

# 5 Ways to modify your communication strategy to succeed in HHVBP

NAVIGATING VBP FOR HOME HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

**CitusHealth**<sup>®</sup>  
by *ResMed*



# The Home Health Value-Based Purchasing (HHVBP) Model is officially here for Medicare-certified home health organizations across the United States.

**This shift from volume-based payments to a model designed to promote higher-quality care means reimbursements will be driven by performance, which will have a significant impact on your organization.**

**The good news is that technology can help in ways that go beyond streamlining your daily processes and operations.**

With the right digital solution, you can improve your communication strategy to ensure your organization maximizes its HHVBP measures — including Home Health Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HHCAPHS) scores, Outcome and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) assessments, and claims-based measures — and ultimately, maximizes reimbursements.

Communication is an important component in achieving HHVBP success. Giving care teams the tools to effectively and efficiently communicate with each other and their patients will empower your organization to go above and beyond performance measures. By focusing on your communication strategy, your organization will be better equipped to succeed in HHVBP.



**CMS has high hopes for the expansion of HHVBP. During the original model in 2016, states increased their quality by 4.6% — saving Medicare an average of \$141 million annually. (HHCN+ Report)**

# The expanded HHVBP Model

**The HHVBP Model has been a success since its 2016 implementation, resulting on average in a 4.6% improvement in HHA performance and an annual savings to Medicare of about \$141 million. These results led to the expansion of the original HHVBP Model to continue to reduce Medicare spending and improve quality of care.**

2022 was the pre-implementation year for agencies to set the bar for performance. 2023 is the performance year, which will be measured against 2022's baseline. In 2025, the first payment year, revenue adjustment amounts will be upward or downward of 5%, which will be determined by 2023 performance scores.

During 2023, data from OASIS, HHCAHPS, and claims-based measures will be used to calculate performance, which will impact adjustments in a later year. During the payment year, an applicable percent (determined by performance-year data) ranging from -5% to 5% will be applied toward Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) payments.

In this expanded Model, each organization's unique beneficiary count in the prior calendar year determines either a nationwide larger-volume cohort or a nationwide smaller-volume cohort. This sets benchmarks and achievement thresholds when determining payment adjustments.



**It's estimated that a 50-state HHVBP program would result in about \$6.3 billion in savings over a 10-year period. (HHCN+ Report)**







## A new era of reimbursement

With the right tools, your organization can gain a competitive edge, increase referrals, and enhance the quality of care you provide in this new payment landscape — helping to ensure your team is set up for success.

Here are **5 Ways** you can help modify your communication strategy right now to succeed in HHVBP.

# 1.

## Start care in a timely manner.

**A key measure derived from data collected in the OASIS, timely initiation of care is the percentage of home health quality episodes in which the start of care or resumption of care date was within two days of the referral date or inpatient discharge date, whichever is later.**

**Why it's important:** The timely initiation of care is associated with better clinical outcomes. Start care in a timely fashion, and you're more likely to have more satisfied patients — and better performance measurements.

**The CitusHealth solution:** When your team is communicating effectively, they know when a patient is ready to start care. Secure care team messaging that helps you maintain HIPAA compliance allows your care team to communicate in real time, share documents, and start a dialogue about the patient care plan. Customizable digital forms and app-less eSignature capture allow your team to expedite any needed signatures required to start care through digital document workflows.



**Real-time communication is rewarding. According to Porter Research, 96% of all patients and family caregivers would choose one provider over another and would give the provider better HHCAHPS scores if the home health provider offers real-time communication technology through a smartphone, tablet, or computer.**

# 2.

**Be available so that 911 is called only when necessary.**

**Data from claims-based measures including Acute Care Hospitalization During the First 60 Days of Home Health Use and Emergency Department Use without Hospitalization During the First 60 Days of Home Health are used to calculate performance.**

**Why it's important:** The rationale for these measures is that some hospital care may be avoided if clinical staff is doing a good job tracking health conditions and detecting problems early, including nutritional status, medication, and home safety. When patients and their caregivers are unable to reach care teams for urgent questions, 911 is their next option — which is avoidable with real-time communication.

**The CitusHealth solution:** With auto-routing and escalation, providers can help patients and family caregivers use instant messaging to get routed within a matter of minutes to a nurse on call. No more phone calls going through an answering service, emails sitting in inboxes, or messages waiting for responses from the next shift. When nurses are available instantly, patients and caregivers know you're there for them in an urgent situation.

