



Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing (SNF VBP) Program
Outpatient Quality Reporting Systems and Stakeholder
Support Contractor

SNF VBP Program Early Look Performance Score Reports
Presentation Transcript

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May 2, 2024
2 p.m. Eastern Time

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Maria Gugliuzza: Welcome. Thank you for joining us for an *Overview of the Early Look Performance Score Report for the Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing, or the SNF VBP, Program*, hosted by the Outpatient Quality Program Systems and Stakeholder Support Team.

As a reminder, we can't recognize the raised-hand feature in the Chat tool during webinars. Instead, you can submit any questions pertinent to the webinar topic to us via the Chat tool. All questions received via the Chat tool during the webinar, that pertain to this webinar topic, will be reviewed, and a Q&A transcript will be made available at a later date. To maximize the usefulness of the Q&A transcript, we will consolidate the questions received during the event and focus on the most important and frequently asked questions. These questions will be addressed, and a question-and-answer transcript will be published at a later date. Any questions received that are not related to the topic of the webinar will not be answered in the Chat tool nor in the question-and-answer transcript for the webinar. To obtain answers to questions that are not specific to the content of this webinar, we recommend that you first review the CMS website for general information regarding the SNF VBP Program. There, you can search for questions unrelated to the current webinar topic. If you do not find an answer, submit your question to the SNF VBP Program Help Desk, which you can access at the link on this slide.

Please welcome our distinguished speakers for today's presentation. Christopher Palmer serves as the SNF VBP Program Coordinator within the Division of Chronic and Post Acute Care, specifically in the Quality Measurement and Value-Based Incentives Group at the Center for Clinical Standards and Quality, part of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. With his expertise, he navigates the intricate landscape of health care quality measures and value-based incentives. Joining Christopher is Nikkilyn Morrison. She brings a wealth of knowledge as a SNF VBP Program Researcher, affiliated with the Division of VIQR Program Support Contractor. Nikkilyn's insight into program research greatly enhances our understanding of the complexities involved in evaluating and improving healthcare quality in skilled nursing facilities.

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Today's discussion will be moderated by myself, Maria Gugliuzza. I hold the role of SNF VBP [Program] Lead within the Outpatient Quality Program Systems and Stakeholder Support [Contractor]. Let's extend a warm welcome to our esteemed speakers as they guide us through today's presentation.

Discover the SNF VBP Program's latest Early Look Performance Score Reports for FY 2026. Learn about the data and methodology behind the results. Explore the contents of the report and understand how to access your facility's Early Look Report. Next slide.

Participants will gain insights into the quality measures and methodology used in the FY 2026 SNF VBP Program, learn to interpret results from the Early Look Report, and understand the process for accessing and reviewing their facilities report.

Attendees are encouraged to review the acronyms that will be used in today's presentation to ensure clarity and understanding throughout the session.

I would now like to pass the presentation over to our first speaker. Chris, the floor is yours.

Christopher Palmer: Thanks, Maria. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Chris Palmer, the SNF VBP Program Coordinator here at CMS, and I just wanted to thank you all for taking the time to attend today's webinar about our newly released Early Look Reports. These reports are now available in iQIES, and we will preview both the report format and scoring methodology we plan on utilizing as part of the FY 2026 SNF VBP Program expansion. We at CMS are all very excited about the expansion of the SNF VBP Program. I believe that these Early Look Reports will be beneficial in previewing the upcoming program expansion and the impact they have on your facilities. Also, as a reminder, the FY 2025 SNF PPS proposed rule is out for public comment right now through May 28. Please get those public comments in, and as we value your feedback on these new VBP proposals that we've put forth for next year. Now I'll turn it over to Nickki for today's webinar.

