/WF245401_Payer-CAHPS
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2022). <http://data.cms.gov/provider-data/search?theme=hospice%20care>



Your Next Steps

Getting started is easy after you decide you're ready to incorporate Qualis into your organization.

Our team offers integration training to ensure a smooth transition from your old systems to Qualis while not disrupting DME ordering in the process.

Contact our team if you're ready to learn more about how Qualis can integrate flawlessly into your hospice organization.

