Website User and Data Submission Manual Version 14.0

Home Health Care CAHPS® Survey

January 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of This Manual

This manual describes the functions of the Home Health Care CAHPS®[1] (HHCAHPS) Survey website and provides instructions and guidelines on the mechanics of submitting survey data to the HHCAHPS Data Center. Procedures for sampling and constructing HHCAHPS data files—including the variables that must be submitted for each sample month and the format of the monthly data files—are provided in **Chapters 4** and **10** of the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* ⧉ available on the HHCAHPS website. Users of the HHCAHPS website and approved survey vendors are strongly urged to review and be knowledgeable about all protocols and procedures described in the *Protocols and Guidelines Manual* before reviewing this manual.

Section 1 of this manual presents an overview of the manual's layout and content. Section 2 describes the public and private functions and links on the HHCAHPS website. System and security requirements are described in Section 3. Section 4 contains information about the template that survey vendors will prepare and use to submit HHCAHPS Survey data to the Data Center. Step-by-step instructions for submitting data files are provided in Section 5, along with a description of each of the reports available to users relating to data submission. Section 6 contains information specific to home health agencies (HHAs) on registering for user credentials, authorizing a vendor, viewing data submission reports, and managing their user account. It also contains a list of frequently asked questions and answers to be used as a resource by HHAs.

1.2 Overview of the HHCAHPS Survey

The HHCAHPS Survey is designed to measure the experiences of people receiving home health care from Medicare-certified HHAs. The survey is conducted by multiple survey vendors working under contract with HHAs and involves ongoing data collection with monthly and quarterly data submissions. Survey vendors prepare and submit data files to the HHCAHPS Data Center, which is operated and maintained by staff at RTI International, the organization assisting the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) with coordinating the national implementation of the HHCAHPS Survey. RTI project staff members are hereafter referred to as the "Coordination Team."

Survey vendors that wish to conduct the HHCAHPS Survey on behalf of an HHA must apply to become an approved HHCAHPS Survey vendor and meet specific minimum business requirements ⧉, available on the HHCAHPS website. Survey vendors must also complete the

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[1] CAHPS® is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, a U.S. Government agency.

HHCAHPS Survey Introductory self-paced training and all Update training sessions provided by CMS and be approved after the introductory training. Approved survey vendors must follow all required protocols when they conduct the HHCAHPS Survey as described in the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual*.

1.3 Overview of the HHCAHPS Survey Website

The HHCAHPS Survey website is a secure interactive website with public and private sections; it is the official website for the HHCAHPS Survey. In addition to housing the data submission tool, the website also serves as the main means of communicating information about the HHCAHPS Survey to survey vendors and to HHAs. It contains the *Protocols and Guidelines Manual*, the survey questionnaire (mail and telephone survey versions), the HHCAHPS Survey supplemental questions, and other survey materials and resources. It also contains online forms, including the Exceptions Request Form, the Discrepancy Notification Report Form, and the Vendor Application Form, and is the means by which HHAs authorize survey vendors to conduct the HHCAHPS Survey and submit data on their behalf.

To ensure the security of interactions, the [HHCAHPS website](#) ↗ has two levels of access: public and private. Approved HHCAHPS Survey vendors and HHAs use both the public and private sections of the website. On the public side, there is a login link that allows only authorized users to gain access to the private sections of the site. Once logged into the private side, survey vendor and HHA users can carry out administrative functions according to their assigned roles. Section 2 of this manual describes the functions and links on both the public and private sections of the website in detail.

The Coordination Team provides survey vendors with technical assistance and support for data submissions to the Data Center. Survey vendors can contact the Coordination Team by sending an email or by calling the project's toll-free telephone number shown below.

PROJECT EMAIL ADDRESS:	**hhcahps@rti.org**
TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER:	**1-866-354-0985**

The Coordination Team operates from 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time Monday through Friday and provides technical assistance until 8:00 P.M. Eastern Time on the day of the quarterly data submission deadline.

2. The HHCAHPS Survey Website

2.1 Overview

This section provides an overview of the functions of the HHCAHPS Survey website and information on how to access and navigate the public and private sections of the website. Changes to the HHCAHPS website will be made as needed; therefore, information in this Manual reflects website content available at the time of publication. Changes to HHCAHPS website content, including revised protocols, will be posted on the Home page under "Recent Announcements."

2.2 The Public Links on the HHCAHPS Survey Website

The website defaults to the Home page, shown in **Figure 2.1**, where users can navigate to menu options that provide information and guidance in completing specific tasks. The Home page contains a welcome message that includes brief information about the HHCAHPS Survey. In that message, there are hyperlinks to other pages that provide more specific information on the history of the survey and how to become an approved vendor. In addition, a menu bar is displayed near the top of the Home page. Each menu has its own dropdown options to allow users to perform various functions and access more information. Public menu items include the following:

- General Information
- Training
- Forms for Vendors
- Survey and Protocols
- Data Submission
- For HHAs

Also provided on the Home page is a "Quick Links" box (**Figure 2.2**). The Quick Links box allows direct access to more commonly used links and includes the following topics:

- Star Ratings Information—links to a page containing information about the HHCAHPS Patient Survey Star Ratings methodology and FAQs.
- Approved Survey Vendors—a list of survey vendors that have been approved to administer the HHCAHPS Survey.
- About Home Health Care CAHPS—provides a quick reference to basic background information on the survey.
- Contact Us/Other Links—provides contact information for the Coordination Team and Technical Support and other links of interest.

Figure 2.1   HHCAHPS Survey Home Page (Public Website)

Figure 2.2   Quick Links Box

Each of the menus on the Home page is described in the following sections.

2.2.1 General Information Menu

The General Information menu (***Figure 2.3***) includes the following dropdown links:

- About Home Health Care CAHPS Survey—provides background information on the project.
- CTQR Newsletters—links to a page where the Coordination Team Quarterly Review (CTQR) Newsletters are posted.

- Chartbook—links to a page with a Chartbook of HHCAHPS Survey results by state and CMS Region and an accompanying Excel data file.
- Mode Experiment—provides information about the HHCAHPS Survey mode experiments, which CMS and the Coordination Team conducted with samples of home health patients in 2009 and 2022.
- Vendor Application Process—describes the process to become an approved HHCAHPS Survey vendor.
- Approved Survey Vendors—provides the list of survey vendors that have been approved by CMS to administer the HHCAHPS Survey.
- Archived Publicly Reported Data—provides links to publicly reported state and national averages, publicly reported HHA-level data (as reported in the Provider Data Catalog), star ratings cut points, linearized patient mix adjusters, and patient-mix adjustment factor memos. Figure 2.4 presents a screenshot of this page.
- Calculating public reporting Measures—links to a document that provides steps for calculating the global ratings and composite scores for the publicly reported HHCAHPS Survey measures.
- Mode Adjustments for Updated HHCAHPS Survey—links to a document that provides the mode adjustments that will be applied to HHCAHPS Survey data with the updated HHCAHPS Survey (effective with the April 2026 sample month).
- Contact Us/Other Links—provides contact information for the Coordination Team and Technical Support and other links of interest.
- Announcements—provides updated news about the survey, the website, or other information.