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Nikkilyn Morrison: Thank you. As stated, my name is Nikkilyn Morrison, and I am a SNF VBP Program Researcher for the Division of Value, Incentives, and Quality Reporting Program Support Contractor. During today's webinar, I will first discuss the changes for the SNF VBP Program starting in fiscal year 2026, and then I'll provide an overview of the Early Look Performance Score Report, which is a confidential feedback report that reflects new changes to the SNF VBP Program's scoring methodology.

Before diving into the changes to the SNF VBP Program, I'll cover a little background of the program. The SNF VBP Program is a program designed to incentivize improvements to the quality of care delivered by SNFs by awarding incentive payments to SNFs. These incentive payments are awarded prospectively to all Medicare Fee for Service Part A claims paid under the SNF Prospective Payment System, and the program began awarding incentive payments in fiscal year 2019. All SNFs that are paid under Medicare's SNF Prospective Payment System are subject to the SNF VBP Program, and they are automatically considered for inclusion in the program.

Statute from the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014, or PAMA, specifies that, under the SNF VBP Program, SNFs are evaluated by their performance on quality measures, scored on both improvement and achievement. They receive quarterly confidential feedback reports that contain information about their performance, and they earn incentive payments based on their performance.

Since the program began, performance in the SNF VBP Program has been evaluated using a single measure of all-cause hospital readmissions, referred to as the SNFRM. In the fiscal year 2023 and fiscal year 2024 SNF PPS final rules, CMS adopted additional quality measures for future years of the program. The first program year that expands to include any additional quality measures is fiscal year 2026, so I'll be focusing on the expansion specific to fiscal year 2026 for the remainder of this webinar. For clarity, the term "program year" refers to the year that incentive payments are made.

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So, the fiscal year 2026 program year reflects the incentive payments that are made beginning the first day of FY 2026, October 1, 2025.

As I just mentioned, the SNF VBP Program has used the SNF 30-Day All-Cause Readmission Measure, or SNFRM, through fiscal year 2025. The *expansion* to the SNF VBP Program in fiscal year 2026 adds three additional quality measures to the program. The measures added are the SNF Healthcare-Associated Infections Requiring Hospitalization measure, the Total Nursing Staff Turnover measure, and the Total Nursing Hours per Resident Day measure.

As was done when the SNF VBP Program included just the SNFRM, when it expands, CMS will continue to use a baseline period and a performance period to assess each SNF's measure performance. For the FY 2026 program, CMS will use fiscal year 2022 as the baseline period and fiscal year 2024 as the performance period. During each of these periods, CMS will calculate a measure result for each of the four quality measures you see here. These periods will be the same across all four of the quality measures.

Also, as has been done when SNF VBP used just the SNFRM, CMS will calculate both an achievement score and an improvement score for each quality measure. I'll go into those in a little more detail when we review the Early Look Report template. In brief, an achievement score reflects a SNF's performance compared to national historical performance, and the improvement score reflects a SNF's performance compared to that SNF's own historical performance. Because there are now more measures in the program, CMS also had to make some adjustments to the scoring methodology. First, CMS will calculate a measure score for each measure that is out of 10 points. Ten will be the highest score a SNF can get on any of the given measures. Second, those four measure scores will then be combined to calculate an overall performance score for each SNF. The SNF performance score will be out of 100 points, and 100 is the highest possible score. The main difference in scoring as the SNF VBP Program expands is this combining of multiple measure scores to produce a single SNF performance score.

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Once CMS calculates the SNF performance score, as I discussed on the prior slide, CMS will follow the same calculation procedures as in past years to turn the performance score into a payment adjustment. CMS takes the performance score and the overall estimated incentive payment pool to determine the incentive payment multiplier, or IPM. CMS then applies that IPM prospectively to SNF Medicare Fee for Service Part A claims throughout fiscal year 2026 by multiplying the SNF's individualized IPM by the adjusted federal per diem rate.

Now that we've walked through the background of the SNF VBP Program and reviewed the changes for the program expansion starting in FY 2026, I'll review the Early Look Performance Score Reports, which I'll refer to as the Early Look Reports for short.

