



PRIMARY CARE FIRST: PATIENT
EXPERIENCE OF CARE SURVEY
VENDOR MODEL QUALITY ASSURANCE
PLAN OUTLINE PY 2024

Version 1
January 2024

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Model Quality Assurance Plan Outline

Survey vendors that meet the necessary business requirements to become a CMS-approved Primary Care First (PCF) PEC Survey vendor and have participated in the PCF PEC Survey training session will receive conditional approval as a PCF PEC Survey vendor. Survey vendors will receive final approval after they have submitted an acceptable Quality Assurance Plan (QAP). This model QAP serves as a guide for survey vendors as they develop their procedures and materials for implementing and complying with the PCF PEC Survey *Quality Assurance Guide for Survey Vendors*.

Each vendor must complete and submit a QAP to the PCF PEC Survey Team. QAPs are submitted via the QAP Submission Module on the PCF PEC Survey Portal. The initial QAP is due to the team within two weeks of completion of the Introduction to PCF PEC Survey training. The use of embedded documents for the purpose of QAP submissions is prohibited. Vendors are permitted to include QAP survey materials as appendices or submit a zipped file containing the materials templates to the PEC Survey email address (pcfpecs@rti.org). The PCF PEC Survey Team will complete an initial review within 2 weeks after the QAP is submitted. If further clarification is needed, the PCF PEC Survey Team will work with the survey vendors to obtain the necessary information. This process may extend beyond the 2-week period, especially if multiple iterations of revisions are required. After the review process has concluded, the vendor will be notified of QAP approval.

In addition, each vendor will be required to update and resubmit its QAP annually, and whenever it makes key personnel or protocol changes.


The vendor's QAP should include the sections listed below. The specific requirements for these sections are described in the pages that follow.

- Organization Background and Staff Experience
- Work Plan
- Survey Implementation Plan
- Data Security, Confidentiality, Privacy Plan and Disaster Recovery Plan
- Questionnaire and Materials Attachments

Each vendor will receive final approval as a PCF PEC Survey vendor after its QAP has been reviewed and approved by the PCF PEC Survey Team.

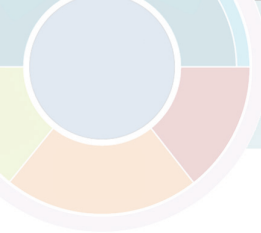
A. Organization Background and Staff Experience

1. Provide your organization's name and address. If your organization has multiple locations, include the address of both the main location and the address of the locations at which the primary operations, including data collection and data processing activities, are being conducted.

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2. Describe your organization's history and affiliation (e.g., is it part of another company, or affiliated with a university, independent, etc.). Include the scope of business, number of years in business, and number of years of survey experience.
 3. Provide an organizational chart that shows the names and titles of staff members, including subcontractors, who are responsible for each of the following tasks:
 - a. Overall project management, including tracking and supervision of all tasks below.
 - b. Obtaining the sample file.
 - c. Data collection, including overseeing implementation of mail and telephone data collection modes.
 - d. Data receipt and data entry/scanning procedures.
 - e. File development and submission processes.
 - f. The organizational chart must specify all staff reporting relationships, including those managing subcontractors. It must designate any individuals who have quality assurance oversight responsibility and indicate for which tasks they are responsible.
 4. Summarize the background and experience of the individuals responsible for the tasks listed in Item 3 above, including a description of any subcontractors serving in these roles. The narrative of each individual's experience must include a discussion of how the person's qualifications are relevant to the PCF PEC Survey tasks that he or she is expected to perform. Resumes must be available upon request.
 5. If survey vendor is using subcontractors for a significant portion of the work, please include information on how the survey vendor will provide oversight and quality control for any and all work performed by their subcontractor(s). Please include the name of the survey vendor staff member responsible for overseeing each task performed by subcontractor staff.

B. PCF PEC Survey Work Plan

1. Include a copy of your schedule or timeline for preparing and concluding all activities within the PCF PEC Survey Quality Assurance Guide for Survey Vendors. The timeline is not limited to but must include:
 - a. preparation of mailing templates,
 - b. programming of the telephone instrument,
 - c. receipt of files from the PCF PEC Survey website/Team,
 - d. conducting additional tracing, address verification, and physical address checks
 - e. printing of the mail materials to sampled cases,
 - f. training staff,
 - g. mailing dates,
 - h. each step of the data collection,
 - i. submission of training documentation,


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- j. data file cleaning,
 - k. data file preparation, review, interim submission and final submission
 - l. submission of monitoring documentation.