Figure 2.3   General Information Menu

Figure 2.4   Archived Publicly Reported Data Menu

2.2.2 Forms for Vendors Menu

The Forms for Vendors menu (**Figure 2.5**) includes links to the Vendor Registration form, the Minimum Business Requirements (MBRs), and the Model Quality Assurance Plan (QAP).

Figure 2.5   Forms for Vendors Menu
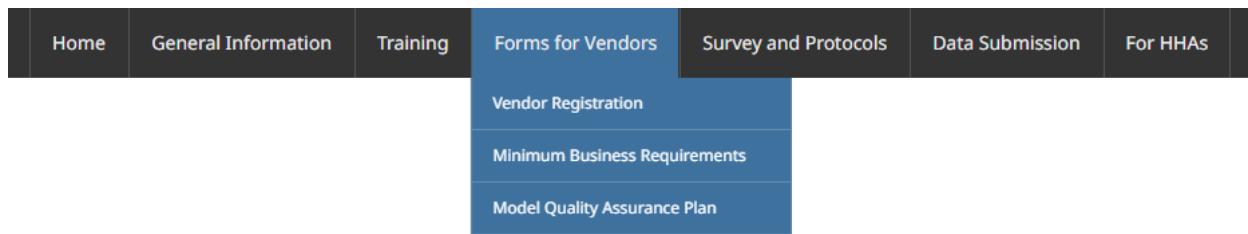
The ***Vendor Registration*** link allows vendors to gain access to the online Vendor Application and Consent Forms, that must be completed by vendors interested in becoming an approved HHCAHPS Survey vendor. Prior to beginning the application process, survey vendor organizations must designate their HHCAHPS Survey Administrator/Project Manager. This is the staff person who will be responsible for managing all HHCAHPS Survey tasks and who will work directly with CMS and the HHCAHPS Survey Coordination Team throughout the vendor approval process.

To register, the Survey Administrator/Project Manager should navigate to the Vendor Registration webpage and complete the credentials registration process. Once logged into the private side of the HHCAHPS website, they should complete and submit the online Consent Form and Vendor Application (discussed in **Section 2.3**).

The second link under this menu, the ***Minimum Business Requirements*** document, contains the set of CMS requirements that organizations interested in becoming approved survey vendors must meet to apply for approval. The vendor must continue to meet these MBRs after initial application is submitted up to and any point after approval is granted by CMS. The third link, the ***Model Quality Assurance Plan***, is a sample QAP outline that approved survey vendors should use as a guide when developing and updating their own QAP.

2.2.3 Training Menu

The links under the Training menu are shown in **Figure 2.6.** The ***Registration Form*** link provides details about when the Update Webinar training session will take place and will be hidden after registration closes. For organizations seeking approval status, the survey vendor's Survey Administrator/Project Manager (as designated in the Vendor Application) must complete the vendor credentialing process described in **Section 2.2.2** before they can register for the self-paced *Introduction to the HHCAHPS Survey Training*. Approved survey vendors are required to register for and attend the annual *HHCAHPS Survey Vendor Update Webinar* training session. Subcontractors with a substantial role in implementing HHCAHPS are strongly encouraged to register and attend the annual Update Training session. When the Coordination Team receives a completed training registration form, the HHCAHPS

website will send an automatic email message to the user to acknowledge and confirm the registration.

The **Training Materials** link provides Introduction and Update session agendas and slides that can be downloaded and printed. Additional training documents may also be made available (e.g., post-training Questions & Answers document) as resources when applicable.

Figure 2.6   Training Menu

2.2.4 Survey and Protocols Tab

The Survey and Protocols tab includes forms and materials that approved HHCAHPS Survey vendors will use to administer the updated HHCAHPS Survey starting with the April 2026 sample month. Users can still access the current *Protocols and Guidelines Manual* and survey materials applicable through the March 2026 sample month via a toggle at the top of the Survey and Protocols webpage. The forms and materials available are described below.

- Protocols and Guidelines Manual
  - Provides guidance and standard protocols for conducting the HHCAHPS Survey
- Mail Questionnaires
  - Contains links to the HHCAHPS mail survey instrument in English, Spanish, simplified and traditional Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Armenian
- Supplemental Questions
  - Provides additional questions that vendors may use if an HHA desires
- Consent to Share Responses
  - Provides text for vendors to use if HHAs wish to add a question to allow vendors to share identified responses with the HHA (assuming that the respondent consents).
- Survey Composites
  - Identifies measures containing two or more questions about a related topic that are reported together
  - The HHCAHPS Survey results that will be publicly reported will be the composite scores, not percentages for individual survey questions
- Sample Survey Cover Letters
  - Provides sample text for survey cover letters to send with the mail survey questionnaire
  - Available in English, Spanish, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Armenian
- Telephone Scripts
  - Contains scripts for telephone interviewers to use in English, Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese
  - Standard respondent and proxy respondent scripts are available

- FAQs for Interviewers
  - o Provides answers for many of the common questions posed to survey vendors sample members
  - o Available in English and Spanish
- General Guidelines for Telephone Interviewers
  - o Provides general telephone interviewing techniques and guidance that survey vendors are encouraged to use as part of their HHCAHPS telephone interviewer training
- OMB Disclosure Notice
  - o Contains the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) disclosure statement that must be printed on either the mail survey cover letter or mail survey instrument
  - o Available in English, Spanish, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Armenian
- Sample File Layout
  - o Provides an example of a monthly patient file layout home health agencies submit to their HHCAHPS Survey vendor
  - o Vendors can also use this as a guide for developing sample frame files for home health agencies to use for the HHCAHPS Survey
- Vendor Application Form (print version)
  - o Displays the fields and layout of the online HHCAHPS Survey Vendor Application Form
  - o The online form is only available to credentialed vendor users after logging in through the Vendor Dashboard.
- Exceptions Request Form (print version)
  - o Displays the fields and layout of the online Exceptions Request Form
  - o The online form is only available to credentialed vendor users after logging in through the Forms for Vendors menu
- Discrepancy Notification Report (print version)
  - o Displays the fields and layout of the online Discrepancy Notification Report
  - o The online form is only available to credentialed vendor users after logging in through the Forms for Vendors menu

2.2.5 The Data Submission Menu

Figure 2.7 shows the links to pages containing data submission forms/materials that are available on the public side of the website (additional links under this menu are accessible on the private site for credentialed users). The materials under ***Current*** are the extensible markup language (XML) and XML Schema (XSD) files HHCAHPS Survey vendors must use to prepare and submit HHCAHPS Survey data to the Data Center through the March 2026 sample month. While the materials under ***Updated*** are those HHCAHPS Survey vendors must use starting with the April 2026 sample month. Brief descriptions are provided below.

