

CAHPS Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS CAHPS): Survey Updates and Participating in the Database

June 2, 2026

Housekeeping

Thank you for joining us today.



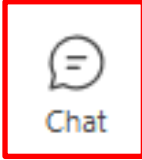
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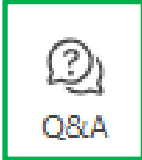
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Please **do not** submit questions in the chat box

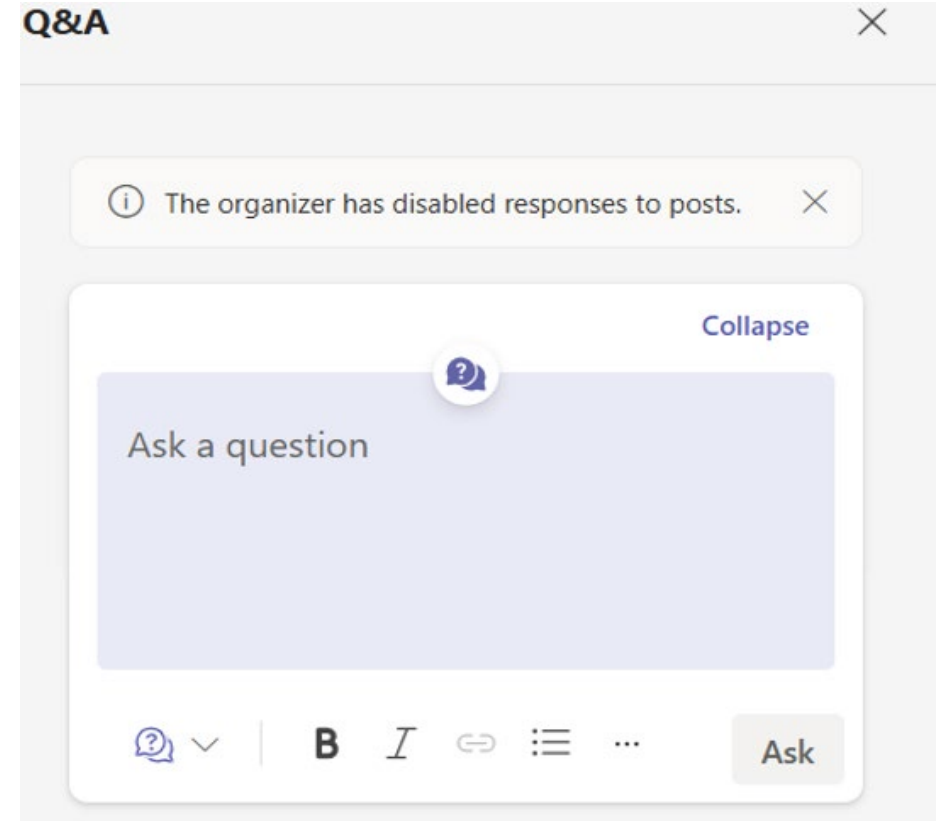


Please **do** submit questions in the Q&A box



Technical Info

- Audio issues
- Poor connection
- Use Q&A to submit questions



Today's Speakers

- **Stephanie Fry, CPXP**, Associate Vice President, Westat
- **Melanie Brown, Ph.D.**, Technical Director Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- **Joshua Rubin**, HCBS CAHPS Database, Lead Research Associate, Westat

Agenda

- Presentation
 - HCBS CAHPS Database Overview and Benefits
 - HCBS CAHPS Survey
 - What's New for the HCBS CAHPS Survey
- Questions and Answers

HCBS CAHPS Survey: Overview and Role in Medicaid HCBS Quality Measurement

Melanie Brown, PhD
Technical Director, Division of Community Systems Transformation
Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS)



Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)

- Provide long-term services and supports in home and community settings
- Enable individuals to live in their homes and communities
- Support individuals in avoiding institutional care and transitioning from institutions to the community
- Serve older adults and people with disabilities
- Delivered through Medicaid authorities including 1915(c), 1915(i), 1915(j), 1915(k), and 1115 demonstrations

HCBS Quality and Measurement

- Focuses on how well services support individual needs and preferences
- Focuses on how services are delivered in community settings
- Includes measurement of access, service delivery, outcomes, and experience
- Requires standardized approaches to measurement
- Includes use of experience-of-care surveys

