

APPENDIX D

Communication with Respondents

ASPE Physician Time Use Under the MFS Contract
Survey of Clinical Time for Selected Services
Pre-mailing letter for physicians

<Date>

<Inside Address>

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

I am writing to ask for your help with an important study being conducted for the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of this study is to explore the time inputs to the Medicare Fee Schedule.

In the next few days you will receive a request to participate in this project by answering questions about the estimated amount of time you spend providing clinical services to patients. ASPE has contracted with Social & Scientific Systems, Inc., and their partner, Urban Institute to gather this information to provide policymakers with a better understanding of one aspect of how clinical services are delivered and the relationships between the clinical time spent by physicians and the time that is currently part of the fee schedule.

Your participation is very important in representing physicians from different specialties that provide health care services to patients. The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The staff at Social & Scientific Systems will do everything they can to make it easy for you to participate in the study.

In recognition of your effort, we will provide a \$100 honorarium with the survey packet. We thank you in advance for your help with this important study and appreciate your valuable time in providing input.

Sincerely,

Richard Kronick, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Policy

ASPE Physician Time Use Under the MFS Contract
Survey of Clinical Time for Selected Services
Cover letter for physicians

<Date>

<Inside Address>

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

I am writing to ask for your help in providing information for our study of physician time use patterns. As a physician, your input on the estimated time you spend providing clinical services to patients is critical to getting a better picture of one aspect of the Medicare Fee Schedule.

The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) has contracted with Social & Scientific Systems, Inc., and their partner, the Urban Institute, to gather this information to be used to inform policymakers as they consider changes to payments for clinical services.

You can help by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it to the Social & Scientific Systems (SSS) team in the stamped return envelope provided. The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete, and your answers will be kept confidential. Only aggregated data will be reported and neither you nor your practice will be identifiable in any way to ASPE. If you have any questions, please call 1-800-XXX-XXXX and ask for the Study Manager, Lourdes Suarez. The staff at SSS will do everything they can to make it easy for you to participate in the effort.

In recognition of your effort, we have included a \$100 check as an honorarium. We thank you in advance for your help with this important study and appreciate your valuable time in providing input.

Sincerely,

Richard Kronick, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Policy

ASPE Physician Time Use Under the MFS Contract
Survey of Clinical Time for Selected Services
Email scripts

<Email note for initial link>

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is collecting information about physician time use patterns. I am writing to request your assistance with this effort. As a physician, your input on the estimated time you spend providing clinical services to patients is critical to getting a better picture of one aspect of the Medicare Fee Schedule.

DHHS has contracted with Social & Scientific Systems, Inc., and their partner, the Urban Institute, to gather this information to be used to inform policymakers as they consider changes to payments for clinical services.

You can help by completing the survey at <http://survey.s-3.com/time>. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete, and your answers will be kept confidential. Only aggregated data will be reported and neither you nor your practice will be identifiable in any way to DHHS. If you have any questions or would prefer to complete a paper version of the survey, please call 1-800-XXX-XXXX and ask for the Study Manager, Lourdes Suarez. The staff at SSS will do everything they can to make it easy for you to participate in the effort.

In recognition of your effort, we will send you a \$100 check as an honorarium. We thank you in advance for your help with this important study and appreciate your valuable time in providing input.

Sincerely,

Richard Kronick, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Policy

ASPE Physician Time Use Under the MFS Contract
Survey of Clinical Time for Selected Services
Email scripts

<Email note for follow-ups>

Dear Dr. [Last Name],

Recently I wrote you requesting help with an important DHHS effort to collect information about physician time use patterns. I am writing again to encourage your participation by completing the survey at <http://survey.s-3.com/time>.

If you have any questions or would prefer to complete a paper version of the questionnaire, please call 1-800-XXX-XXXX and ask for the Study Manager, Lourdes Suarez. The staff at Social & Scientific Systems (SSS), the study contractor, will do everything they can to make it easy for you to participate in the effort.

As a physician, your input on the estimated time you spend providing clinical services to patients is critical to getting a better picture of one aspect of the Medicare Fee Schedule. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete, and your answers will be kept confidential. Only aggregated data will be reported and neither you nor your practice will be identifiable in any way to DHHS. If you have any questions, please call

In recognition of your effort, we will send you a \$100 check as an honorarium. We thank you in advance for your help with this important study and appreciate your valuable time in providing input.