Before I get into the details of the Early Look Reports, it's important to note that this report is confidential and intended for informational purposes only. The main purpose of the report is to familiarize SNFs with the expanded FY 2026 SNF VBP Program. So, this Early Look Report will show you the new format that the official Performance Score Report will be in, and it will also give SNFs an opportunity to become more familiar with the scoring and payment methodology that will be applied for fiscal year 2026.

Another important benefit of the Early Look Reports is that they give SNFs an opportunity to get a sense of how they are performing on the three new measures being added to SNF VBP for FY 2026. These reports will contain historical quality measure results, using data from FY 2021 as a baseline period and FY 2022 as a performance period. However, it's important to keep in mind that, again, these reports are just modeling your performance in the expanded FY 2026 program. They will not reflect actual or official performance, as they do not use the official baseline and performance periods for the FY 2026 program. Because these are not official program results, the reports and data or scores in the reports will not impact any incentive payments to SNFs. SNFs will receive an official Performance Score Report for the FY 2026 program next year.

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The Early Look Reports are in Excel format and contain six worksheets: an Introduction, an Overview of Performance, Measure Results, Measure Scores, Performance Score, and Incentive Payment Multiplier. The report was structured so that SNFs can see key indicators about their performance up front in the overview sheet and can then dig deeper into the calculation steps in the subsequent sheets. I'll review the content of each of these sheets and show you examples of the tables included, so you can see how the information is laid out in the report.

Starting with the first sheet in the report, the Introduction sheet provides a brief summary of the expanded SNF VBP Program and the Early Look Reports. It also includes a Table of Contents describing and linking to the subsequent worksheets, as well as links to a user guide for the report, the SNF VBP Program website, and a help desk email.

Next, the Overview of Performance sheet highlights key results for your SNF. First, it tells you whether your SNF was included in the SNF VBP Program, based on whether or not your SNF met the measure minimum policy, which I'll describe in a minute. It also includes your SNF's incentive payment multiplier, measure results and scores for each of the four quality measures, and performance comparisons to other SNFs, both nationally and specific to the state that your SNF is in.

So, let's see what this looks like. The Overview sheet starts with Table 1, which covers your SNF's program eligibility and overall performance. On the first row of the table, you can see whether or not your SNF is included in the SNF VBP Program. This is determined by whether your SNF met the measure minimum. To be included in the FY 2026 program, a SNF must meet the case minimum for at least two of the four measures that are in the program. I'll discuss case minimums more when we get to the Measure Results sheet a little bit later. If your SNF is included in the program, if the first row says Yes, you'll get an incentive payment multiplier, or IPM, on the next row. The IPM is based on your SNF's performance on all four SNF VBP measures. You can think about this number as representing your SNF's overall performance in SNF VBP, as well as defining the modeled financial impact to your SNF.

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The row underneath the IPM helps you interpret your IPM. As a reminder, the IPMs in this Early Look Report will not be used to make any real payment adjustments and is just for informational purposes. However, if your IPM is greater than 1, your SNF would earn more in FY 2026 than it would in the absence of the SNF VBP Program. That's because Medicare Fee for Service Part A claim payments are based on the adjusted federal per diem rate multiplied by this IPM. Conversely, if your IPM is less than 1, your SNF would earn less than it would in the absence of the program. The last two rows of Table 1 provide comparisons of your SNF's IPM to other SNFs. First, you'll see a national percent rank that tells you what percentage of SNFs nationwide that your SNF performed equal to or better than. This is based on the number of SNFs that are included in the program. The last row gives a similar percentage, but here it gives you a percentage just among SNFs in the same state. If a SNF doesn't meet the measure minimum, that first row says No, they will not receive an IPM or comparisons to other SNFs because they will not be included in the SNF VBP Program. That means that Medicare Fee for Service Part A payments to these SNFs would not be affected by the SNF VBP Program in FY 2026.

