



January
2024

PCF PEC Survey Semiannual Newsletter

Message from the PCF PEC Survey Team

Welcome to the January 2024 issue of the Primary Care First (PCF) Patient Experience of Care (PEC) Survey Newsletter! These newsletters are posted on the PCF PEC Survey website under the General Information Tab. Please visit the PCF PEC Survey website for more information on the items mentioned in this newsletter: <https://pcfpecs.org/>

REMINDER: Final data submission for Performance Year (PY) 2023 due January 16

The final deadline to submit data for PY 2023 is Tuesday, January 16, 2024. Data files are not accepted unless they pass all validation checks. For this reason, **RTI recommends submitting files at least two days before the deadline** to ensure that all files are accepted. CMS will not accept any data files for the final submission received after 7:59 PM Eastern Time on January 16.

Please keep in mind that this deadline follows a holiday closure for RTI and CMS staff for Martin Luther King Day, so contact the PCF PEC Survey Team with any questions well in advance of the deadline.

Requirements for PY 2023 Vendor Client Reports

CMS-calculated results for the PCF PEC Survey and the practice-level report CMS disseminates are the official survey results. Survey vendors do not have sufficient information to replicate CMS scoring. For the vendor-supplied PEC Survey reports, vendors **MUST**:

- Include a statement that vendor results are not official CMS results and are for the practice's internal quality improvement purposes only. The statement must be printed in a minimum 14-point font size.
- Suppress any display of data that includes cell sizes with fewer than 11 observations.
- Have CMS approval to append data from the sample file to the survey data.
- Refrain from providing practices with patient identifying information. Respondent names cannot be shared with practices, even if the respondent wishes to do so.

Survey vendors should contact the PCF PEC Survey Team for additional guidance if they are not clear as to whether certain types of survey response data can be shared with a PCF practice site. CMS recommends that vendors wait until their final data submission has been accepted before sending any survey reports. This allows time for the PEC Survey team to review the data. To aid practices in understanding their vendor reports, it is also recommended that vendors provide contextual language such as:

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- Official PCF PEC Survey Supplemental reports will be released from CMS in Q2. There is no required minimum response rate for scoring. The PY 2023 PEC Survey benchmark will be announced in Spring of 2024.

Vendors should direct practices to PCF Support with any questions about PEC scoring, the official CMS PEC Survey Supplemental report, or the PCF model.

Vendor application period is open January 3 – February 2

All new vendors seeking approval to administer the PCF PEC Survey in PY 2024 must submit their completed applications by February 2, 2024. Vendors that are currently fully approved do not need to re-apply. Vendor applications will be reviewed by the PCF PEC Survey Team and CMS. Vendors will be notified of conditional approval on February 19. The list of conditionally approved vendors will be posted to the PCF PEC Survey website by March 14. The final list of fully approved vendors will be announced in May. Practices will be able to authorize vendors from March 11 - June 14. Practices will only be able to authorize vendors that are fully approved. A full list of the [Minimum Business Requirements](#) for PCF PEC Survey vendors can be found at the [PCF PEC Survey web portal](#).

For more information on the vendor application process, [visit our website](#).

Now Available: PY 2024 Materials

The updated PY 2024 Quality Assurance Guidelines (QAG) manual for vendors is now available on the PCF PEC Survey website under the [Survey and Protocols tab](#). Please refer to the “Updates in this Release” table of the QAG for a summary of the new and updated information in the manual.

Highlights include:

- Changes to the vendor client report requirements to address practice confusion between the scoring and methodology on vendor reports and official CMS reports.
- An update to the sample file language variable code to reduce vendor level of effort.
- Survey vendors will be required to complete the first call attempt on all telephone survey sample during the first week of non-response follow-up.

All PY 2024 survey materials are also available now on the [Survey and Protocols tab](#). No changes were made to the questionnaire for the upcoming year.

One major change to the materials includes:

- New language has been added to the PY 2024 outgoing envelopes to encourage the use of proxy respondents.

More details on these PY 2024 requirements can be found in the QAG and will be discussed during the Survey Vendor Update Training Webinar on March 6.

Upcoming Events and Milestones

1/15 – RTI Closed for Martin Luther King Day

1/16 – Data Submission Deadline for PY 2023

1/31 – Deadline for vendors to submit interviewer monitoring documentation for PY 2023

2/2 – Survey vendor application period closes

3/4 – 3/8 – “Introduction to PCF PEC Survey Training for Vendors” pre-recorded webinar is available to conditionally approved vendors

3/6 – “Survey Vendor Update Webinar Training” is hosted live for fully approved vendors

3/11 – Vendor authorization opens to practices

3/14 – Vendor list on PCF PEC Survey website and PCF Connect is updated with conditionally approved vendors

3/15 – Deadline for returning vendors to submit updated QAPs

3/22 – Deadline for new vendors to submit QAPs

5/10 – Vendor list on PCF PEC Survey Website and PCF Connect is updated with fully approved vendors

6/14 – Vendor authorization closes to practices

“Introduction to the PCF PEC Survey on-demand Training for Vendors” will be available March 4 – 8 for conditionally approved vendors

New vendors, and any new key staff of returning vendors and their subcontractors, will complete the “Introduction to PCF PEC Survey Training for Vendors” as a self-guided, pre-recorded webinar which has been updated for PY 2024. After the self-guided training has been completed, the designated survey administrator of any new vendor must also complete the Training Certification. This certification will also be available on the PCF PEC Survey website from March 4 – 8.

