
42 C.F.R. § 423.182

Part D Prescription Drug Plan Quality Rating System.

(a) *Definitions.* In this subpart the following terms have the meanings:

Absolute percentage cap is a cap applied to non-CAHPS measures that are on a 0 to 100 scale that restricts movement of the current year's measure-threshold-specific cut point to no more than the stated percentage as compared to the prior year's cut point.

CAHPS refers to a comprehensive and evolving family of surveys that ask consumers and patients to evaluate the interpersonal aspects of health care. CAHPS surveys probe those aspects of care for which consumers and patients are the best or only source of information, as well as those that consumers and patients have identified as being important. CAHPS initially stood for the Consumer Assessment of Health Plans Study, but as the products have evolved beyond health plans the acronym now stands for Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems.

Case-mix adjustment means an adjustment to the measure score made prior to the score being converted into a Star Rating to take into account certain enrollee characteristics that are not under the control of the plan. For example age, education, chronic medical conditions, and functional health status that may be related to the enrollee's survey responses.

Categorical Adjustment Index (CAI) means the factor that is added to or subtracted from an overall or summary Star Rating (or both) to adjust for the average within-contract (or within-plan as applicable) disparity in performance associated with the percentages of beneficiaries who are dually eligible for Medicare and enrolled in Medicaid, beneficiaries who receive a Low Income Subsidy, or have disability status in that contract (or plan as applicable).

Clustering refers to a variety of techniques used to partition data into distinct groups such that the observations within a group are as similar as possible to each other, and as dissimilar as possible to observations in any other group. Clustering of the measure-specific scores means that gaps that exist within the distribution of the scores are identified to create groups (clusters) that are then used to identify the four cut points resulting in the creation of five levels (one for each Star Rating), such that the scores in the same Star Rating level are as similar as possible and the scores in different Star Rating levels are as different as possible. Technically, the variance in measure scores is separated into within-cluster and between-cluster sum of squares components. The clusters reflect the groupings of numeric value scores that minimize the variance of scores within the clusters. The Star Ratings levels are assigned to the clusters that minimize the within-cluster sum of squares. The cut points for star assignments are derived from the range of measure scores per cluster, and the star levels associated with each cluster are determined by ordering the means of the clusters.

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