- Data Submission Deadlines Page
  - o Shows the deadline for uploading HHCAHPS Survey data files for each of the next four upcoming calendar year quarters.
- **Data Submission Resources Page** (**Figure 2.8**) takes users to a page containing the documents listed below:
  - o User Manual

- The *Website User and Data Submission Manual* provides information on the functions and uses of the HHCAHPS Survey website, including both public and private links available to vendors and HHAs.
  - XML File Layout
    - Specifies the format of HHCAHPS Survey data files.
  - XML Sample File
    - Contains a sample data file that survey vendors can use to construct the monthly sample frames for the HHCAHPS Survey.
  - XSD File
    - Provides the XSD files that vendors can use to construct or validate their XML files, including an example of a zero-sampled XML XSD file.

Figure 2.7   Data Submission Menu

Figure 2.8   Data Submission Resources Webpage

Please refer to the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* for more information about data submission deadlines and sample file layouts. The data submission deadlines are posted and regularly updated on the HHCAHPS website.

Table 2.1   HHCAHPS Quarterly Data Submission Deadlines

Quarter and Year	Data Submission Deadline
Quarter 4, 2025	April 16, 2026
Quarter 1, 2026	July 16, 2026
Quarter 2, 2026	October 15, 2026
Quarter 3, 2026	January 21, 2027
Quarter 4, 2026	April 15, 2027

2.3 The Private Links on the HHCAHPS Survey Website

The HHCAHPS website's private menu options differ slightly from those on the public website. To log into the secure portion of the website, all users must first establish a registered account. More information about registering for an account is provided on the website and in ***Section 10.3.1*** of the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* ⤤.

Several of the menus on the navigation bar include additional links that allow users to perform various functions and provide information specific to authorized vendors and HHAs. The remainder of this section is focused on survey vendor users, with detailed private links information for HHAs provided in Section 6.

2.3.1 Survey Vendor Dashboard

The HHCAHPS website includes custom dashboard views for survey vendor and HHA users. Each dashboard features relevant links to the user. **Figure 2.9** shows the Vendor Dashboard view once a user has selected the Dashboard menu. Survey vendor organizations that are not yet approved will only see the ***Vendor Approval Process*** section of the Dashboard, which provides them with links to and the status of key elements of the Vendor Approval Process—including their Vendor Application Form, HHCAHPS Vendor Consent Form (**Figure 2.10**), and overall approval status. Approved survey vendors will see the full Dashboard that includes links to both data submission reports and reports showing the HHAs that have authorized them; a User Access console, showing administrative users within the organization; and Recent Announcements.

Figure 2.9   Vendor Dashboard View

Figure 2.10   HHCAHPS Survey Vendor Consent Form

2.3.2 Forms for Vendors—Private Links

Figure 2.11 displays the links under the Forms for Vendors menu that appear when an approved survey vendor user is logged into the site.

- Exceptions Request Form
  - o Approved survey vendors must complete to request a planned deviation from standard survey administration protocols
- Discrepancy Notification Report Form
  - o Approved survey vendors must complete and submit for any unplanned deviations from survey administration protocol
- Model Quality Assurance Plan
  - o This is an outline that vendors should use to develop their own QAP for submission to the Coordination Team (see **Section 2.2.2** above)
- Submit Quality Assurance Plan
  - o Online tool that approved survey vendors will use to submit (and subsequently update) their QAP, within 6 weeks after their first HHCAHPS data file is submitted to the HHCAHPS Data Center
- Survey Vendor Authorization Report
  - o Allows survey vendors to see which HHAs have authorized them to submit data
- Manage Users
  - o Allows the vendor's HHCAHPS Survey Administrator/Project Manager to create, edit and remove backup and non-administrative users

Figure 2.11 Forms for Vendors Menu—Private Side

2.3.3 Data Submission Menu—Private Links

Figure 2.12 shows both the public and private links under the Data Submission menu. There are three private links under this menu—the "Schema Validation Tool" link, the "Data Submission Tool" link, and the "Data Submissions Reports" link.

Figure 2.12 Submit Data Menu—Private Side

The "Schema Validation Tool" link allows the vendor to test their file formatting prior to submitting their files to the HHCAHPS Data Center. The **Data Submission Tool** link takes the user to a page where survey vendors browse for, select, and then upload their monthly XML files to the Data Center. The last link under the Data Submission menu is the "Data Submission Reports" link (see **Figure 2.13**). There are four links under the Data Submission Reports menu item. These four reports provide the vendor with historical information about its data file submissions. Please refer to **Chapter 11** of the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* ⬈ for a description and use of these reports. The "Helpful Submission Tips" available via the "Data Submission Resources" link provides information to help approved survey vendors avoid problems when uploading files containing HHCAHPS Survey data.

Figure 2.13 View Data Submission Reports Menu—Private Side
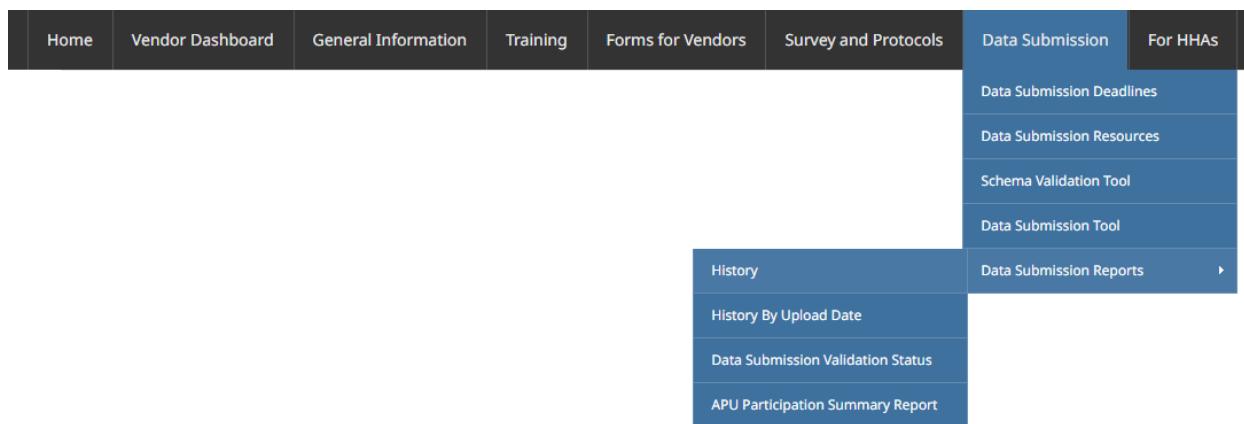
3. System and Security Requirements for the HHCAHPS Website

3.1 Overview of System and Security Requirements

Approved survey vendors submit or upload HHCAHPS Survey data to the HHCAHPS Data Center through a link on the HHCAHPS Survey website. This section provides information on the minimum technology required for the upload process. To use the HHCAHPS Survey website, vendors must have, at a minimum, the following equipment and software:

- Web browser, such as Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, or Apple Safari
- An Internet Service Provider
- Adobe Acrobat Reader ([download Acrobat Reader from the Adobe website](#) ↗ at no cost)

3.2 HHCAHPS Website Data Security

HHCAHPS Survey vendors can submit only **de-identified data files** to the HHCAHPS Data Center. Although only de-identified data are submitted, ensuring data security was a major concern and consideration during the design and development of the HHCAHPS website. The website balances a straightforward and flexible design with the need to protect the privacy and security of HHCAHPS Survey data. The Coordination Team has implemented policies and procedures to ensure that all communications and transfers are secure. These measures include:

- Requiring that each individual provided access to the private links on the website has a secure login to the private side of the website;
- Requiring users to create and use a **strong** password;
- Using Transport Layer Security (TLS) technology to encrypt all communication between the browser and server using the website; and
- Carefully monitoring upload attempts and website use on an ongoing basis.

