Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) – Reducing the Risk of Falling

Who: Adults aged 65 or older who had a problem with a fall, walking or balancing, who discussed it with their doctor and got treatment during the year.

Why: The Health Outcomes Survey for Reducing the Risk of Falling was developed to help identify patients that may be at risk of falling. By identifying patients who may be at risk, physicians and other providers can initiate appropriate interventions to prevent injuries resulting from falls.

What: Percentage of patients aged 65 years or older who were seen by a practitioner in the past 12 months for a fall, problems with balance or walking, and received a fall-risk intervention.

How: This is a patient-reported measure using a random sample of Medicare beneficiaries drawn and surveyed. The survey is administered annually to a random sample of plan members. The same member cohort is surveyed again two years later to account for baseline and follow-up results. Health Outcomes Survey measures include two functional health measures and three HEDIS Effectiveness of Care measures used in the annual Medicare Part C Star Ratings.

Reducing risk of falling is based on four questions:

1) In the past 12 months, did your doctor or other health provider talk with you about falling or problems with balance or walking?
2) Did you fall in the past 12 months?
3) In the past 12 months have you had a problem with balance or walking?
4) Has your doctor or other health provider done anything to help prevent falls or treat problems with balance or walking?