NCQA's Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2011-2012

NCQA
Measuring quality.
Improving health care.

What's the Same as Last Year

- NCQA will rank plans based on combined HEDIS®, CAHPS® and NCQA Accreditation standards scores
- NCQA will license the rankings data to Consumer Reports to publish online and in *Consumer Reports*
- CR's No Commercial Use Policy bars health plans from mentioning Consumer Reports *or* Consumers Union or in promotional materials
  - See: http://bit.ly/NoCommercialUse

What's New This Year

- Private (Commercial) and Medicare rankings will include PPOs
- Private, Medicare and Medicaid rankings will be published at the same time
  - This is the timing NCQA used 2005-2009
- Medicaid rankings will use the CAHPS component plans selected for Accreditation
- Pre-approval by NCQA of press releases and marketing materials that reference the rankings is not required

More About Ranking PPOs

- Applies only to Private and Medicare PPOs
  - Insufficient sample of Medicaid PPOs report data
- Same methodology as for HMO/POS plans
  - Exception: Colorectal Cancer Screening benchmarks
- PPO rankings are calculated with HMO/POS rankings to create combined rankings
  - This is the only set of rankings numbers produced

How Rankings Will Be Displayed

List	NCQA (online)	CR (online & print)
Combined rankings of HMOs and PPOs (includes description of differences between HMOs and PPOs)	✓	
HMOs in order of combined rankings	✓	✓
PPOs in order of combined rankings	✓	✓

What's Included in Rankings Displays

- **NCQA**
  - **Rankings Summary:** ranked listing of all plans, with demographic information
  - **Rankings Detail:** same as Rankings Summary, plus 1-5 ratings for all measures used in rankings methodology
- **CR**
  - **For free online**: Oct. 4 - Nov. 15: Everything! After Nov. 15: all Medicaid; same info as NCQA Rankings Summary for Private and Medicare
  - **For a fee online**: After Nov. 15: same info as NCQA Rankings Detail for Private and Medicare
  - **In magazine:** Article on how to choose a plan

Schedule

Communication	Sent to	Date
Rankings Project Announcement	HEDIS/Accreditation staff, Medical Director, CEO	April 21
Data Confirmation & Projected Status Notification (Rankable, Insufficient Data or No Data)	HEDIS/Accreditation staff	July 14
Final Rankings Notification (all plans' results)	HEDIS/Accreditation staff, Medical Director	Sept. 9
Final Rankings posted on NCQA.ORG (embargo ends 5pm Eastern)	NA	Sept. 20
Final Rankings printed in November issue of *Consumer Reports* (embargo ends 6pm Eastern)	NA	Oct. 4
Final Rankings posted on CR Web site (embargo ends 6pm Eastern)	NA	Oct. 4

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Q: May plans' communications about the rankings reference NCQA?

A: Yes, per the Marketing Guidelines at www.ncqa.org/rankings.

Q: May plans reference CR's role in the rankings, such as by saying "as seen in *Consumer Reports*" or by linking to CR online?

A: No, plans may not reference CR in promotion or advertising. However, consistent with widely followed online practices, we allow sites, including social networking sites, to link directly to any of our free content, including deep links, as long as the link is not surrounded by language promoting or advertising a specific product or service per Consumer Reports' No Commercial Use policy. See: http://bit.ly/NoCommercialUse

Q: Why would consumers want to pay (after Nov. 15) at the CR Web site for the same Private and Medicare rankings that are available for free at NCQA.ORG?

A: Customization and convenience. The CR Web site has sort and comparison capabilities that help users focus on plans relevant to them. The NCQA Web site presents rankings as static lists.

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Q: Will consumers be able to see rankings by product type (PPOs only or HMOs/POS plans only)?

A: Yes, all Consumer Reports displays of rankings data will be by product type. NCQA will show separate rankings by product type, plus an integrated list of PPO and HMO/POS rankings.

Q: May plans' communications refer to rankings from 2005-2009, the years that NCQA produced rankings with *USNews*?

A: Yes, as long as plans distinguish the 2005-2009 rankings from subsequent rankings by using the official names and editions of all rankings. The 2005-2009 rankings are called America's Best Health Insurance Plans (year). Subsequent rankings are called NCQA's Health Insurance Plan Rankings 2010-2011 – Private (or 2011-2012 Private. For Medicare and Medicaid plans, substitute Medicare or Medicaid for the word Private.)

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- **Q: Will reprints of the *Consumer Reports* article or the entire issue be available?**
- A: In compliance with Consumer Reports' No Commercial Use Policy, CR does not license reprints or PDFs of articles or sell bulk issues containing the article of interest to organizations whose products or services are rated in that article. We only sell our material to those parties who are not rated in that article.

For More Information

- **NCQA**
  - **www.ncqa.org/rankingsinfo**
    - **Methodology Overview**
    - **Marketing Guidelines**
      - **No review required, effective August 1**
    - **Badges that plans can use in marketing materials**
  - **rankings@ncqa.org**
    - **Individual questions**
- **Consumers Union**
  - **nocomm@cu.consumer.org**

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