When users log into the private links on the website, the system automatically checks and authenticates their credentials before allowing access. This ensures that only authorized users log into the system.

All electronic HHCAHPS Survey data are stored within a password-protected network located behind a firewall. HHCAHPS data transmitted between the vendor's network and the HHCAHPS website passes through a designated, controlled connection point. The firewall is configured in accordance with the HHCAHPS Data Center's network security policy and logs incoming traffic for review and analysis of potential issues or suspicious activity.

3.3 Survey Vendor Website Security Responsibilities

All approved HHCAHPS survey vendors must adhere to strict website data security requirements to continue their participation. By following the HHCAHPS security procedures,

survey vendors will protect their client HHAs' data and those of other vendors participating in the HHCAHPS Survey.

When issued credentials to access the private links, approved survey vendors must follow all safeguards to prevent an unauthorized person from entering the private side of the HHCAHPS website. The following password protection guidelines apply to all approved survey vendors accessing the website.

- When a survey vendor's account is created, their Survey Administrator/Project Manager will designate a username and password on the "Vendor Registration" form.
- Each account will be locked out after five successive incorrect password entries. If the account is locked, the user will need to contact the Coordination Team to have the account unlocked.
- If a user's password is compromised or lost, contact the Coordination Team immediately to ask that the account be deactivated. The Coordination Team will then issue new credentials to the user.
- Users must create a strong password. ***A strong password is defined as one that contains at least nine (9) characters.*** These nine characters must include the following:
    - One upper-case alphabet letter,
    - One numeral, and
    - One special character (&, %, #, !)
    - An example of a strong password is **Mgh0721$&**; it meets the required criteria shown above.

These password rules and guidelines are designed to minimize the chance that automated password-cracking routines used by unauthorized personnel can gain access to the website. In addition to the above rules, the following guidelines will help create a strong password:

- Combine two or more related words with punctuation, such as Radio-Cook1.
- Use a password that looks like nonsense but allows an easy way to remember it, such as "Thaaw7som." for "The h1lls are alive with the sound of music." (Note the end punctuation.)
- Think in terms of vanity license plates, such as "I8myfood."

The following should be **avoided** when creating a password. Specifically, do not use…

- A single English word;
- A scientific name, biological term, or geographic name; and
- A person's name or part of name, even with slight modifications like an added character at the end or beginning.
- Known combinations (e.g., NLRB 1234, attorney1, judge111);
- Words found in a dictionary, including names, obscene words, or well-known phrases;
- A password with a repeating series of characters;
- Reverse spellings of dictionary words;
- A name associated with the user in any way (middle name, family names, pet's name, sports team name, films, etc.);
- Portions of a User ID on the current or other systems; or
- Simple keyboard patterns (e.g., "asdfjkl").

A user should never write down his or her password. If the user needs to store passwords, there are free applications that can be downloaded and used. An application like this can be very helpful because another password safety rule is to never use the same password across applications or computers. Finally, do not share or give the password to anyone. All HHCAHPS users are responsible for all access to the private links on the HHCAHPS website that are made under their credentials.

3.4 What to Do If a User Forgets the Password

If a user forgets their password, they can select the Reset Password link on the Login screen on the HHCAHPS website, enter their username, and follow the directions to complete the request. The HHCAHPS website will send a password reset link to the user via their registered email address. When the email containing the password reset is received, the user should log in and follow the directions to create a new password.

3.5 Managing the HHCAHPS Website Survey Vendor Account and Profile

HHCAHPS Survey vendors may need to update information in their user account as information about HHCAHPS Survey personnel or the organization changes. An approved user can edit their account information at any time after logging in by selecting his or her name displayed in the upper right corner of the website. Once the username is selected, the user should then select the "Edit profile" link, which will bring up the screen called Manage Account (depicted in **Figure 3.1**). The Manage Account screen contains two tabs: Manage Account and Manage Profile. The Manage Account tab contains the login User Name, Display Name, and Contact Email Address.

Figure 3.1   Manage Account

Approved survey vendors can change information in their profile by going to the Manage Profile tab (see **Figure 3.2**) and making edits in the available fields. As noted in Section 1 of this manual, a website user can contact the Coordination Team by sending an email or calling the toll-free project number to get help establishing a username or setting up an account to access the private links in the system. Users should notify the Coordination Team immediately if they suspect that there has been a breach in security in their own data system.

Figure 3.2   Manage Profile

4. Using an XML Template to Submit HHCAHPS Data Files

4.1 Overview

This section contains information about preparing HHCAHPS Survey data files for submission to the Data Center. For details about the data submission process, survey vendors should refer to **Chapter 10** of the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* ⬈. If vendors encounter submission problems, the Coordination Team will work with survey vendors to resolve the problems. The Coordination Team can be reached by telephone at 1-866-354-0985 or by email to hhcahps@rti.org.

4.2 Format and Clean Survey Data Following the XML File Specifications

Survey vendors can submit data only in the XML format. Each XML file should contain only one month of survey data, with one file for each HHA. Survey vendors should note that if a data file for a sample month is submitted more than once, the most recent data submission will overwrite the file previously submitted for that sample month. **Therefore, the final file submission must contain data for all patients who were sampled in that sample month for a specific HHA.**

The data file layout templates for HHCAHPS Survey XML files were developed based on data elements needed for analysis and HHCAHPS Survey response data. These XML files are available to view and download on the Data Submission Resources ⬈ webpage. The XML Data File Layout for the Standard Header Record is used with simple and proportionate random sampling methods. On the other hand, survey vendors using disproportionate stratified random sampling (DSRS) must use the DSRS Data File Layout. These data file layouts contain specification details about the data to be submitted such as data type, field sizes, and order. The format of each HHCAHPS Survey data file must match the specifications provided.

Two sets of data submission materials are available on the Data Submission Resources webpage:

Current—XML data file layouts and XSD files for the current HHCAHPS Survey instrument through the March 2026 sample month.

Updated—XML data file layouts and XSD files for the updated HHCAHPS Survey instrument effective starting with the April 2026 sample month.

Each XML file consists of three sections: a Header Record, a Patient Administrative Data Record, and a Patient Response Record. There should be only one Header Record for each HHCAHPS XML file. Each sampled patient within the XML file must have a corresponding Patient Administrative Data Record. A Patient Response Record must be included for every sampled patient who completed or partially completed the HHCAHPS Survey. The

information provided in the following subsections reflect the requirements that will take effect starting with the April 2026 sample month.

