

NCQA Publications/Programs	
Use in NCQA Health Plan Ratings	<p>Each September, NCQA provides the Medicare CAHPS ratings used in Health Plan Ratings to all plans.</p> <p>Due to the timing of receipt of Medicare CAHPS data from CMS, NCQA uses the previous measurement year's (MY) Medicare CAHPS data for Health Plan Ratings.</p> <p>On September 15, NCQA will release the Health Plan Ratings using Medicare CAHPS data on the NCQA Health Plan Report Card.</p> <p>Note: 2026 Health Plan Ratings uses MY 2024 Medicare CAHPS® data and MY 2025 Medicare HEDIS® data.</p>
Methods	
Scoring	<p>NCQA uses top-box scoring for Health Plan Ratings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For ratings on a 0–10 scale, the percentage of valid responses answering 9 or 10. • For ratings on a Never/Sometimes/Usually/Always scale, the percentage of valid responses answering “Usually” or “Always.” <p>CMS uses linear mean scoring converted to a 0–100 scale.</p>
Measure Weight	<p>NCQA assigns CAHPS measures a weight of 1.5.</p> <p>CMS assigns CAHPS measures a weight of 2.</p>
Composites	<p>NCQA: For multi-question composites, the score is the straight average of the percentage scores for individual questions.</p> <p>CMS: For the Coordination of Care measure, items 5 and 6 are averaged to generate a single item score.</p>
Case Mix Adjustment	<p>NCQA does not case-mix adjust Medicare CAHPS results.</p> <p>CMS does case-mix adjust Medicare CAHPS results.</p>
Composite and Single-Item Rating Measures	
Getting Needed Care	<p>Two-item composite (Usually+Always):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last 6 months, how often did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed? • In the last 6 months, how often was it easy to get the care, tests or treatment you needed? <p>Same questions as CMS 2-item composite (Getting Needed Care).</p>
Getting Care Quickly	<p>Two-item composite (Usually+Always):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last 6 months, when you needed care right away, how often did you get care as soon as you needed? • In the last 6 months, how often did you get an appointment for a check-up or routine care as soon as you needed? <p>Same questions as CMS 2-item composite (Getting Appointments and Care Quickly).</p>

Coordination of Care	<p>Uses the CMS 6-item composite [Care Coordination] (in contrast to NCQA’s 1-item question for commercial and Medicaid product lines) (Usually+Always):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the last 6 months, when you talked with your personal doctor during a scheduled appointment, how often did he or she have your medical records or other information about your care? 2. In the last 6 months, how often did you and your personal doctor talk about all the prescription medicines you were taking? 3. In the last 6 months, how often did your personal doctor seem informed and up-to-date about the care you got from specialists? (NCQA 1-item question for commercial and Medicaid.) 4. In the last 6 months, did you get the help you needed from your personal doctor’s office to manage your care among these different providers and services? (NCQA’s top-box scoring uses the “Yes, definitely” and “Yes, somewhat” responses). 5. In the last 6 months, when your personal doctor ordered a blood test, x-ray or other test for you, how often did someone from your personal doctor’s office follow up to give you those results? 6. In the last 6 months, when your personal doctor ordered a blood test, x-ray or other test for you, how often did you get those results as soon as you needed them? <p>¹For this 3-answer question, NCQA’s top-box scoring uses the “Yes, definitely” and “Yes, somewhat” responses.</p>
Single-Item Rating Measures	<p>Rating of All Health Care (CMS Rating of Health Care Quality):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst health care possible and 10 is the best health care possible, what number would you use to rate all your health care in the last 6 months? <p>Rating of Health Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst health plan possible and 10 is the best health plan possible, what number would you use to rate your health plan?

References

- [HEDIS Volume 3: Specifications for Survey Measures](#)
- [CMS Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plan CAHPS Survey](#)
- [CMS Medicare Part C & D Star Ratings: Technical Notes](#)

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