2. **Quality control steps and their dates must be included for each step.** If you will work with a subcontractor(s) to implement the PEC Survey, please include any steps associated with reviewing work products completed by your subcontract partner.
3. Please describe your process for ensuring you will meet all PCF PEC Survey deadlines as required. Please include how you will ensure timely response to all communications and requests from the PCF PEC Survey team.

C. PCF PEC Survey Implementation Plan

For the PCF Protocol, please describe:

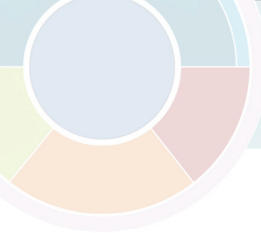
1. Process for Receipt and Tracking Sample Files
 - a. Describe your process.
 - b. Describe related quality control procedures
 - c. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process.
2. Training for all Project Staff
 - a. Project staff includes:
 - i. Telephone interviewers (English and Spanish)
 - ii. mail survey production staff
 - iii. data receipt, data processing, and data entry staff,
 - iv. customer support/Help Desk staff (English and Spanish)
 - v. all staff in supervisory positions
 - b. Include an explanation of how attendance will be ensured and tracked
 - c. Describe training related quality control procedures
 - d. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process
 - e. Include a description of remote staff training (if applicable) and how it may differ from training for your in-person staff
 - f. Include a description of your re-training process including how you identify staff for re-training
3. Help Desk processes for implementation and quality control on PCF PEC Survey
 - a. Include, at a minimum, the actual telephone number (when available), email address (when available), and who responds to questions
 - b. Include information on how status codes will be assigned by customer support staff, the days of the week and times of the day that you will staff the customer support line, and how you will handle after-hours contacts. Present the text of any audio-recordings and auto replies that will be used

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- c. Include a discussion of your quality control procedures to ensure compliance with PCF PEC Survey protocols and describe your documentation of this quality control, including monitoring of calls conducted by your help desk staff.
 - d. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process
 4. Process for implementing PCF PEC Survey data collection via mail and telephone
 - a. A description of the relevant hardware or software (e.g., describe case management of systems for mailing, scanning or data entry, and electronic interviewing
 - b. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process
 - c. Describe process for using address correction and standardization service
 5. Printing and production processes for PCF PEC mail surveys
 - a. Explain the quality control checks implemented at each stage (e.g., monitoring the quality and content of English and Spanish mail survey packages, use of seeded mailings, and frequency of checks).
 - i. Describe the quality control checks implemented to ensure that sample members flagged as Spanish receive the correct materials for the first and second mailings.
 - ii. If relying on electronic QC and verification for the mailings, please describe what, if any, manual checks on the mailing items that you conduct.
 - b. Describe process for flagging residential care facility (RCF) sample members to receive facility envelopes.
 - i. Describe the quality control checks implemented to ensure that sample members flagged as RCF receive the correct envelope for mailings 1 and 2.
 - c. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process
 6. Receipt and data entry or scanning process for PCF PEC mail surveys
 - a. Quality control checks being implemented at the stages of questionnaire receipt, status code assignment, data entry, and scanning, and how frequently those checks are conducted
 - b. If receipt control and scanning is handled by a subcontractor, please describe how data are sent back to the survey vendor including the frequency of the transmission.
 - c. Describe your process for handling white mail and undeliverable mail according to PCF PEC Survey protocols.
 - d. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process
 7. Process for implementing the telephone survey
 - a. Describe system and procedures that will ensure all interviewing is conducted according to the PCF PEC Survey protocols (e.g., varying times of day calls are attempted, tracking the status of call attempts, CATI time zones)
 - b. Describe process for using batch service to obtain missing phone numbers for the telephone sample

- c. Describe process for identifying cell phone sample so that it can be dialed according to TCPA/FCC regulations
- d. Include a crosswalk of internal interim status codes and PCF final status codes
 - i. Example:

Interim Disposition	Disposition Description	PCF Disposition	PCF Description
CO	Complete and Valid Survey by Mail	110	Completed Mail Questionnaire
CO	Complete and Valid Survey by Phone	120	Completed Phone Interview
130	Partial Survey by Mail	130	Partially Completed Mail Questionnaire
140	Partial Survey by Phone	140	Partially Completed Phone Interview
11	Ineligible - Deceased	150	Ineligible: Deceased
DC	Ineligible - Deceased	150	Ineligible: Deceased
RD	Ineligible - Deceased	150	Ineligible: Deceased
160	Not in Eligible Population	160	Ineligible: Does Not Meet Eligibility Criteria

