



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

Version I
January 2021



Model Quality Assurance Plan Outline

Survey vendors that meet the necessary business requirements to become a CMS-approved Primary Care First (PCF) PECS vendor and have participated in the PCF PECS training session will receive conditional approval as a PCF PECS 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 PECS *Vendor Quality Assurance Guide*.

Each vendor must complete and submit a QAP to the PCF PECS Team. QAPs are submitted via the QAP Submission Module on the PCF PECS Portal. The initial QAP is due to the team within 4 weeks of completion of the Introduction to PCF PECS training. The PCF PECS Team will complete an initial review within 2 weeks after the QAP is submitted. If further clarification is needed, the 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 on or before May 20 of each year thereafter, 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, and Privacy Plan
- Questionnaire and Materials Attachments

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

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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.

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 PECS tasks that he or she is expected to perform. Resumes must be available upon request.

B. PCF PECS Work Plan

1. Include a copy of your schedule or timeline for preparing and concluding all activities within PCF PECS Vendor Quality Assurance Guide. 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 PECS website/Team,
 - d. printing of the mail materials to sampled cases,
 - e. training staff,
 - f. mailing,
 - g. each step of the data collection,
 - h. data file cleaning, and
 - i. data file preparation, review, interim submission and final submission.

Quality control steps and their dates must be included for each step.



C. *PCF PECS Survey Implementation Plan*

For the PCF Protocol, please describe:

1. Process for Receipt and Tracking Sample Files
 - a. Describe your process.
 - b. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process.
2. Training for all Project Staff
 - a. Project staff includes:
 - i. Telephone interviewers
 - ii. mail survey production staff
 - iii. data receipt, data processing, and data entry staff,
 - iv. customer support/Help Desk staff
 - 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
3. Help Desk processes for implementation and quality control on PCF PECS
 - 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
 - c. Include a discussion of your quality control procedures to ensure compliance with PCF PECS protocols and describe your documentation of this quality control
 - d. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process
4. Process for implementing PCF PECS 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
5. Printing and production processes for PCF PECS 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)
 - b. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the process



6. Receipt and data entry or scanning process for PCF PECS 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. 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 PECS protocols (e.g., varying times of day calls are attempted, tracking the status of call attempts, CATI time zones)
 - b. Include a crosswalk of internal interim status codes and PCF final status codes
 - c. Describe process for preventing calls from being flagged as spam and coding residential care facility sample members
 - d. Describe how monitoring is conducted and documented
 - e. 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. How do you determine which completed survey to retain (mail or telephone interview data) if the sample member returns a completed survey and participates in a telephone interview?
9. Processes to submit data files to the PCF PECS 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 PECS Team
 - c. Include the name of the staff member responsible for the deliverables

D. Data Security, Confidentiality, and Privacy 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 PECS 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. Data Security for Disaster Recovery.
 - a. Please include a statement in your QAP confirming that you have a disaster recovery plan for PCF PECS data.

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 no later than August 13, 2021 (6 weeks prior to the start of data collection).
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. This may be submitted in a revised QAP no later than August 13, 2021 (6 weeks prior to the start of data collection).
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 no later than August 13, 2021 (6 weeks prior to the start of data collection).