

Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS)

Request for Approval of a Non-Substantive Change

OMB No. 0938-0568
(Expires 07/31/2017)

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A1. Circumstances making the collection of information necessary

This request is for a non-substantive change to an approved data collection (OMB No. 0938-0568, expires 07/31/2017). On July 30, 2014, OMB approved the extension of MCBS data collection for an additional three years with no changes in burden. The approved clearance encompasses the MCBS Community questionnaires, Facility screener, Facility questionnaires, and supplements that are rotated in and out of the MCBS questionnaires.

Non-substantive Changes

The MCBS rotating panel design includes three rounds of interviews per year: the Fall Round (September – December); the Winter Round (January – April); and the Summer Round (May – August). Some parts of the questionnaire are ‘core’ and repeated each round; others are rotating modules and are only asked once a year in a specific round.

This change request seeks approval to implement non-substantive changes in the MCBS questionnaire, beginning the Summer Round 75 in May 2016.

- Income and Assets (IAQ): CMS requests approval to revise the wording of some items to accommodate deceased respondents and/or partners, and to add new items about lump sum payments.
- Preventive Care (PVQ): CMS requests approval to add items to the PVQ on the shingles vaccination and pneumonia vaccination.

The revised IAQ and PVQ sections will be integrated into the MCBS questionnaire in Round 75 (summer of 2016) and are contained in Attachments A and B.

A2. Purpose and use of information collection

Income and Assets (IAQ) Section:

In Round 73, CMS and NORC implemented a redesigned Income and Assets Questionnaire (IAQ) based upon selections from the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS). Because the NHATS questionnaire is only administered to living respondents, the questionnaire as implemented in Round 73 skipped the IAQ for proxies responding for deceased respondents. In addition, questionnaire skip logic was not added to account for recently deceased spouses/partners.

Deceased Respondent

A small number of interviews are conducted each round with a proxy for a respondent who has died since the last interview. These interviews tend to be difficult to complete, as it can be distressing to the proxy and, in some cases, the proxy may not have very much information about the respondent’s financial situation. CMS is requesting to only ask the final total income question for the prior calendar year for deceased respondents. This will

allow for an overall measure of income in the year prior to the respondent's death, while minimizing respondent burden.

Deceased Spouse or Partner

In Round 73, questions in the IAQ were administered for spouses and partners of respondents even if they had died since the last interview. These questions can be awkward and difficult for respondents to answer about recently deceased spouses or partners. A more concise way of dealing with a situation in which the spouse or partner has died is to consider that respondent as "single" (not having a spouse or partner) for the purposes of IAQ. CMS is requesting to change the questionnaire programming logic for text fills so they would refer only to the respondent, and not the spouse, in this section. This can be accomplished by changing the specifications to indicate that the spouse or partner must be living in the household at the time of the interview. Household members reported to have died in the reference period are then flagged as "not in household" for the purposes of the current round. Any spouses or partners reported as not in household in a prior round would also be excluded. The relevant spouse/partner income questions would then be skipped.

Additional Questions for Lump Sum Payments

CMS is requesting the addition of a four-question item set in the IAQ to collect information about inheritances and other large lump sum assets. This would allow the survey to capture certain types of one-time lump sum payments not previously captured, such as inheritances, gifts, and pension settlements. The proposed item set was adapted from the Health and Retirement Survey (HRS) which has been in the field for many years.

The revisions to the IAQ section are contained in **Attachment A**.

Preventive Care (PVQ) Section:

CMS is requesting to add two items on preventive health measures. The first is a new item asking whether the respondent has ever received a shingles vaccine. The second is an item that was previously part of the Health Functioning and Status (HFQ) section, asking the respondent whether they have ever had a pneumonia shot or vaccine. These additions to the PVQ section are contained in **Attachment B**.

A12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

The addition of two items to PVQ, combined with improving the programming skip logic to IAQ for the relatively rare events of a beneficiary or spouse who has died, will not result in an increase in burden. The total burden is based on the average amount of time estimated across all respondents.

Attachments:

A – Revised Income and Assets (IAQ) section

B – Revised Preventive Care (PVQ) section