- e. Describe process for preventing calls from being flagged as spam
 - f. Describe process for coding residential care facility sample members
 - g. Describe how monitoring is conducted and documented
 - i. Please include a copy or screenshot of your scored monitoring form.
 - h. Describe process for maintaining records of interviewer monitoring and submission to PCF PEC Survey team
 - i. Include the name of the staff member responsible for managing and monitoring interviewer performance
8. Control system to monitor case status as cases transition from mail survey phase to telephone follow-up phase
- a. Describe survey receipt process to track surveys that are returned while telephone follow-up phase is in effect
 - b. Describe the processes that you have in place to ensure that sample members who have returned a completed survey are not called after the completed survey is received.
 - c. Describe process for determining which completed survey to retain (mail or telephone interview data) if the sample member returns a completed survey and participates in a telephone interview
 - d. Describe process for handling duplicate surveys

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9. Processes to submit data files to the PCF PEC Survey web portal for both interim and final file submissions
 - a. Discuss quality control during file creation, including document of quality control
 - b. Process that will be used to ensure final survey data are linked to the original SID assigned by the PCF PEC Survey Team
 - c. Discuss how survey vendor incorporates feedback from PCF PEC Survey team on interim data submissions
 - d. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the deliverables

D. Data Security, Confidentiality, Privacy Plan and Disaster Recovery Plan

1. Data Security for Receiving and Tracking Sample Files.
 - a. Section C1 requested a description of the process for receiving and tracking sample files. Here, please describe in detail how data security is provided in this process, including explaining your use of passwords, file encryption, backup systems, etc.
2. Data Security for Data in Hardcopy in Mail and Hardcopy Form.
 - a. Section C4 requested a description of the process for implementing data collection by mail and telephone. Here, please describe in detail how data security is provided for data in hardcopy and electronic form. Explain your use of passwords, file encryption, backup systems, material storage, access control, retention, and when materials will be destroyed, in addition to other measures taken.
3. Data Confidentiality Among Staff.
 - a. Describe your vendor and subcontractor staff confidentiality agreements, including how affidavits of confidentiality are being stored and tracked. Include a copy of the confidentiality agreement that is being used.
4. Privacy Plan.
 - a. Describe your measures to protect respondent privacy. Include your telephone survey script regarding privacy or confidentiality of the data collected. Vendors must ensure compliance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements. Describe the required HIPAA training of staff working on the PCF PEC Survey project. If you are using any subcontractors for any roles, describe how the subcontractor's staff are being trained on HIPAA.
5. Data Confidentiality for Patients.
 - a. For the telephone survey, include a screenshot or text indicating the voluntary nature of the sample member's participation.
6. Disaster Recovery Plan.
 - a. Please include the details of your disaster recovery plan. This plan should include, but not be limited to:



- i. The staff member(s) responsible for implementing the Disaster Recovery Plan.
- ii. Details on how your organization plans to preserve PCF PEC Survey data in the event of an unplanned incident such as a power outage or cyber-attack.
 - 1) Details on how quickly your organization could be operational and what amount of data may be lost in the event of any unplanned incident.
- iii. Details on how your organization plans to maintain staffing levels and adhere to the PCF PEC Survey schedule and deadlines despite potential disruptions due to illness/public health emergencies (PHEs). For example, if there is a shortage of telephone interviewing staff due to illness, how will the vendor/subcontractor maintain schedule and production?
- iv. Details on how your organization plans to maintain staffing levels and adhere to the PCF PEC Survey schedule and deadlines during delays caused by inclement weather events. For example, if an adverse weather event prevents mail delivery for a period of days, how will the vendor/subcontractor catch up on mail receipt and processing?
- v. Details on how your organization plans to remain operational despite potential supply chain delays. For example, how far in advance does the vendor/subcontractor order mail supplies and does the vendor/subcontractor identify alternative suppliers in case of delays?

E. Questionnaire and Materials Attachments

1. Attach a copy of your formatted mail survey questionnaire, both English and Spanish and versions. Be sure to include the cover page and back page. One dummy patient in 1 practice should appear on all mail templates. This may be submitted in a revised QAP.¹
2. Attach all screen shots from your telephone interview program—beginning with the introductory screens and ending with the last question in the interview—both English and Spanish versions. A test link to the CATI questionnaire with dummy patient sample loaded may be submitted in lieu of screen shots, if preferred. This may be submitted in a revised QAP.¹
3. Include a copy of your cover letters, postcards, and envelopes. One dummy patient in 1 practice should appear on all mail templates. This may be submitted in a revised QAP.¹

Note: Fully approved vendors who participated in PY 2023 data collection only need to submit materials that have been updated for PY 2024. Materials that did not change from PY 2023 to PY 2024 do not need to be submitted.

¹ See *Patient Experience of Care Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines for Survey Vendors* and pcfpecs.org announcements for specific deadlines.