

Health outcomes survey: **fall risk management**



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) gathers patient-reported health outcomes from members enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans to support quality improvement activities and improve the overall health of members. Increased awareness of all HOS measures can help guide provider interactions with their patients and positively impact HOS results. Three of the HOS measures are included in the Medicare Part C Star Ratings. The HOS affects 3% of a plan's Star Rating.

Key drivers

- Fewer than 50% of members discuss their falls with their primary care provider.
- Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among adults 65 years and older.
- 20% to 30% of those who fall suffer moderate to severe injuries (for example, hip fracture and head trauma).
- Risk of fall-related injuries increases with age, especially for those 75 years of age and older.
- Past falls predict the likelihood of fractures independently of osteoporosis risk.
- Members may have a fear of telling providers of a fall.

CMS survey questions

- 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?
- Did you fall in the past 12 months?
- In the past 12 months, have you had a problem with balance or walking?
- Has your doctor or other health provider done anything to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking? Some things they might do include:
 - Suggest that you use a cane or walker.
 - Suggest that you do an exercise or physical therapy program.
 - Suggest a vision or hearing test.



Most likely to affect HOS score for this measure:

- Difficulty with daily activity
- Talking about physical activity
- Physical health

Best practices

- Perform the Timed Up and Go (TUG) Test to assess ambulation and gait.
- Ask these questions and document in the medical record:
 - Have you fallen and hurt yourself in the past year?
 - Have you fallen two or more times in the past year?
 - Do you fear falling because of balance or gait?

Helpful links:

cdc.gov/steady/index.html