Table 2 on the Overview worksheet provides performance information for each of the four measures in the FY 2026 SNF VBP Program. Each row in the table represents a measure. The first column displays your SNF's baseline period measure result. As a reminder, the baseline period for the Early Look Report is FY 2021, and this report reflects your SNF's performance on that measure during this time period. To the right of the baseline period measure result is the performance period measure result, which reflects your SNF's performance on the measure during FY 2022. Both of these measure results are calculated and risk-adjusted according to measure specifications. You can find those on the CMS SNF VBP Program website if you would like more information about each measure's calculation. The first three measures, SNFRM, SNF HAI, and Total Nursing Staff Turnover, are structured such that a lower measure result is better, whereas Total Nurse Staffing Hours per Resident Day is structured such that a higher measure result is better.

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To make this easier to interpret, the third column provides an indicator of whether your measure result improved or worsened over time between the baseline and performance periods. SNFs that meet the case minimum for a measure will receive a measure score. That score will range between 0 and 10, where 10 is the best possible score you could receive. The last column in the table gives you a comparison of your measure score to other SNFs nationwide that also met the case minimum for the measure. It displays what percentage of SNFs your SNF performed equal to or better than on that measure.

The third worksheet in the Early Look Report contains more detailed measure results. This is where we start digging deeper into the calculations. In addition to your measure results, which are also on the Overview sheet we just reviewed, the Measure Results worksheet includes case counts for the baseline and performance periods and some additional guidance to help interpret your measure results.

This is an example of the table included in the Measure Results worksheet. As we saw in Table 2, each row in the table represents a measure. The first column displays your SNF's case count for the baseline period, which is FY 2021 for this report. The case count represents the number of cases that are included in the measure calculation. Each measure has a minimum number of cases needed to calculate a reliable measure result, so the next column to the right displays whether or not your SNF met the case minimum for that baseline period for the measure. The next two columns over repeat this same information, but this time for the performance period, which is FY 2022 for this report. The case minimums for each measure are in a footnote under this table in your report for quick reference. The Measure Result Interpretation column presents an arrow that tells you whether a lower or higher result indicates better performance to help you interpret your SNF's measure results in the last two columns. These last two columns present the same measure results that were in the Overview sheet in Table 2.

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If your SNF doesn't meet the case minimum but provided some reportable data for the measure, you will still receive a measure result in the Early Look Report, just so you're aware of your SNF's approximate performance on the measure. However, if you do not have any reportable data, you will not receive a measure result.

The fourth worksheet in the Early Look Report contains your measure scores, including your achievement scores, improvement scores, and overall measure scores.

Similar to previous tables, each row in Table 4 represents a measure. The next two columns repeat your SNF's baseline and performance period measure results that you can also find on Table 2 and Table 3. Using your SNF's measure results and the performance standards calculated from national SNF data during the baseline period, CMS calculates measure scores. First, you'll see your SNF's achievement scores for each measure, which are on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the best possible achievement score. Your SNF's achievement score is based on your SNF's performance period measure result, compared to national SNF performance. Next, you'll see your SNF's improvement score. This one is on a scale of 0 to 9, with 9 being the best possible score. The improvement score is based on your SNF's change in measure results from the baseline to performance period, as well as a comparison to national SNF performance. The resulting measure score for each measure in the last column is the higher score between the achievement and improvement scores. If you do not meet the case minimum for a measure during the performance period, you will not receive a measure score. If you do not meet the case minimum during the baseline period only, you will not receive an improvement score, but you will still receive an achievement and overall measure score. If you'd like more information about how measure scores are calculated, you can navigate to the Early Look Report User Guide on the CMS website, which is going to be linked in the Introduction sheet of the report.

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The fifth sheet, called the Performance Score sheet, summarizes your SNF's overall performance across all four quality measures in the SNF VBP Program. It includes information about how many measures received a score and, therefore, if your SNF met the measure minimum policy to be included in SNF VBP Program for the program year. It also provides information about each measure score's contribution to the overall performance score, what your SNF's performance score is, and your SNF's national program rank.

