



Special Bulletin

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

CMS Releases Hospital Star Ratings

Over the strong objections of the hospital field, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today released its new star ratings for hospitals on the [Hospital Compare](#) website.

Earlier this month, the AHA, along with the Association of American Medical Colleges, America's Essential Hospitals and the Federation of American Hospitals, [urged](#) CMS to share additional information with hospitals and the public about how accurately the overall hospital quality star ratings portray hospital performance, and work with hospitals to validate the methodology or continue to withhold publication of the ratings. We also shared an [analysis](#) by an independent expert that gave reason to believe that the assumptions on which the current model is based are flawed. On July 21, the agency released [impact data](#) that continues to raise questions and concerns about the methodology and may unfairly penalize teaching hospitals and those serving the poor.

The hospitals field's concerns were [echoed](#) by a bipartisan majority of both houses of Congress, which in April urged CMS to delay the release of the star ratings to allow time to work with the hospital field to ensure the ratings are fair and reliable. Reps. Jim Renacci (R-OH) and Kathleen Rice (D-NY) July 25 introduced a [bill](#) to delay for at least one year the introduction of the hospital star ratings. This reflects continued congressional concerns about the star system, and we urge you to contact your representative to support the bill. See our July 25 [Action Alert](#) for more. We will be pushing Congress to address this issue when they return.

We continue to believe that the star ratings raise more questions than answers, and create confusion rather than clarity. They add to the long list of conflicting rating and ranking systems. We urge CMS to go back to the drawing board to develop a more fair and accurate rating system. [Click here](#) to view the statement we shared with the media this morning.

We expect that today's release will raise questions with the media and patients. Please visit [Hospital Compare](#) to view your organization's star rating. Attached, please find an [AHA Media Advisory](#) with talking points that your organization can use as it answers questions.

If you have questions, please contact AHA Member Relations at 1-800-424-4301.