HCBS CAHPS Survey

Focuses on the Person

Assesses whether services are person-centered and prioritize what is important to participants, if participants can direct and control their own service plan, and how services are delivered

Includes Reliable and Valid Survey Measures

Developed with input from a range of stakeholders and tested through the CMS Testing Experience and Functional Tools (TEFT) Demonstration

Applies across Delivery Systems

Used in both fee-for-service and managed care programs, allowing for comparison of all programs operating within a state

Applies across Populations

Target populations include older adults and persons with physical disabilities, intellectual or developmental disabilities, acquired brain injury, or mental health or substance use disorders

Includes the Option for Telephone, In-Person, and Videoconference

Fielded by interview conducted either over phone, video, or in-person. Several states also using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI).

Asks about 69 Core Items

Contains a maximum of 69 core items, depending on the types of services used

Key HCBS CAHPS Considerations

- Development aligned with CAHPS
- Frequency of use determined by survey sponsor
- Publicly available for voluntary use in HCBS programs as part of quality assurance and improvement activities and public reporting
- Provision of technical assistance by CMS to support all users
- Unit of analysis can vary
- Seventeen composite measures derived from HCBS CAHPS are endorsed by a consensus-based entity
- AHRQ, along with its contractor Westat, manages the HCBS CAHPS Database, which offers free access to aggregated results for analysis and use

HCBS Quality Measure Set

- Developed by CMS to support standardized quality measurement in HCBS
- Identified in CMS guidance, including updates released in 2024 and proposed changes for 2028 released for public comment in April 2026 through the Federal Register
- Includes measures across multiple domains of HCBS quality
- Draws from administrative data and experience-of-care surveys

HCBS CAHPS Measures in the HCBS Quality Measure Set

- Includes measures related to person-centered planning, personal safety, and transportation, among others
- Reflects beneficiary-reported experience
- Supports comparisons within and across HCBS programs

Using HCBS CAHPS Data

- HCBS CAHPS data can be used for program monitoring, quality improvement, and comparative analysis
- The HCBS CAHPS Database supports data submission and provides standardized reporting and access to results

HCBS CAHPS Survey Database

Joshua Rubin
HCBS CAHPS Database
Lead Research Associate
Westat

CAHPS Database Overview

- Central repository of data for selected CAHPS surveys
 - CAHPS Health Plan (HP) survey
 - HCBS CAHPS survey
 - CAHPS Child Hospital (CHCAHPS) survey
- Two major applications
 - Program-level data to assess patient/beneficiary experiences
 - De-identified data for research
- Participation is voluntary and open to all users
- Funded by AHRQ and administered by Westat through CAHPS User Network

HCBS CAHPS Database

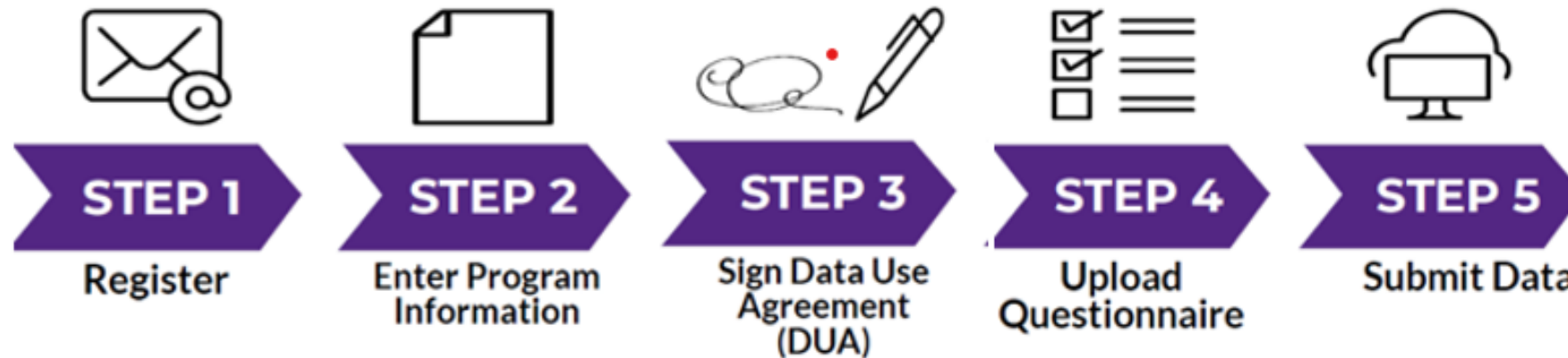
- Collaborative initiative between AHRQ and CMS
- Facilitates comparisons of HCBS CAHPS survey findings by states and HCBS program types
- Participation is free and open to all states and managed care plans (MCPs) on a voluntary basis
- Data submission opens in August each year
 - **Data submission period:** August 3 - 21 in 2026
 - **Survey administration period:** January 1 - December 31, 2025