Beyond technology, train patients and caregivers to feel comfortable knowing what they're doing and when to call you for help. Ensure they know that your team will be there when they reach out. Sometimes they don't need a visit, they just need help talking through a situation. This thoughtful approach to communication can help you avoid unnecessary hospitalizations that can reflect poorly on your organization.

# 3.

## Reinforce communication between providers, patients, and family caregivers.

**When completing the HHCHAPS survey, patients are asked how well the home health team communicated with them throughout their care.**

**Why it's important:** The way you engage patients and their caregivers will determine how they rate your organization. Patients who feel heard and engaged are more satisfied with their care, which will be reflected in HHCAHPS scores.

**The CitusHealth solution:** Omni-channel communication allows patients and caregivers to choose their preferred method of securely sending and receiving information. Our instant messaging and video chat can help you maintain HIPAA compliance, and get patients answers from the care team faster than phone calls and emails. Making care teams easily and instantly accessible gives patients a sense of security knowing communication about their care is always at their fingertips.

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“ One of the things I’m responsible for is working on our CAHPS scores and improving the care we provide to patients and our caregivers. One feature of CitusHealth that jumped out at me was secure messaging and how we can use that to collaborate as a care team, but also to communicate with patients and/or caregivers. We can avoid waiting on callbacks and really meet the patient’s needs right when they need it. ”

*Jim Payne, Director of Enterprise Project Management, Chapters Health System*

# 4.

## Provide an accessible record of conversations about medicines, pain, and home safety.

**In the Specific Care Issues section of the HHCAHPS survey, patients are asked whether the home health team discussed medicines, pain management, and home safety during their care.**

**Why it's important:** To accurately assess medication, pain, and home safety, these topics must be well documented and discussing them should be incorporated into the treatment routine. The problem is that many patients forget these important discussions after the visit. By properly educating and training patients on the care they receive, they feel a sense of connection with the care team and a preparedness for any potential problems.

**The CitusHealth solution:** Through the platform's Education Center, care teams can follow up with patients by sending electronic documents easily accessed on any device. Care reminders and on-demand training materials are accessible via the app — empowering patients with knowledge about their care, long after their visit ends.



Having better educated patients and families on oxygen safety is critical for reducing risks associated with oxygen in the home. Being able to share that electronically with patients and family members ended up solving that problem for us.



*Sherry Stroble, CIO, Chapters Health*



# 5.

**Do a great job and remind the patients of what you did for them.**

**To measure their overall perception of your organization, the HHCHAPS survey asks patients how they would rate the overall care from your organization and whether they would recommend it to friends and family.**

**Why it's important:** The HHCAHPS survey gives patients a voice, and its questions give patients a megaphone to share their true care experience. With staff shortages and regulation changes taking their toll on clinicians, organizations must prioritize finding a solution that makes clinicians' jobs easier so they can focus more on patient care.

**The CitusHealth solution:** Once their experience with your organization is complete, patients may not remember all the great things you did for them and the high level of care you provided. Our customer-facing platform serves as an electronic record of all the good you provided during their care — including training and education materials, access to the plan of care, and a history of the services offered.

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“ We had one family caregiver relay a story that his father was on hospice 100 miles away, and the four siblings were scattered around the country. It took five phone calls to the hospice (not including missed calls) and to the DME company just to coordinate getting his bed delivered. ”

*Melisa Kozak, RN, CEO and Founder, CitusHealth*

**CitusHealth was founded by a home-based care nurse on the premise that communication must be improved. The result is an all-in-one digital platform that transforms the way patients, family caregivers, and care teams engage with each other — ultimately improving value-based measurements that will guide you toward success with the HHVBP Model.**

**Here are just a few CitusHealth features that can help you enhance your communication strategy:**

- Real-time communication
- Care team collaboration
- Secure messaging
- Configurable forms
- App-less e-signatures
- Delivery coordination
- Patient onboarding
- Video chat and telehealth
- Auto-routing and escalation
- On-demand education and training materials
- Schedule change communication
- EMR integration
- Bereavement care

To help ensure patient and caregiver satisfaction, the need for effective communication is clear. CitusHealth can help your organization gain a competitive edge by enhancing the quality of care you provide — supporting your team in preparation for the HHVBP Model and beyond.

**When we're better connected, everyone wins.**

Visit us at [citushealth.com](https://citushealth.com) to learn more

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