4.2.1 Header Record

The Header Record contains the identifying information for the HHA corresponding to data included on the file, sampling information, survey administration mode, and the method by which the sample was selected. Information required in this section includes the name of the HHA and its CMS Certification Number (CCN). Other sampling information required in the Standard Header Record is shown below.

- Sample Year
    - Calendar year in which the survey is being conducted
- Sample Month
    - Month for which the sample was selected. Survey vendors will select a sample of patients who meet survey eligibility criteria for each calendar month
- Mode of Survey Administration
    - Method by which the survey was administered
    - The survey mode, either mail only (1), phone only (2), or mixed mode (3), must be the same for all patients in each sample month in the calendar quarter for each HHA.
    - HHAs and their survey vendors cannot change survey administration modes until a new quarter begins.
- Type of Sampling
    - Sampling method that was used to select the sample. These include census, simple random sampling (SRS), proportionate stratified random sampling (PSRS), and DSRS. See **Chapter 4** in the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* ⧉ for detailed information about each of these methods.
- Number of Patients Served
    - Number of patients who had at least one visit for skilled care at any point during the sample month, regardless of whether they are eligible for the HHCAHPS Survey. In other words, this number should include both patients who are eligible for the survey and those who are not.
- Number of Patients on the File Submitted to Vendor
    - HHA-provided list of all patients served during the sample month to the survey vendor, with the exception of those patients…
        - Whose care was not paid for by Medicare or Medicaid, those
        - Who are deceased,
        - Are not 18 years old or older,
        - Currently receive hospice care,
        - Received home health care for routine maternity care only,
        - Whose illnesses or conditions are protected by state laws and regulations ("state-regulated" patients), and
        - Who requested that the HHA not release their name to anyone outside the HHA ("no publicity" patients).
- Number of Eligible Patients
    - Number of patients on the sample frame provided by the HHA who meet survey eligibility criteria in the sample month
- Number of Patients Sampled
    - Number of patients selected for the HHCAHPS Survey during the sample month

DSRS Sampling. Vendors with HHA clients seeking to use DSRS sampling must complete and submit an Exceptions Request Form (ERF) and receive CMS approval prior to sampling (see **Section 14.2** of the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* 🔗 for more information about the ERF process). If a vendor submits a data file with a DSRS Header Record and does not have prior approval from CMS for using DSRS, the data file will be rejected. More information about DSRS and requirements for DSRS sample selection and file construction is provided in the *Protocols and Guidelines Manual* (**Chapters 4** and **10**).

If DSRS is used, survey vendors must include the following information in the Header Record:

- DSRS Stratum Name—note that there must be at least two strata identified for DSRS sampling.
- DSRS Number of Patients on File Submitted to Vendor—the number of patients included on the file that the HHA provided for this stratum.
- DSRS Number of Patients Eligible in Stratum—the number of patients who meet survey eligibility criteria within each stratum.
- DSRS Number of Patients Sampled in Stratum—the number of patients sampled within the stratum.

4.2.2 Patient Administrative Data Record

The second section of the XML file contains **data about each patient** who was sampled for the sample month, including both those who responded to the survey and nonrespondents. In this section of the file, some of the information provided in the Header Record is repeated, including the HHA's CCN, Sample Year, and Sample Month. All other information included in this section of the file is about the patient. HHCAHPS Survey vendors are required to assign a unique sample identification (SID) number to each sampled patient included in the survey, regardless of whether the sample member completed the survey. More information about assigning a unique SID to each sampled patient is included in **Section 4.8** of the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* 🔗.

> **NOTE: All files submitted with missing SID numbers will be rejected during the upload process.**

Most of the information required in the Patient Administrative Data Record should be provided to the HHCAHPS Survey vendor by the HHA on the monthly patient information file. This information includes the patient's age (the survey vendor will calculate the patient's age based on the date of birth provided by the HHA), the patient's sex, the number of skilled visits the patient had in the sample month, payer information, admission source, and activities of daily living (ADLs). The information in the last part of this section is survey administration data, including the final disposition code assigned to each case, a flag to indicate whether the survey was completed by a proxy respondent, and the number of supplemental items the HHA added.

It is the vendor's responsibility to flag all surveys completed with a proxy respondent as a proxy interview. For telephone interviews, it is the vendor's responsibility to assign a flag to those cases completed with a proxy respondent. For mail questionnaires, the vendor must assign a proxy flag to any case where the respondent indicated in Question 25 that the person helping him or her "answered the questions for me" (response option 3).

4.2.3 Patient Response Record

The third section of the XML file is the Patient Response Record, which contains the responses to the HHCAHPS Survey from every patient who completed or partially completed the survey during the sample month. Users should submit **only** data corresponding to the HHCAHPS Survey questions. Do not submit responses to questions that were added by the HHA (non-HHCAHPS questions), and do not submit responses to any CAHPS supplemental questions included in the survey. The only response records that survey vendors should include are those with a final survey disposition code for a completed survey (codes 110 and 120) and those with code 310 (Break-Off). For all Patient Response Records that are included, all response fields must have a legitimate value. Legitimate values can include "Missing" or "Not applicable."

5. Submitting Data to the HHCAHPS Data Center

5.1 Overview

This chapter describes the process to submit data via the HHCAHPS Survey website and the reports available to survey vendors to ensure that this process is completed successfully.

5.2 Submitting Data

To submit data on the HHCAHPS website, approved HHCAHPS Survey vendors will need to first log into the secure portion of the website with their unique username and password. Survey vendors can submit data files to the HHCAHPS Data Center in one of two ways, as a single XML file or as a ZIP file containing multiple XML files.

Prior to submitting XML files, vendors can test their data files with the "Schema Validation Tool" posted on the HHCAHPS website, under the Data Submission menu. The Schema Validation Tool is formatted in accordance with the XML Data File Specifications that are described in the sections that follow, and vendors should make sure that they have reviewed these specifications prior to submission. The Schema Validation Tool contains some, but not all, of the same validation checks that are applied when the data file is submitted to the Data Center. Using the Schema Validation Tool to identify and correct file problems will reduce the number of attempts needed to submit the data file.

Follow the steps below to submit data via the HHCAHPS website:

1. Log on to the HHCAHPS website.

2. Select the "Data Submission Tool" link under the Data Submission menu. The data submission tool page will display (as shown in **Figure 5.1** below).

3. Select "Choose File" to identify the file to upload. Up to five XML files can be uploaded at a time. The "Choose File" button permits users to locate and directly upload a file that has been saved in their own computer system. Survey vendors can select either a single XML file or a single ZIP file that contains multiple XML files.

   NOTE: The text that displays on the "Choose Files" button may vary, depending on the web browser. For example, it could appear as "Browse" or "Select."

4. After selecting the file to be uploaded, select "Upload" to submit the file. The Data Upload Summary Report based on the file selected will appear. A link to this report will also be emailed to the vendor's HHCAHPS Survey Administrator/Project Manager.