Sincerely,

Richard Kronick, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Policy

ASPE Physician Time Use Under the MFS Contract
Survey of Clinical Time for Selected Services
Text for Reminder Postcard for Physicians

Recently a questionnaire was mailed to you seeking your input on the time you spend providing clinical services to patients. Your response is very important because of your role as a physician and knowledge about the clinical time it takes to provide such care.

If you have already completed the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, your prompt response would be greatly appreciated.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, it has been misplaced, or you have any questions about the study please call us at 1-800-XXX-XXXX and ask for the Study Manager, Lourdes Suarez. We would be happy to send you another copy, provide you with a link to the online version of the survey, or take your responses over the telephone should that be more convenient for you.

Thank you for your valuable input.

Second postcard if needed

The field period for the Survey of Clinical Time is coming to a close and we need your response within the next 10 days. Your input is very important because of your role as a provider and knowledge about the clinical time it takes to provide such care.

If you have already completed the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, your prompt response would be greatly appreciated.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, it has been misplaced, or you have any questions about the study please call us at 1-800-XXX-XXXX and ask for the Study Manager, Lourdes Suarez. We would be happy to send you another copy, provide you with a link to the online version of the survey, or take your responses over the telephone should that be more convenient for you.

Thank you for your valuable input.

PROMPTING SCRIPT

Survey of Physician Clinical Time for Selected Services

A. Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services. Is Dr. [LAST NAME] available to come to the phone?

- SPEAKING TO R 1
- R NOT AVAILABLE..... 2 (GO TO G
- ASKS WHO IS CALLING 3 (GO TO H

}

Go to Gatekeeper Script

Talking to the RESPONDENT:

B. (IF R just came to phone: Hello, my name is _____) I'm calling from a health research organization called Social & Scientific Systems. We're conducting a study for the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. We recently sent you a questionnaire for the Survey of Clinical Time for Selected Services.

C. Do you recall receiving it?

- YES 1
- NO 2 (GO TO F)

D. Have you had the opportunity to review the information?

- YES 1
- NO 2

E. By what date do you think you can complete the survey?

- WILL SEND..... 3 (Record date -Go to Closing 2)
- ALREADY SENT 4 (Record date -Go to Closing 2)

F. The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) has contracted with Social & Scientific Systems its partner the Urban Institute to gather information on physician time use patterns for selected clinical services. The results will help ASPE and other policymakers better understand how health care is

delivered and the quality of the clinical time estimates that underlie the Medicare Fee Schedule.

([PHYSICIAN] Your participation is very important in representing physicians from a diverse range of specialties.

There are several ways that you can complete the questionnaire—either online, over the telephone, or on a hard copy questionnaire. Which way would you prefer?

If you'd like to complete the questionnaire over the phone, I can do that with you now or we can make an appointment for another time. It should take only about 20 minutes.

- (If no,) I would like to re-send you the questionnaire

SEND LINK TO WEB SURVEY.....	1.	GET EMAIL ADDRESS, EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE, END CALL (closing 1)
RE-SEND QUESTIONNAIRE	1	CONFIRM ADDRESS, EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE, END CALL (closing 1)
DO INTERVIEW NOW	2	SWITCH TO HARD-COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE
NO, NOT NOW	3	SET CB OR APPT TIME, END CALL

CLOSING1: Thank you for your help. We will re-mail the survey questionnaire in the next couple of days.

CLOSING2: Thank you for sending the information. If we haven't received the completed form in the next couple of weeks we'll give you a call back. [END CALL]

CLOSING3: Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions. We appreciate your help.

GATEKEEPER Script:

G. When would be a good time to reach (RESPONDENT)?

(RECORD CALLBACK TIME OR MAKE APPOINTMENT) (END CALL)

H. I'm calling from a health research organization called Social & Scientific Systems. We're conducting a study for the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Some materials about the study were recently sent to [RESPONDENT]. I am calling to follow up. Is this the correct number to reach [RESPONDENT]?

IF YES:

Is [RESPONDENT] available now?

IF YES: [WITH RESPONDENT ON THE PHONE, GO TO Respondent script- B]

IF NO: When would be a good time to reach (RESPONDENT)?

(RECORD CALLBACK TIME OR MAKE APPOINTMENT) (END CALL)

IF NO:

Do you know [RESPONDENT]?

IF YES: Could you give me a number where I can reach [RESPONDENT]?

IF YES: RECORD NEW NUMBER – THANK INFORMANT - END CALL

If the contact refuses to give a number, ask them to have the respondent call (TOLL-FREE LINE) so that we may discuss this study. When [RESPONDENT] calls, please ask them to refer to study number [ID #]

THANK INFORMANT – END CALL.

IF NO: Thank you for your time (END CALL)