Benefits of Participation

- Private feedback report
 - Submitting states/MCPs will receive a customized report that compares their state/MCP and individual program type results to overall HCBS CAHPS Database results
- Inclusion in other reporting products
 - Chartbooks
 - Research data set
- Technical assistance with data submission

CAHPS Data Submission Process

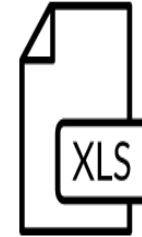
The CAHPS Database Online Submission System opens once a year. Organizations interested in submitting data complete five easy steps:



CAHPS Database Products



Chartbook:
Displays
summary-level
database results



Private Feedback Reports:
Compare your results to the
database average



Research Datasets:
De-identified data files that can
help answer researcher
questions related to patient/
beneficiary experience of care

Public reporting product availability is dependent on the volume of data received.

Example Private Excel Report: Core Results

Agency	Program	Valid Responses	Top Box	Valid Responses	Sometimes/Never (Bottom Box)	Usually (Middle Box)	Always (Top Box)
2026 HCBS CAHPS Database Average		9,091	85%	8,208	5%	11%	84%
State X	Overall	706	82%	653	4%	14%	81%
2026 HCBS CAHPS Database Older Adults Program Type Average		1,468	85%	1,167	5%	13%	82%
Older Adults	Overall	706	82%	653	4%	14%	81%
Program A	Older Adults	583	81%	549	5%	13%	83%
Program B	Older Adults	123	81%	104	4%	22%	74%

Example Private Excel Report: At A Glance

HCBS CAHPS Composite Measures by Area	Measure Type	Top Box Scores			
Composite Measure		2026 HCBS CAHPS Survey Database Average	State X	State X -2025	Program A
Staff are Reliable and Helpful	Composite Measure	85%	79%	78%	76%
Staff Listen and Communicate Well	Composite Measure	86%	83%	78%	81%
Case Manager is Helpful	Composite Measure	92%	87%	87%	88%
Choosing the Services that Matter to You	Composite Measure	80%	71%	72%	69%
Transportation to Medical Appointments	Composite Measure	77%	68%	68%	66%
Personal Safety and Respect	Composite Measure	95%	91%	89%	90%
Planning Your Time and Activities	Composite Measure	61%	54%	53%	53%

Example Private Excel Report: Demographics

Demographic Characteristics	2026 HCBS CAHPS Survey Database Average	State X	Program A	Program B
Respondent Sex				
Male	38%	27%	24%	39%
Female	62%	73%	76%	61%
Age				
18-24	3%	0%	0%	0%
25-34	7%	0%	0%	0%
35-44	8%	0%	0%	0%
45-54	10%	0%	0%	0%
55-64	19%	25%	26%	21%
65-74	23%	41%	43%	34%
75+	30%	34%	31%	45%
Education				
8th grade or less	14%	9%	10%	6%
Some high school, but did not graduate	14%	15%	16%	10%
High school graduate or GED	42%	38%	37%	39%
Some college or 2-year degree	21%	31%	30%	33%

Data Confidentiality

- HCBS programs can be assured that their data are kept confidential and no program names or other identifying information is made publicly available.