Figure 5.1   Link to Data Submission Tool

As the upload begins, the XML file will undergo several validation checks. The first check will determine whether the CCN in the Header Record and the Patient Administrative Data Record matches the CCN listed as having authorized the survey vendor submitting the data file. The next validation checks will determine the quality and completeness of the data. If the file fails any of the validation checks, the survey vendor will receive an error message after a file error is detected noting that the file upload did not take place and giving details on why the file failed to upload. Messages may:

- Indicate that there is no authorization from the HHA for the vendor to submit data on its behalf, or
- State that the number of patient records listed in the Header does not match the number of sample patients for which data are provided in the Patient Administrative Data Record section of the file.

Survey vendors are strongly advised to submit XML files far enough in advance of the quarterly submission deadline to allow for both the initial upload file checks and the data processing checks, in the event they are required to resubmit a file because the file failed the validation process. ***CMS will not accept revised or resubmitted files after the data submission deadline.*** Survey vendors can resubmit a data file for a client HHA as many times as needed prior to the data submission deadline. However, survey vendors must keep

in mind that each time a data file for an HHA is submitted, it overwrites any data for that same agency that were previously submitted for that survey period.

5.3 Review and Follow-Up on Data Upload Reports

Five reports are available to survey vendors via the HHCAHPS website. These reports serve to inform survey vendors about the outcome of each of the vendor's data file upload attempts, and they also provide the vendor with a history of upload efforts, successful or unsuccessful. The five reports are described in the sections below.

5.3.1 *Data Submission Summary Report*

This report will be available via an email link immediately after the survey vendor has uploaded data via the "Data Submission Tool" link on the HHCAHPS website. Once the survey vendor uploads a data file(s), the system will check for the correct file layout, missing data, duplicate SID numbers, invalid responses, etc. An example of this report is shown in **Figure 5.2**.

Figure 5.2   Example *Data Submission Summary Report*

Validation Results Report for File: HHCAHPS Standard xml - passes all.xml, CCN #: 160035, # Patients: 1
Message 1010: File Passed all XML Format checks.
Schema Validation: VALID
Data Validation Checks: VALID

Validation Results Report for File: HHCAHPS Standard xml - not well formed.xml, CCN #: Could not Retrieve, # Patients: 0
Error 1020: This file has not been properly formatted. Please review XML file specifications and upload again.
Schema Validation: NOT CHECKED due to XML failing Well Formed test.

Validation Results Report for File: HHCAHPS Standard xml - fails value missing for header-type.xml, CCN #: 160035, # Patients: 1
Message 1010: File Passed all XML Format checks.
Schema Validation: INVALID. Please review XML file specifications and upload again. Please see the schema validation errors below:
Error 2001: Value for "header type" is missing

Validation Results Report for File: HHCAHPS Standard xml - fails data validation 18 for number-sampled.xml, CCN #: 160035, # Patients: 1
Message 1010: File Passed all XML Format checks.
Schema Validation: VALID
Data Validation Checks: NOT VALID. Please review Data Validation specifications and re-upload. 18 - The number of Patient Administrative Data Records on the file does not match the number of patients sampled!

The initial validation check of the submitted data file is to make sure that the XML template has been used and is properly formatted. If any of a survey vendor's data files has an incorrectly formatted template, the data upload process will stop immediately and send an error message to the survey vendor that describes the problem detected. After the system verifies that a properly formatted template has been used, it begins a series of data checks which look for any fields in the Header Record with missing data.

If any required data are missing, the file will be rejected, and the **Data Submission Summary Report** will let the survey vendor know what data fields are missing. The system will also check for any duplicate SIDs to make sure that the same SID has not been used more than once for a given HHA in a quarter. If a vendor has used a duplicate SID, the file will be rejected. This report will identify where the error is located so it can be corrected. Finally, the report will check to make sure that the survey vendor has been authorized by the HHA for which a data file is being loaded to submit data on the HHA's behalf.

If the data file successfully passes these initial validation checks, the file will be sent through a more formal secondary data processing step. HHCAHPS Survey vendors will be notified via email within a short period of time that the *Data Submission Summary Report* has been updated to reflect the result of the secondary validation checks. An example of an updated *Data Submission Summary Report* is shown in **Figure 5.3**. The validation will check for missing data fields required for patient eligibility determination, including the number of visits over the lookback period, payer, or patient age. The process will also check each Patient Response Record included on the file to ensure that all entries are within the acceptable range. A completeness algorithm will be run to verify that all patient survey data records included on the file meet survey completeness criteria. Failing the completeness criteria does not cause an invalid submission.

Figure 5.3   Example of Updated *Data Submission Summary Report*

Validation Results Report for File: HHCAHPS Standard xml - incomplete.xml, CCN #: 160035, # Patients: 1
Message 1010: File Passed all XML Format checks.
Schema Validation: VALID
Data Validation Checks: VALID
Nightly Data Check 23: INVALID: 23 - The patient Response Record does not meet the completeness criteria for one or more cases.

Validation Results Report for File: HHCAHPS DSRS xml - passes all.xml, CCN #: 160035, # Patients: 20
Message 1010: File Passed all XML Format checks.
Schema Validation: VALID
Data Validation Checks: VALID
Nightly Data Check: VALID.

Following completion of all edit checks, the data submission system will generate and send an email to the survey vendor indicating that this data processing step has been completed. This email will include a link that will take the vendor user to the updated *Data Submission Summary Report*. The report will be identical to the original report, but it will include more detailed information about the checks that were performed during the secondary data checks process. The report will provide the survey vendor with sufficient detail, by CCN, of data file errors that caused data files to be rejected so that the vendor can correct the

errors and resubmit the file(s). The report will also indicate which of the vendor's data files have successfully passed this second set of edit checks.

Once the data files successfully pass the secondary checks, the vendor's data submission is considered successful, and the files will be accepted and processed for public reporting. If all the records for a given CCN are accepted, the vendor does not need to resubmit that file. However, if a vendor submits a file for multiple CCNs and there are one or more invalid records for a given CCN, the vendor will need to resubmit a file containing all records for the CCN that had invalid records.

5.3.2 Data Submission History Reports

HHCAHPS Survey vendors will be able to view a history of their data submission activities via two reports under the Data Submission Report menu: *Data Submission History* and *Data Submission History by Upload Date*. The *Data Submission History Report* allows vendors to see a summary or detailed list of data submission activity (as shown in an example report in **Figure 5.4**). The *Data Submission History by Upload Date* allows vendors to search for a data submission report by the actual file upload date (as shown in an example report in **Figure 5.5**).

