

Spotlight: 2016 Medicare Advantage Star Ratings Released

The Medicare Advantage (MA) star ratings for calendar year 2016 are now available. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) publishes the star ratings each year to help beneficiaries find the best plan for them and to determine MA quality bonus payments to plans. States can use the ratings to help assess the plans operating in their state, especially Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans (D-SNPs) with which they may have contracts to provide services to Medicaid beneficiaries. In reviewing the ratings, note that:

- **The lowest-ranking plans receive one star, and the highest ranking plans receive five stars.**
- **Star ratings are assigned at the contract level, not at the individual plan level.** A single MA contract may include more than one type of Special Needs Plan (SNP) (i.e., chronic condition, institutional, and/or dual eligible), as well as non-SNP MA plans. A single MA contract may also include plans in more than one state. The star rating assigned to the contract applies to all plans under the contract.

To find star ratings for D-SNPs in your state:

- 1) **Find D-SNPs operating in a state, their MA contract number, and current enrollment.** CMS publishes monthly [SNP Comprehensive Reports](#) that can be sorted by state, SNP type, and MA contract number and include enrollment numbers for each individual SNP.
- 2) **Access the 2016 Star Ratings for MA contracts including SNPs.** Once a SNP contract number has been identified in Step 1 above, use the [2016 Report Card Master Table](#) file within the ZIP file [2016 Part C and D Medicare Star Rating Data](#) to find details on the D-SNP's star ratings. The "Summary Rating" tab shows summary ratings for Part C, Part D, and overall for each contract. The Master Table also contains a "Low Performing Contracts" tab listing contracts that have had Part C and/or Part D ratings of 2.5 stars or less from 2014 through 2016. These contracts are assigned a "Low Performing Icon" in the star ratings and are subject to termination by CMS. Four of the six low-performing contracts include D-SNPs.

Related Resource

[Fact Sheet - 2016 Star Ratings](#) This fact sheet includes a summary of highlights of MA plan performance and also provides more detailed information on how the star ratings are calculated.

ABOUT THE INTEGRATED CARE RESOURCE CENTER

The *Integrated Care Resource Center* is a national initiative of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to help states improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of care for individuals dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. The state technical assistance activities are coordinated by Mathematica Policy Research and the Center for Health Care Strategies. For more information, visit <http://www.integratedcareresourcecenter.com>.

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