“Survey Vendor Update Training” Webinar will be hosted LIVE on March 6 for fully approved vendors

Fully approved vendors are required to attend the update training webinar so they can review lessons learned in PY 2023 and be briefed on the updated [Quality Assurance Guidelines for PY 2024](#). This webinar will be hosted LIVE, so be sure that all appropriate staff members are in attendance. There is no certification requirement for the PCF PEC Survey Vendor Update Training.

Quality Assurance Plans Due March 2024

The Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) is a comprehensive working document that is developed, and periodically revised, by survey vendors to document their administration procedures for the PCF PEC Survey. Vendors should use the QAP as a training tool for project staff and subcontractors. The submission and approval of a QAP is a component in the process through which vendors attain the status of Fully Approved. Only Fully Approved vendors may be authorized by PCF Practices, and only Fully Approved vendors may conduct the PCF PEC Survey.

Returning vendors should submit updated versions of their QAPs by March 15, and new vendors should submit a QAP by March 22. CMS evaluates the QAPs to determine if they demonstrate vendor compliance with all protocols for implementation and quality control/assurance. If a QAP lacks sufficient detail to confirm this, CMS will explain the deficiency to the vendor and give the vendor a date by which a revised QAP must be submitted. The vendor will be required to correct the identified issue and resubmit.

Please refer to these quick links for detailed instructions on how to [submit a QAP](#), or [submit a revised QAP](#).

FAQs for vendors and practices

Please visit this page to view the list of FAQs for vendors and practices:

<https://pcfpecs.org/General-Information/FAQs>

This list will be updated periodically.

We want to hear from you!

What would you like to see in these newsletters and on the PCF PEC Survey website? What types of resources would be beneficial to survey vendors and your client practice sites?

Please reach out to the PCF PEC Survey Team at pcfpecs@rti.org with ideas!

Resources For Vendors

[Quality Assurance Guidelines](#)

[Data Submission Resources](#)

[PCF PEC Newsletters](#)

Quick Links for Vendors

[How to Download Sample Files](#)

[How to Use the Online Validation Tool for Data Submission Files](#)

[How to Upload Interim Data](#)

[How to Add or Update Vendor Point of Contact Information](#)

Resources For Practices

[PCF PEC Survey Fact Sheet for Practices](#)

Vendor Authorization Window Open for Practices March 11 - June 14

Practices will be able to authorize a vendor for the PCF PEC Survey from March 11 - June 14. Please note: the authorization deadline has shifted from previous years and will end in **mid-June** instead of June 30. If a practice will continue to use the same survey vendor that was used to administer the PY 2023 PEC Survey, they do not need to update the online vendor authorization form. However, a practice must update the online vendor authorization form if either of the following apply:

- A practice is participating in the PCF PEC Survey for the first time in PY 2024; or
- A practice is switching to a different survey vendor to administer the PY 2024 PCF PEC Survey.

There is not a new cohort of practices for PY 2024, but there are practices that will be participating for the first time.

As in PY 2023, vendors will still be required to review and confirm their authorization report via email to the PCF PEC Survey Team in writing on a weekly basis during the Vendor Authorization window. **It is the responsibility of the vendor to reach out to practices who have not completed their authorization, contract, and/or Business Associate Agreement (BAA).** CMS can only provide sample to the survey vendor for practices that have a signed BAA with and have authorized their survey vendor. Sample files for the PY 2024 PCF PEC Survey will be available to vendors on September 10.

PY 2024 Data Collection Timeline

Activity	Start Date	End Date
Teaser Postcard Mailing	9/23/24	9/27/24
Help Desk Open	9/24/24	12/15/24
Reminder/Thank you Postcard Mailing	10/7/24	10/11/24
2 nd Questionnaire Mailing	10/28/24	11/1/24
Initiate telephone follow-up by CATI to nonrespondents to mail (1 st attempt must occur during this time)	11/18/24	11/24/24
Conduct additional telephone follow-up* of nonrespondents to mail	11/25/24	12/17/24

* Survey vendors have the option to suspend CATI interviews during 11/28 – 11/29 due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Suspending calls isn't a requirement. [View the full PY 2024 timeline here.](#)

[Introduction to PCF PECS On-Demand Webinar](#)

[Understanding and Using Your PEC Survey Results On-Demand Webinar](#)

[PCF PEC Survey Reports & Scoring Fact Sheet](#)

[PCF Connect](#)

Quick Links for Practices

[Practice Site Responsibilities](#)

PCF Support

Please direct your practices to PCF Support (PCF@Telligen.com or 1-888-517-7753) when they have questions about the PCF model, patient rosters, PEC Survey reports, payment, and technical assistance inquiries for the PCF PEC Survey website, such as authorizing their vendor.

Do you have any questions?

Email us at pcfpecs@rti.org or call 1-833-997-2715
Visit the PCF PEC Survey website at

<https://pcfpecs.org>

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