Figure 5.4   Example Data Submission History Report

Data Submission History

						# of	# of	# of			
Sample Year	Sample Month	CCN #	Filename		Submission Date	Patients Sampled	Complete Responses	Incomplete Responses	Validation Status	Replaced	Authorized
2010	Jul	160035	160035 Std 2 - passes all (2).xml		12/16/2010	2			Failed		No
2010	Mar	160035	160035 Std 2 - passes all (2).xml		06/29/2010	2			Failed		No
2010	Mar	160035	160035 Std 2 - passes all (2).xml		06/28/2010	2			Failed		No
2010	Mar	160035	160035 Std 2 - passes all.xml		05/27/2010	2			Failed		
2010	Mar	160035	160035 Std 2 - passes all.xml		05/27/2010	2			Failed		
2010	Feb	101010	101010 Std - zero sampled.xml		07/21/2010	0	0		Passed		
2010	Feb	101010	101010 Std - zero sampled.xml		07/21/2010	0			Failed		
2010	Jan	160035	160035 Std 2 - passes all.xml		07/21/2010	2			Failed		

Number of records = 8

Figure 5.5   Example Data Submission History by Upload Date Report

Data Submission History By Upload Date

Data Submission Date: Jul 21 2010 9:55AM

XML Validation Results:

Validation Results Report
CCN #: 101010, Sample Month: 2/2010, Patients Sampled: 0
File: 101010 Std - zero sampled.xml

Message 1010: File Passed all XML Format checks.

Schema Validation: VALID

Data Validation Checks: VALID

BatchID: 106

5.3.3 Data Submission Validation Status Report

The purpose of the *Data Submission Validation Status Report* is to allow vendors to view a summary of their data submissions, by CCN, with failed submissions listed at the top. Since most of the failed submissions are because of invalid or missing vendor authorizations, this report shows whether the vendor authorization is valid for each CCN. Vendors can use this report to quickly identify agencies that need to correct their vendor authorizations prior to an upcoming data submission deadline. See **Figure 5.6** below for an example report.

Figure 5.6   Example Data Submission Validation Status Report

Data Submission Validation Status

Date Range   Start Month 1   End Month 12
              Start Year 2010   End Year 2010

[Show Report] [Export to Excel]

CCN	Sample Month	Sample Year	Authorized	Status	Submission Date
160035	1	2010	Yes	Failed	7/21/2010 1:15:04 PM
160035	3	2010	No	Failed	6/29/2010 9:14:37 AM
160035	7	2010	No	Failed	12/16/2010 11:45:43 AM
101010	2	2010	Yes	Passed	7/21/2010 9:55:03 AM

4 row(s) in report. (1 passed, 3 failed)

5.3.4 APU Participation Summary Report

The purpose of the *APU Participation Summary Report* is to give vendors a summary view of all files that they have uploaded for their clients, organized by each APU summary period. This report will indicate each month within the APU period that a data file has been successfully submitted to the Data Center, per agency (as shown in an example report in **Figure 5.7**). Vendors can quickly get a summary view of the submission status for each of their clients.

Figure 5.7   Example *APU Participation Summary Report*

APU Participation Summary Report

[Export to Excel]

APU period [2018 APU Period (Apr 16 - Mar 17) ▼]

APU Participation Summary Report for Test Vendor

Agency Name	CCN	State	Apr 2016	May 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	Sep 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017	No. Mos. Participated
TEST HHA 1	148193	Illinois	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 2	368250	Ohio	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 3	267140	Missouri	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 4	148325	Illinois	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 5	148258	Illinois	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 6	677809	Texas	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 7	097025	District of Columbia			Yes										1
TEST HHA 8	059306	California	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 9	267634	Missouri	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 10	467207	Utah	Yes	Yes	Yes										3
TEST HHA 11	108450	Florida	Yes	Yes	Yes										3

11 row(s) in report.

6. Information for Home Health Agencies

6.1 Overview

This section contains information specific to HHAs on registering for user credentials, authorizing a vendor, and viewing data submission reports. Also covered in this section is a set of frequently asked questions and answers addressing common questions from HHAs on how to manage their user accounts. We begin this section with a description of the "For HHAs" menu, discussing several of the links under that menu in more detail.

6.1.1 The "For HHAs" Menu

The "For HHAs" menu contains links to documents, forms and reports for HHAs. The public links under this menu (see **Figure 6.1**) include an online form (through the "Registration for Login Credentials" link) for registering for credentials needed for accessing the private links on the website. The second link is the "Participation Exemption Request Form." This is for HHAs that are requesting exemption from implementing HHCAHPS because they served fewer than the number of required eligible patients (e.g., fewer than 60 eligible patients for the CY 2027 APU period).

More information about these links is provided in the *HHCAHPS Survey Protocols and Guidelines Manual* ⧉.

Figure 6.1   For HHAs Menu—Public Side
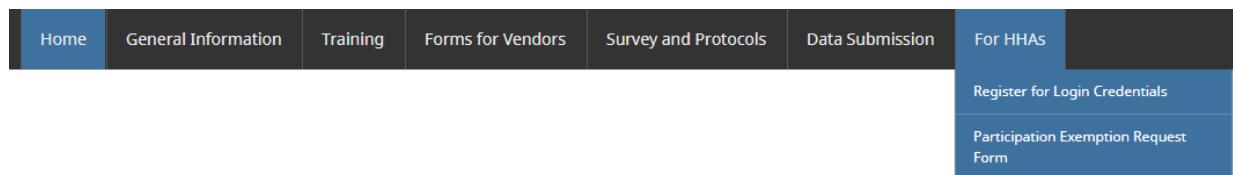
6.1.2 For HHAs Menu—Private Links

Figure 6.2 displays the private links under the For HHAs menu; a description of the private links under this menu is provided below.

Figure 6.2   For HHAs Menu—Private Side

Home	HHA Dashboard	General Information	Training	Forms for Vendors	Survey and Protocols	Data Submission	For HHAs

Register CCNs

Participation Exemption Request Form

Manage Users

Authorize a Vendor

Data Submission Reports

Survey Preview Report

Understanding the Preview Report

- Register CCNs
  - Allows users to register as their HHA's HHCAHPS Survey Administrator
- Participation Exemption Request Form
  - This link, described above, appears on both the public and private sides of the website
- Manage Users
  - Allows the HHA's HHCAHPS Survey Administrator to create, edit and remove backup and non-administrative users
- Authorize a Vendor
  - Online form that the HHA's HHCAHPS Survey Administrator must complete to authorize an approved survey vendor to submit data on the agency's behalf
- Data Submission Reports
  - Allows HHAs to view the data submission activity of their authorized vendor
- Survey Preview Report
  - Allows HHAs to view their agency's publicly reported data for the two-to-three-week period prior to the data being posted on Medicare's Care Compare website
- Understanding the Preview Report
  - Provides an explanation of each of the publicly reported measures shown in the HHCAHPS Survey Preview Report

6.1.3 HHA Dashboard

When an HHA logs into the HHCAHPS website, he or she will see the **HHA Dashboard** menu, as noted in **Figure 6.3**. The **Dashboard** view provides the user with links to key items on the website (such as those described in the paragraphs above) and is intended to give HHAs a quick way to manage the activities they are responsible for. HHAs are provided with links to documents required for the Registration and Vendor Authorization processes, including links to the Register CCNs and vendor authorization forms; a User Access console, showing administrative users within the organization; and a link to their data submission report.