Information on the Performance Score worksheet is split across three distinct tables that I'll cover one at a time. First, Table 5 covers the measure minimum requirement. The top row is the same for all SNFs, and it reflects the measure minimum policy for FY 2026, which is that SNFs must receive a measure score on at least two of the four measures to be included in the SNF VBP Program. The next row is specific to your SNF, showing you how many of the four measures your SNF received a measure score on. Then, the final row repeats information from the Overview sheet, telling you whether or not your SNF met the measure minimum and is included in the SNF VBP Program.

Table 6 provides more information on how your SNF's performance score is calculated. Each row represents a measure, and the first column repeats the measure score we've seen on Tables 2 and 4. At the bottom, these measure scores have been summed. The middle column represents the maximum possible measure score a SNF can receive on each measure. This value will always be 10 for any measure for which the SNF receives a score, since all measures are scored from 0 to 10. The maximum possible measure score will only display a 0 if the SNF could not be scored on the measure. The last column in Table 6 represents each measure's contribution to your SNF's performance score. Because each measure is scored out of 10 points, but the performance score is out of 100 points, measure scores need to be normalized, or rescaled, so that their sum is also out of 100 points. CMS rescales each measure score by dividing the measure score by the sum of the maximum possible score and multiplying by 100.

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So, to walk through an example, for the first row, the SNFRM, CMS divides the 7.1 measure score by 40, the sum of the maximum possible score, and multiplies by 100 to get a 17.8 Contribution to Performance Score. This is a little easier to think about looking at that second measure, SNF HAI. Because this example SNF is scored on four measures, each measure is worth a possible 25 out of 100 points. This SNF got a perfect score on SNF HAI, a 10, so they get all 25 points for SNF HAI contributing to their performance score out of 100. At the bottom of the Contribution to Performance Score column, you'll find a sum across all of the measures, which is your SNF's overall performance score out of 100 points, that 77.5 number.

Table 7, which is the last table on the Performance Score worksheet, repeats this performance score and adds a reminder that the performance score ranges from 0 to 100, with 100 being the highest possible performance score. Here you can also find your SNF's national rank in performance in the SNF VBP Program. This means that, in this example, across the 13,720 SNFs that were included in the SNF VBP Program for FY 2026, the SNF ranked 295. The SNF with the highest performance score nationally, or multiple SNFs if they were tied, would see the rank number 1 here.

The sixth and final worksheet includes your SNF's incentive payment multiplier, or IPM. When CMS makes payments for a SNF's Medicare Fee for Service Part A claims in the applicable program year, CMS multiplies the adjusted federal per diem rate by the SNF's IPM. However, as I previously mentioned, because the Early Look Reports are just modeling performance using historical measure data, they will not impact any incentive payments to SNFs for FY 2026 or any other year. You will receive your actual IPM for FY 2026 in a report next year.

The IPM worksheet contains a single table that tells you the SNF VBP Program year, in this case FY 2026. It repeats your SNF's performance score that was calculated on the prior worksheet. It also repeats your SNF's IPM that you saw on the Overview worksheet.

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As a reminder, since the IPM is a multiplier, if your SNF's IPM is greater than 1, your SNF would earn more than it would in the absence of the SNF VBP Program. If it's less than 1, your SNF would earn less than it would in the absence of the program.

Now I'll move on to how to access your Early Look Report. You can download your SNF's report the same way you access other quarterly reports for the SNF VBP Program, through the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System, or iQIES. An email notification indicating that the Early Look Report is available was sent to Listserv subscribers via the iQIES Listserv on April 23. This notification includes report access instructions and links, but I will also walk through them here as well.

