

Application to Use Burden/Hours from Generic PRA Clearance:
Generic Social Marketing & Consumer Testing Research
(CMS-10437, OMB 0938-1247)

Generic Information Collection (GenIC) #20: Medicare Online Qualitative Panel Monthly Survey

Office of Communications (OC)
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

A. Background

The Office of Communications/Strategic Marketing Group/Division of Research will be conducting brief monthly surveys of Medicare beneficiaries and coming-of-agers using an online qualitative panel over the course of one year. The overall purpose of the survey is to examine topics of interest to CMS as it relates to understanding the needs of Medicare beneficiaries and their experiences with Medicare over time. Information gathered from these monthly surveys will be used to inform ongoing qualitative research to be conducted with members of the CMS-developed panel during the one-year period. Critically, these brief monthly surveys serve as an effective tool in implementing regular touchpoints to enhance panel member engagement.

Survey respondents will be screened to be included in a longitudinal online panel and will include current Medicare beneficiaries and individuals who will be signing up for or receiving Medicare within the next six months (coming of agers). Each will be followed over a one-year period via inclusion in an online panel. Each brief, five-minute survey will examine changes in knowledge, attitudes, exposure to Medicare information, and behaviors over time. CMS is in the process of developing and refining tools to assist Medicare beneficiaries, coming of agers, and caregivers in making informed decisions regarding their health insurance and healthcare choices. Data collected through this effort will enable us to identify some of the problems individuals encounter when performing these tasks. Additionally, and importantly, the data gathered through this process will help to identify areas where more in-depth qualitative research will be valuable and will assist us in targeting our recruitment for such efforts. For example, when refining resources on Medicare.gov that are designed to promote informed decision-making around healthcare provider, services, or facility selection, having data indicating which members of the panel have recently engaged in such activities will enable us to recruit those individuals who will have recent experiences to draw upon when reviewing Medicare.gov provider and care decision support tools.

Because this data will be gathered longitudinally, it will enable us to examine exposure to different types of outreach and information at different points throughout the year and how that information exposure might impact behaviors around use of CMS information sources when needed. This information will assist in identifying priorities for source and channel improvement during particular year parts. Additionally, changes in information search and use behaviors over time may help CMS to develop better personalization, more targeted outreach, and a better and more cohesive omnichannel experience for our consumers by enabling the examination of behaviors across different communication channels.

B. Description of Information Collection

The survey will be conducted with a sample of 500 individuals, who will be included in the online panel membership sample that will be recruited and maintained for the purpose of this one-year long assessment. Each individual who is included in the longitudinal sample will receive the same survey once per month for 12 months. This brief online questionnaire will include a set of static questions for which responses will be examined over time, as well as up to two questions that will be alternated month-to-month (questions 2-3 and Questions 6-8 in the instrument). The survey is designed to be no more than five minutes in length for each fielding, resulting in a total of 60 minutes per participant for the entire duration of the project.

Participants will be invited to participate in the survey once per month via email, and they will log into the secure panel portal to respond to the questions online. Data will be captured using Qualtrics, and will be analyzed using the Qualtrics data analysis platform, Excel, and SPSS, as appropriate. Because the data will not be used to generalize findings across the population of Medicare beneficiaries or individuals aging into Medicare, the data will not be weighted prior to analysis.

Results from the monthly surveys will be used to provide information regarding potential information needs; customer experience improvements; and topics in need of more in-depth examination through qualitative research such as focus groups, usability testing, materials testing, or concept testing.

C. Deviations from Generic Request

No deviations are requested.

D. Burden Hour Deduction

One survey will be implemented 12 times with up to 500 participants over the course of 12 months.

Participants will include Medicare beneficiaries who have Original Medicare or Medicare Advantage plans and individuals who will be signing up for or receiving Medicare within the next six month. Participation will be voluntary and the data collection is expected to take approximately 60 minutes per participant (five minutes per survey, 12 times per year). The total burden hour request for this effort is 500 hours.

E. Timeline

CMS hopes to begin data collection as soon as OMB clearance is received and continue data collection for a duration of one year.

The following attachments are provided for this information collection:

- Study Initiation Request Form (Medicare Online Panel Monthly Survey)
- Survey Instrument – Medicare Online Panel Monthly Survey Instrument