HCBS CAHPS Database Technical Assistance

- The HCBS CAHPS Database team at Westat performs the following technical assistance activities
 - Submission Issues: Respond to questions regarding data specifications and data submission
 - Reporting Issues: Respond to questions regarding public reporting products (e.g., how results are calculated, how to obtain and use research data sets).
- Contact the HCBS CAHPS Database
 - E-mail: HCBSCAHPSDatabase@westat.com
 - Phone: 855-580-4657

What's New for The HCBS CAHPS Survey

Stephanie Fry
Associate Vice President
Westat

Introducing HCBS CAHPS Version 1.1

What's Different? Slight re-organization to improve data quality and offer flexibility.



HCBS CAHPS 1.0

- Screening for receipt of:
 - Personal assistance and behavioral health services
 - Homemaker services
 - Case manager services
- Experience with personal assistance and behavioral health services
- Experience with homemaker services
- Experience with case manager services
- Transportation
- Personal safety
- Community inclusion and empowerment
- About you



HCBS CAHPS 1.1

- Screening for receipt of personal assistance and behavioral health services
 - Experiences with services
- Screening for receipt of homemaker services
 - Experiences with services
- Screening for receipt of case manager services
 - Experiences with services
- Transportation
- Personal safety
- Community inclusion and empowerment
- About you

Benefits of HCBS CAHPS 1.1 Survey Reorganization



Respondents

Reduces cognitive burden by grouping questions by service/provider



**States and other
survey users**

Offers flexibility to field survey sections relevant to users of HCBS programs

Reorganization reduces burden while preserving consistency and relevance of survey data.

HCBS CAHPS 1.1 Question-Specific Enhancements

Introduce and define terms for clarity and consistency

Example:

HCBS CAHPS 1.0:

Does someone come into your home to help you?



HCBS CAHPS 1.1:

Do you get help from someone who is paid to help you with the things you do at home or outside the home?

Explicitly excludes unpaid assistance from family or friends, improving comparability and validity of responses about formal HCBS supports

Simplify homemaker services questions

- Two yes/no items were consolidated into one frequency-based question

Reduces burden and captures how often services are received

Adopting HCBS CAHPS 1.1



HCBS CAHPS 1.1 available now!

In 2027, the HCBS CAHPS Database will accept versions 1.0 and 1.1

New HCBS CAHPS Behavioral Health Questions

Why new questions? State requests for behavioral health-specific experience of care data

What they cover:



**Counseling or
medication
services**



**Substance use
treatment**



Crisis services



**Communication
with behavioral
health staff**

23 optional items to be used with HCBS CAHPS version 1.1

Adopting HCBS CAHPS Behavioral Health Items

Example HCBS CAHPS Behavioral Health item

People can get counseling or mental health services for many different reasons, such as feeling depressed, anxious, or stressed; personal problems; or needing help with drug or alcohol use.

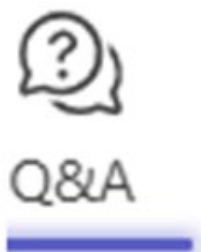
Not including care you got at a hospital; in the last 3 months, did you need any counseling, treatment or medicine for mental health, drug or alcohol use?

- Yes
- No
- Refused
- Don't know
- Unclear response

Optional HCBS CAHPS Behavioral Health items available now!

In 2027, the HCBS CAHPS database will accept Behavioral Health items

Q&A



Q&A ×

ⓘ The organizer has disabled responses to posts. ×

Collapse

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Ask a question


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A screenshot of a Q&A interface. At the top, there's a title 'Q&A' with a close button. Below it is a notification bar: 'The organizer has disabled responses to posts.' with an info icon and a close button. The main content area is a light blue box with a 'Collapse' link in the top right. Inside this box, there's a question mark icon and the text 'Ask a question'. At the bottom of the box is a toolbar with icons for a question mark, a dropdown arrow, bold (B), italic (I), link, list, and a menu icon, followed by an 'Ask' button.

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Questions

Contact the HCBS CAHPS Database

 E-mail: HCBSCAHPSDatabase@westat.com

 Phone: 1-855-580-4657

 Website: https://cahpsdatabase.ahrq.gov/default_landing.aspx

For questions about HCBS CAHPS survey implementation

E-mail: HCBSQuality@cms.hhs.gov

THANK YOU!

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE
WEBCAST EVALUATION**