Once you navigate to iQIES, at iqies.cms.gov, you will log in using a Health Care Quality Information Systems Access Roles and Profile, or HARP, user ID and password. If you do not have a HARP account, you can register for a HARP ID at HARP.cms.gov. Once you log in, you will navigate to the Reports menu and select My Reports. From the My Reports page, you will select the MDS 3.0 Provider Preview Reports folder. This will show you all of the reports available for download. All of the SNF VBP reports start with SNFVBP and your CCN number, and the Early Look Report follows with FY26, then ELR for Early Look Report, and Apr 2024 for the report release date. Next to the file name, select More, and your report will be downloaded through your browser.

If you need any help obtaining access to your Early Look Report in iQIES, you can contact the iQIES Service Center using the contact information on the slide.

There are three additional resources that may help you interpret your Early Look Report. These are all available on the CMS website, linked at the bottom of the Introduction sheet in the Early Look Report. First, there is a two-page fact sheet that provides an overview of the report and scoring methodology. Second, there is a more in-depth user guide that provides a detailed review of the contents of the report.

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Third, there is an infographic that details the steps CMS followed to calculate the IPM in the Early Look Report.

In addition to the resources specific to the Early Look Report, there are also more general resources about the SNF VBP Program available on the CMS website. That includes recent announcements, information about the quarterly confidential feedback reports, public reporting, and more.

Finally, if you have any questions about the SNF VBP Program, you can email the SNF VBP Program Help Desk at SNFVBP@rti.org. As a reminder, any questions specific to accessing the report in iQIES should go to the iQIES Service Center.

Maria Gugliuzza: Thank you, Nikkilyn. We will now answer some of the questions that were submitted during the webinar. If you would like to submit additional questions at this time, please include the slide number associated with your question, The first question is: Will all SNFs be moved to the expanded SNF VBP Program?

Nikkilyn Morrison: Yes, all SNFs that are paid under Medicare’s SNF Prospective Payment Systems are subject to the SNF VBP Program and are automatically considered for inclusion in the program. The expanded SNF VBP Program replaces the current one-measure program starting in FY 2026. As new measures are added to the SNF VBP Program, all SNFs eligible for inclusion in the program will be subject to the additional measures. So, when we say, “expanded program,” we mean the current program is expanding, not that there will be two different, concurrent SNF VBP Programs.

Maria Gugliuzza: Our next question: Does the Early Look Report replace the regular quarterly SNF VBP reports?

Nikkilyn Morrison: No. Your SNF will continue to receive quarterly confidential feedback reports for the current SNF VBP Program, which is the FY 2025 program.

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The Early Look Report is just a one-time supplemental report that helps familiarize SNFs with the future expansion of the SNF VBP Program since the scoring methodology and report format will be different than the current reports distributed to SNFs since 2018.

Maria Gugliuzza: Next question: Are the new measures the same ones that are used in SNF QRP?

Nikkilyn Morrison: Yes and no. The readmission measure in SNF VBP, the SNFRM, is different than the readmission measure currently in SNF QRP, and the two staffing-related measures are not currently included in SNF QRP either. However, the SNF HAI is also included as a quality measure in SNF QRP.

Maria Gugliuzza: Next question: How different will our data be in the Early Look Report from the official FY 2026 program year Performance Score Report?

Nikkilyn Morrison: The Early Look Report uses FY 2021 as the baseline period and FY 2022 as the performance period, whereas the official FY 2026 program will use FY 2022 as the baseline period and FY 2024 as the performance period. Overall, because the Early Look Report and official Performance Score Report will use different time frames for the measures and scoring calculations, we expect SNF performance will be different between the two reports. However, we also expect your SNF's historical measure results provide a good indicator of your SNF's future measure results and performance in the SNF VBP Program.

Maria Gugliuzza: Thank you. The next question: I received my fiscal year 2026 Early Look Report, but I never received my fiscal year 2025 report for SNF VBP. How do I access my fiscal year 2025 report and incentive payment multiplier?

