Message from the PCF PEC Survey Team

Welcome to the July 2022 issue of the Primary Care First Patient Experience of Care (PCF 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/ 🗗

ANNOUNCEMENT: PEC SURVEY Reports to be Released to Practices August 1

The Performance Year (PY) 2021 PCF Patient Experience of Care (PEC) Survey reports will be released to practices in the PCF Practice Portal on August 1, 2022. All Cohort 1 practices that participated in the PEC Survey will receive these reports detailing practice performance. In addition to overall PEC survey summary and domain-level scores for PY 2021, the report presents the practice's performance on each of the individual items in the PY 2021 PCF PEC survey, as well as the average scores within their region and across all PCF practices.

An accompanying webinar, **"Understanding and Using Your PEC Survey Results"** will be released on the PCF Practice Portal on 7/28. This on-demand webinar is a resource for practices that provides an overview and discussion of every section (down to the item level) of the PCF PEC Survey report. The webinar also describes how a practice may implement changes based on their results. Practices will be notified about this webinar via the First Edition newsletter.

PY 2021 PCF PEC Survey Response Rates

The goal for overall response rate for the PY 2021 PCF PEC Survey was 35.5%. The actual overall response rate for PY 2021 across all vendors was 19.3% (*Response Rate = (complete + partial complete surveys) / (cases fielded – ineligible cases))*.

Elements of the PCF PEC Survey Design That Support Target Response Rate

There are many steps built into the PCF PEC Survey design to support the target response rate. CPC+ PECS, a precursor to the PCF PEC

July 2022 | Issue 4

In This Issue

- ANNOUNCEMENT: PECS Reports to be Released August 1
- PY2021 Response Rates
- Elements of the PCF PEC Survey Model That Support Response Rates
- Recent Updates Based on PY 2021 Lessons Learned
- Important Steps that Vendors Should Take for a Successful Data Collection This Fall
- Preparing for Sample File Download in September
- First Interim Data Submission Deadline is October 24th

Upcoming Events and Milestones

7/28 – Release of "Understanding and Using Your PCF PEC Survey Report Webinar"

8/1—PY 2021 PEC Survey Reports Released to Practices

9/5 —RTI Closed for Labor Day

Survey, used a similar protocol and attained an overall response rate above 35%, with some practice sites achieving a much higher rate. Survey vendors must make every reasonable effort to ensure optimal response rates and are expected to pursue contacts with potential respondents until the full data collection protocols has been completed. For example:

- **Mailing of Teaser Postcard** —Research suggests that prenotification mailings increase response rates by 3.5 to 4.0 percentage points (Wright, 1995; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). CPC+ PECS found an increase of 4.3 percentage points with a similar teaser postcard.

- **Voicemail** – CPC+ PECS found voicemails were successful when comparing those receiving a voicemail—completing at a rate of 8.23 percent—to those not receiving a voicemail—completing at a rate of 7.99 percent. This is statistically significant at a p-value < 0.001.

- **Differentiate Between First and Second Mailing** – Designed to decrease calls to the Help Desk and duplicate package processing; language on the outside of the 2nd envelope is designed to reduce calls asking why a 2nd package was mailed and returns of unnecessary duplicate mail surveys.

- **Image on Cover Letter/Survey Envelope/Postcard/Poster** – Designed to make the survey look more engaging, not to be confused with junk mail, it also helps create a cohesive brand for the survey that helps remind the patient about the survey and its legitimacy. Aids in reducing nonresponse.

- **Filling the practice name and address on the survey cover-** The patient may lose the letter, so having the practice name and address on the survey itself ensures that they can answer the survey about the correct practice. Aids in reducing nonresponse and unnecessary calls to the Help Desk.

- **Residential Care Facility Protocol –** Use of special envelope helps the survey get to the intended recipient or proxy, reducing nonresponse; removing the cases from the telephone follow-up prevents frustration among facility staff and refusals/nonresponse.

Recent Updates Based on PY 2021 Lessons Learned

Patient Roster Material Updates

CMS and the PCF PEC Survey Team listened to vendor and practice feedback regarding patient rosters in PY 2021 and made significant updates to the materials for PY 2022. The following updates were made:

- Added specific billing codes to identify types of visits for inclusion on the roster.

