



Reference #: 2024-62-IPF
From: Inpatient & Outpatient Healthcare Quality Systems Development & Program Support
To: IPFQR Program Listserv Recipient List
Sent: October 31, 2024
Subject: CMS Announces Recruitment for the Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Patient Assessment Instrument (IPF-PAI) Alpha Test

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), as part of its overarching initiative to advance quality of care in Inpatient Psychiatric Facilities (IPFs), has contracted with RTI International, Abt Global, and their partners to develop and test a draft patient assessment instrument, the Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Patient Assessment Instrument (IPF-PAI).

Abt Global is now recruiting Inpatient Psychiatric Facilities to participate in an alpha test to evaluate candidate IPF-PAI data elements and the feasibility of integrating the IPF-PAI into the assessments and workflows that currently exist within IPFs.

IPF site selection and enrollment is planned for November and December 2024. Data collection is anticipated to begin in November 2024.

Background

One way CMS fulfills its mission to improve healthcare quality is through its Quality Reporting Programs (QRPs). Section 4125(b)(1) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA), 2023 requires IPFs participating in the IPF Quality Reporting (IPFQR) Program to submit to CMS certain standardized patient assessment data elements using a standardized patient assessment instrument beginning in fiscal year 2028. IPFs will have to meet all requirements of the IPFQR Program, including reporting the IPF-PAI, to receive a full Annual Payment Update (APU) each year under the IPF Prospective Payment System (PPS).

Data that CMS collects from the IPF-PAI will be used to support the IPFQR Program and the IPF PPS. Your participation in the alpha test is a vital part of IPF-PAI development. Results from the alpha test will inform improvement and refinement of the draft IPF-PAI for field testing in 2025. CMS anticipates proposing IPF-PAI data collection in future rulemaking.

Eligibility and Requirements

Participation in the IPF-PAI alpha test is completely voluntary. IPFs and staff who do not wish to participate will not be penalized in any way. Eligible IPFs will be contacted and invited to contribute.

Recruitment and Selection

- The IPF-PAI alpha test will include staff from Medicare-certified IPFs that represent different geographic regions (Northeast, Midwest, West, and South), different ownership status (government, for-profit, nonprofit), structure (inpatient unit, freestanding facility), and rurality (rural, urban) in the United States.

- We are recruiting IPFs that represent a variety of and/or distinct patient populations, such as geriatric patients, to provide their unique perspectives.
 - **Recruitment begins 11/1/2024 and ends 12/30/2024.**
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What Does Testing Involve?

The Abt team will provide individualized support to IPFs while they participate in the alpha test. IPFs that participate in the alpha test will be required to:

- Identify eligible staff who volunteer to participate in cognitive interviews, a survey, and/or a focus group. Staff may volunteer for one, two, or all three activities.
 - All staff members are eligible if they have at least one year (12 months) of IPF experience. Eligible staff includes those who conduct patient assessments at admission and/or discharge.
 - Provide time for staff to participate in cognitive interviews which will demonstrate whether IPF staff understand the data elements and instructions (the guidance) of the IPF-PAI. Each staff member will participate in *one virtual cognitive interview (estimated time = 1 hour)*.
 - Provide time for IPF staff to complete a virtual survey where they will be asked to rank the candidate data elements of the IPF-PAI in several dimensions to evaluate the importance of each element to assessment, care planning, and evaluation of progress. Each staff member will be asked to complete *one virtual survey (estimated time = 30 minutes)*.
 - Provide time for staff to participate in a focus group that will focus on the perceived barriers and facilitators to the integration of the proposed IPF-PAI into their existing assessments and into the admission and discharge process. Each staff member will be asked to participate in *one virtual focus group (estimated time = 1.5 hours)* that will consist of approximately 4 - 8 individuals.
 - Provide time for designated IPF staff to participate in approximately *three (3) hours of required alpha testing training prior to engaging in the interviews, survey and focus group*. This training will review the purpose of testing, roles and responsibilities, communication with the Abt research team, and the candidate IPF-PAI data elements.
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What's in it for IPFs?

IPFs that participate in the IPF-PAI alpha test will have the opportunity to directly support CMS' efforts to promote quality care. Each IPF staff member that participates in data collection will receive a \$50.00 gift card for each data collection activity (cognitive interview, survey, and/or focus group) completed.

The alpha test presents minimal to no risk to the IPF staff participants. Based on prior experience testing CMS' patient assessment instruments we do not anticipate participant concerns. However, participation is voluntary; staff who volunteer to participate in the cognitive interview, survey and/or focus group may decline to answer any question they are not comfortable with and may stop participating at any time for no reason. Of note, there is no plan to include patients in this phase of testing.

Thank you for considering this opportunity. The IPF-PAI development work is under CMS contract number 75FCMC18D0012.

Interested in Participating in the IPF-PAI Alpha Test?

Interested IPFs should respond by sending an e-mail indicating your interest to IPF-PAI_testing@abtglobal.com

Questions? Email IPF-PAI_testing@abtglobal.com