Nikkilyn Morrison: So, the Early Look Report that you just received, which models your SNF's performance in the fiscal year 2026 SNF VBP [Program] program year, doesn't replace any existing quarterly reports. You will still receive all four quarterly reports for the fiscal year 2025 program. So far, CMS has released two quarterly reports for FY 2025. There's one in December of last year and one in March of this year.

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You will receive another quarterly report for the FY 2025 program in June, and the final quarterly report, which is called the Annual Performance Score Report, you'll receive in August of this year. The August report will have your final performance data. It's going to include your IPM for the fiscal year 2025 SNF VBP Program. So, the bottom line is, you haven't received it yet. You did not miss anything. I also just want to clarify that the Early Look Report that you received for fiscal year 2026 doesn't reflect your SNF's actual performance for FY 2026. It will not affect any payments to SNFs in FY 2026. The Early Look Report is for informational purposes only. The report uses historical data to model your SNF's performance since there are new measures and a new scoring methodology being implemented for SNF VBP in fiscal year 2026. Regarding actual performance for FY 2026, you're still going to receive or quarterly reports next year that will contain your SNF's actual performance data during that official baseline and performance periods for FY 2026.

Maria Gugliuzza: Thank you, Nikki. Our next question: Why is CMS sending out an Early Look Report if it doesn't affect payment? Nikki, if you're talking, can you check your mute button, please?

Nikkilyn Morrison: Can you hear me now?

Maria Gugliuzza: Yes, again. Thank you.

Nikkilyn Morrison: Sorry about that. So, FY 2026 is the first program year where SNF VBP performance is evaluated on more than one measure. It's just been SNFRM up to this point. So, we recognize SNFs may not be aware of the new measures that were added or how the SNF VBP, scoring methodology changed or the kind of impact that those changes are going to have on SNF payments. So, the Early Look Report, it was sent to help with that, to help familiarize SNFs with the new measures, the new scoring methodology, and to give a preview of their approximate performance across these four measures using historical data. Even though it's not reflecting official performance, we expect that that historical data will provide a pretty good indicator of your SNFs future performance on the measures.

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If needed, it could be used to target quality improvement efforts before the new measures affect actual payments to SNFs.

Maria Gugliuzza: Great. Thanks, Nikki. Our next question: I don't have a HARP ID. How do I get one to access the report?

Nikkilyn Morrison: Sure. If you navigate to slide 34, we have some instructions there. If you navigate to HARP.CMS.gov, there's a link on the bottom of the screen where you can sign up for a HARP ID, if you don't have one. Once you have that HARP ID and password, you can use those credentials to log into iQIES to access the Early Look Report. So, once you login, you will navigate to the Reports menu and select My Reports. From the My Reports page, you select the MDS 3.0 Provider Preview Reports folder. That's going to show you all of the reports that are available for download. The Early Look Report file name is going to start with SNF VBP. All the SNF VBP reports start with SNF VBP. Then, it'll have your CCN number, FY 2026, ELR, and APR 2024. So, thanks for pulling up the slides. So, all these instructions are included in the slide deck on slide 34, which is also available for you to download.

Maria Gugliuzza: Thank you. Our next question: Why does my report say No Reportable Data for a measure? Is it because I didn't meet the case minimum?

Nikkilyn Morrison: Good questions. So, the Early Look Reports will display No Reportable Data from measure results and case counts if your SNF didn't have any reportable measure data during that particular time period, whether it's the baseline period or the performance period. There are a few reasons why you may not have any reportable data for a measure. So, one reason is that your SNF just simply didn't have any stays that met eligibility for inclusion in the measure. As a reminder, all those measure specifications can be found online. Second, for the staffing measures, which use data that SNFs submit to CMS's Payroll-Based Journal, or the PBJ system, you might see No Reportable Data for those, if your SNF did not submit data to the PBJ system or the data that was submitted failed validation. If your SNF doesn't meet the case minimum but has at least some reportable data, you'll see a measure result in your Early Look Report.