Figure 6.3   HHA Dashboard View

6.1.4 Authorizing a Vendor

The online Vendor Authorization Form allows HHAs to perform the following four actions once they have logged in to the private side of the website, through a dropdown list (see **Figure 6.4**):

- Authorize a vendor for an HHA for which a vendor has never been authorized
- Change the start or end date for the current vendor
- Change/switch to a different HHCAHPS Survey vendor
- View the current authorization status

A brief description and the steps in each of these functions are provided below, and in the instructional document available on the HHCAHPS Survey website's Home page in the **Information for HHAs** box.

Figure 6.4   HHCAHPS Vendor Authorization Form

1. To Authorize a Vendor for an HHA for the First Time

HHAs should select the "Select a vendor for an HHA for the first time" action from the dropdown list on the Vendor Authorization Form if an HHCAHPS Survey vendor has never been authorized before (see example in **Figure 6.5**). To authorize a vendor for one or more HHAs for the first time:

- Select an approved vendor from the dropdown list;
- Select the Start Date, which corresponds to the first sample month the survey vendor is administering the HHCAHPS Survey on the HHA's behalf (HHCAHPS protocols strongly recommend leaving the End Date blank);
- Choose the CCN(s) to which the authorization applies; and
- Select the "Submit" button. An email notification will be sent to the HHA's HHCAHPS Survey Administrator confirming that the vendor has been authorized immediately after the form has been submitted.

Figure 6.5   Example Vendor Authorization Form When Authorizing Vendor for First Time

2. To Change the Date of an Existing Vendor Authorization

This function will allow an HHA to do the following:

- Choose new Start or End Date for an existing vendor authorization;
- Choose the CCN(s) to which the authorization applies; and
- Select the "Submit" button.

3. To Switch/Change to a Different HHCAHPS Vendor

To complete the vendor authorization change process, the HHA should first follow the directions in Item 2 above, select an End Date from the drop down list for the HHCAHPS vendor that was previously authorized, and select "Submit." Then, the HHA must then

select and submit the authorization for the new vendor by selecting "Change or Switch to a Different Vendor" in the Select Action dropdown list and following the steps in Item 1 above. HHAs that want to switch vendors in the middle of the quarter must contact the Coordination Team to make sure that their vendor authorizations are correctly set up to allow their old and new vendors to submit all required files.

4. View Current Authorization Status

Selecting the "View current vendor authorizations" action in the dropdown list on the online form will allow HHAs to view the list of HHAs for which a vendor has been authorized, the current vendor's name, and the Start Date for each vendor. If the HHA entered an End Date for the vendor currently authorized, the End Date will also show for each HHA.

6.1.5 Data Submission Report for HHAs

All HHCAHPS Survey vendors' work is subject to review by the HHAs with which they have contracted. The *Data Submission Report* located under the **For HHAs** menu on the HHCAHPS website provides the HHA with detailed information about its vendor's data submission activities (see **Figure 6.6**). **Only files that pass *both* the initial and the secondary validation checks will be listed on this report**. Each HHA should review these reports on a monthly or quarterly basis, depending on the agreement that the HHA has with the vendor in terms of frequency of data submission. HHAs that have contracted with a survey vendor will be able to log into the website and view or print a report that includes information on the number of submissions and the submission status of their contracted vendor's monthly or quarterly file submissions.

Figure 6.6   HHA Data Submission History Report

The *Data Submission Report* displays the dates on which the HHCAHPS Data Center accepted the data files the vendor submitted for the HHA. The intent of this report is to allow an HHA to monitor whether its vendor has successfully submitted data files by the required quarterly data submission deadlines; as noted previously, only successfully submitted data files are shown in this report. The *Data Submission Report* includes a hyperlink embedded in the date of each submission that will take the user to the *Processed Data Files Summary Report* for that date.

To protect the confidentiality of the HHA and the vendor it has selected, only the HHA and its authorized vendor will be able to view the submission history relating to that agency's data.

6.2 Frequently Asked Questions and Answers Related to Managing User Accounts

In this section, we present a list of questions the Coordination Team frequently receives from HHAs about managing their user accounts; responses are provided for each question. Please review these carefully if you are experiencing problems conducting any of the functions on the HHCAHPS website, because it is possible that your question may be addressed here. If you attempt to correct the problem without success, please contact the

Coordination Team by emailing hhcahps@rti.org or by calling toll-free at 866-354-0985 and leave a message for the team to callback.

Q: I lost my password/my password isn't working. What do I do?

A: You have two options:

1. From the HHCAHPS website, go to the Login page. Select "Reset Password". Enter your username and select the "Send Reset Link" button. You will receive an email (to your registered email address) shortly containing a link to reset your password.

2. Email the Coordination Team at hhcahps@rti.org and we will send you an email containing a link to reset your password.

Q: I've tried to reset my password several times but haven't received the instructional email message with the reset link. What do I do?

A: Sometimes the password reset messages that are sent directly from the website may go into your Spam or Junk email folders instead of your Inbox. Users typically receive the email within a few minutes of resetting the password. If you do not receive the password reset message in your Inbox, check the Spam/Junk email folders.

If you still do not receive the reset password email message after trying again, you should contact the Coordination Team at hhcahps@rti.org, for assistance.

Q: My password reset expired. What do I do?

A: Follow the steps to reset your password again. For security reasons, a password reset is valid for only 24 hours.

Q: My email address has changed. Can you just fix this in the system so that the confirmation emails come to my new email address?

A: The only way to change an email address for your HHCAHPS Survey Administrator in our system is to contact the Coordination Team at hhcahps@rti.org and request that we delete your current registration to allow you to reregister with your valid email address.

Q: How do I designate a Backup Administrator?

A: The HHCAHPS Survey Administrator should log onto the HHCAHPS website and select the "Manage Users" link under the "For HHAs" menu. Then, select the "Add New User" link toward the top and complete the User Details form. In the form, select the "role" that he or she wants the new user to have. One of the roles available is "Backup Administrator," who will have the same privileges and access as the Survey Administrator. Note that you can have multiple Backup Administrators within an agency.

Q: **The person who registered as the HHCAHPS Survey Administrator for our agency left, and we don't know the password.**

A: Unfortunately, if the person who was registered as the HHCAHPS Survey Administrator did not designate a Backup Administrator within your agency, your only choice is to contact the Coordination Team at hhcahps@rti.org and request that we delete the registration. This will allow you or someone else within your agency to register a new Survey Administrator. Remember that you should have this new person designate a Backup Administrator as soon as possible.

Q: **How do I remove access for someone in my organization who is no longer working here?**

A: The person in your organization designated as the HHCAHPS Survey Administrator or Backup Administrator can manage user accounts (that is, add or remove users) by logging into the HHCAHPS website and selecting the "Manage Users" link under the "For HHAs" menu. A list of all users within your organization should appear, along with the option to "edit" or "delete" a user. The pencil icon is the edit icon and the "X" that is adjacent to the username is the delete icon.

Q: **I need to add another CCN to my user account. How do I do that?**

A: First, log into the HHCAHPS website using your username and password. Next, click on the "Register CCNs" link under the "For HHAs" menu, or select the "Click Here to register your home health agency (by CCN)" link on your HHA Dashboard. Complete the *Register CCNs* form with your new CCN and select the "Submit" button.