



Special Bulletin

Wednesday, April 20, 2016

CMS DELAYS RELEASE OF *HOSPITAL COMPARE* OVERALL STAR RATINGS

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that it will delay until *at least* July 2016 the release of overall hospital quality “star ratings” on its *Hospital Compare* website. The ratings were originally scheduled to be released tomorrow, April 21. CMS also announced that it is delaying its regularly scheduled update of data on individual *Hospital Compare* measures until May 4.

The delay for the overall star ratings responds to the significant [concerns](#) raised by the AHA and others about whether the methodology provides a fair, accurate and meaningful representation of hospital performance. Our concerns were echoed by a majority of Congress – 60 senators and 225 members of the House – who [weighed in](#) urging CMS to delay the release and take time to re-evaluate its methodology.

In conjunction with the delay, CMS announced several additional steps:

- First, CMS invites continued feedback and questions about the star ratings methodology via its Star Ratings inbox: cmsstarratings@lantanagroup.com. The agency also indicated it intends to continue refining and improving the website after the ratings go live.
- Second, on May 6, CMS will open a 30-day preview period for hospitals to confidentially preview their data for the July update, which will include overall star rating data. However, the overall star ratings may not be included in the July update if CMS determines it needs to significantly revise its methodology. The reports will be available via CMS’s [QualityNet website](#).
- Third, CMS will host a National Provider Call on May 12 to explain and answer stakeholder questions about the [star rating methodology](#). We will share information about the call with members as soon as it is made available.

The AHA will continue to work with the agency to ensure its ratings approach is fair, accurate and meaningful to hospitals, patients and families. And we will continue to share information with the field as we receive it. If you have additional questions, please contact Akin Demehin, AHA senior associate director for policy, at (202) 626-2365 or ademehin@aha.org or Nancy Foster, vice president of quality and patient safety policy, at (202) 626-2337 or nfoster@aha.org.