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That's calculated with the available data. This is just for information purposes because the measures are new to SNF VBP. Measure results typically are not calculated if you don't meet the measures case minimum because the measure result does not meet the case count threshold for reliability. So, the Early Look Reports also will not calculate measure scores unless the SNF meets the case minimum for a measure. So, you may see your report saying not enough data for achievement scores, improvement scores, and measure scores if you didn't meet the case minimum for a given measure. So, I know that was a lot to summarize. No Reportable Data means there's no data to calculate a measure result, and not enough data means there's not enough data to reliably calculate a measure score.

Maria Gugliuzza: Thank you. Our next question is: I'm brand new to LTC. So, I am not really familiar with all of this. I do have a question, though. I'm in a brand-new building. We just opened in December 2023. How might this look for us?

Nikkilyn Morrison: Sure. See, the Early Look Report is based on data from fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022. So, a SNF that opened in December 2023 would have no data from those time periods. So, they won't have any data in their Early Look Report or you won't receive one. For the actual fiscal year 2026 program year, the baseline period is FY 2022, and the performance period is FY 2024. So, a SNF like this would report some data to CMS. Yet, it's important to note, without that baseline period data, the SNF would not be scored on improvement for each measure, but the SNF may still receive achievement scores based on the FY 2024 measure data. Its overall FY 2026 program year performance and incentive payment multiplier, or IPM, would be based on the SNF's achievement scores.

Maria Gugliuzza: Great. Thank you so much. Next question: Baseline is 2021 and performance is 2022 for the SNF VBP for fiscal year 2026.

Nikkilyn Morrison: For the Early Look Report, FY 2021 is the baseline period and FY 2022 is the performance period, but for the actual FY 2026 SNF VBP Program, CMS is going to be using newer data.

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So, for the actual FY 2026 program year, FY 2022 will be used as the baseline period and FY 2024 as the performance period for all four of the quality measures included.

Maria Gugliuzza: Excellent. Next question: Would this be part of federal match to Medicaid program or only Medicare Fee for Service?

Nikkilyn Morrison: So, the incentive payment multiplier for the SNF VBP Program is only applied to Medicare Fee for Service claims. When CMS makes payments for a SNF's Medicare Fee for Service Part A claims in FY 2026, the adjusted federal per diem rate would be multiplied by the SNF's official incentive payment multiplier. As I mentioned, and I mentioned enough, the Early Look Report does not contain the official IPM, so that will be getting later.

Maria Gugliuzza: Thank you. Next question: For nursing staff turnover, how about your nursing agency nurses? Is that considered turnover? Is there a code for agencies, so the facility will not be coded as a turnover?

Nikkilyn Morrison: The nursing staff turnover measure, that's calculated using data from the CMS Payroll-Based Journal, or PBJ system, I mentioned. The turnover measure only includes individuals who work at least 120 hours in the 90-day period, starting from the first workday observed across the baseline quarter. That baseline quarter is the quarter prior to the first quarter used in the turnover calculation. So, across that baseline quarter and the first two quarters used in the turnover calculation, both regular employees and agency staff are included in the turnover measure if they work sufficient hours to be eligible for the denominator of the measure.

Maria Gugliuzza: All right. Next question: Where is the infection control measure getting data, from the MDS?

Nikkilyn Morrison: The Skilled Nursing Facility Healthcare-Associated Infection measure, SNF HAI, that measure is calculated using Medicare Fee for Service claims data. You can find all of the measure specifications for this and all the other SNF VBP measures on the CMS SNF VBP website under the measure's web page.

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Maria Gugliuzza: Great. Thank you. It looks like that is all the time we have today for questions. If your question wasn't answered and you still have questions, please e-mail the SNF VBP program help desk at SNFVBP@rti.org. Thank you again for joining. We hope you had a great afternoon.