- Expanded on the proper use of the Do Not Contact label.

- Enhanced explanation of why we need good contact information and how it directly ties to PEC Survey response rates.

9/9-9/14 — Sample files posted to PCF PEC Survey website for vendors

9/26 — Teaser postcard mailing

9/27 — Vendor Help Desks Open

10/3-10/7 — First questionnaire mailing

10/10 – 10/14 —Reminder/Thank You postcard mailing

10/24 – First interim data submission due from vendors

10/31–11/4 — Second questionnaire mailing

11/21 –CATI non-response follow up begins

11/29 – Second interim data submission due from vendors

12/18 – CATI follow up ends, Vendor Help Desk Closes

1/17/2023 – Final data submission due from vendors

FAQs for vendors and practices

Please see a 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!

- Added specific FAQs in roster user guide explaining not to include patients only seen for COVID testing or vaccine clinics.

- Provided an FAQ for patients with HIPAA concerns.

Emphasized Communication to Practices about Support of the Survey

The PCF PEC Survey Team has also increased its messaging to practices in PY 2022 about:

- Displaying the survey poster.

- Displaying the waiting room FAQs.

- Responding to questions about the survey.

In addition, *new for PY 2022*, CMS suggests practices make patients aware of the PCF PEC Survey by sending a message through their patient portal in September. This additional communication about the survey can be used as a tool for improving response rates. **The suggested language for this message will be released to practices via the First Edition newsletter on August 11.**

For further guidelines about communicating to patients about the survey, practices should reference the section called **Communicate with Patients about the Survey in Accordance with CMS Specifications** in the [Practice Site Responsibilities quick link](#) ↪.

Important Steps that Vendors Should Take for A Successful Data Collection This Fall

All vendors must do the following:

- ✓ Confirm the practice name and physical address that sampled patients will recognize with every practice client and use that information on mailing materials and in the telephone script.
- ✓ Use a name other than "PCF" in Help Desk email address or voicemail script (for example, "Patient Survey").
- ✓ Take measures to ensure calls are not flagged as spam.
- ✓ Communicate with practices to properly address patients who live in residential care facilities.

Optional for vendors:

- o Submit an [Exceptions Request Form](#) ↪ (ERF) for PY 2022 regarding the estimated length of the survey (currently estimated at 20 minutes). Survey vendors must provide a report of the telephone interview data collected in PY 2021 that supports an average telephone interview time of less than 20 minutes in the ERF. A shorter estimated interview (if accurate) may result in increased cooperation and higher response rates. As always, Exceptions Requests are subject to approval by CMS.

Preparing for Sample File Download in September

Sample files for the PY 2022 PCF PEC Survey will be available Friday, September 9, 2022, for download on the PCF PEC Survey website by survey vendors who have been authorized by one or more PCF practices to collect and submit survey data on their behalf.

The PCF PEC Survey website has a Downloading Sample Files Quick Link ⬀ to walk vendors through the download process.

The sample patient variables contained in each sample file are listed in the example sample file ⬀ that is posted to the PCF PEC Survey website.

PCF PEC Survey vendors must review their Survey Vendor Authorization Report ⬀ regularly and confirm they have contracts with all listed practices. CMS will not release a practice site's sample to their survey vendor unless the practice has fully authorized a vendor on the PECS website, including checking the BAA attestation box. CMS is unable to provide a sample to vendors without a properly executed BAA in place.

Sections 4.5 and 4.6 of the Quality Assurance Guidelines ⬀ contain more information about sample file protocols for the PCF PEC Survey. Please be on the look-out for further communications from the PCF PEC Survey Team about sample file downloads in the coming weeks.

First Interim Data Submission Deadline is October 24

The deadline for PCF PEC Survey vendors to submit their first interim data file to the PCF PEC Survey website is Monday, October 24, 2022. Please see this Quick Link ⬀ with instructions on uploading the interim data file. Data submission resources ⬀ are available on the PCF PEC Survey website.

For additional information about data file preparation and data submission requirements, please see Chapter 7 of the Quality Assurance Guidelines ⬀.

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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