CDC Health Systems Scorecard

US Department of Health and Human Services

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention

What is the CDC Health Systems Scorecard?

Introduction

Addressing chronic diseases and associated risk factors is a pressing and costly challenge for the Unites States (US) health care system because the majority (86%) of the nation's health care dollars are dedicated to treating people with one or more chronic diseases. Two chronic diseases—heart disease and cancer—are the leading causes of death in the US. Preventable conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and tobacco use are risk factors for both of these diseases. The third leading cause of death, chronic lower respiratory disease, is largely attributable to a single risk factor—tobacco use.

Unfortunately, no standard approach exists to assess the strategies, policies, and protocols that health systems are using to provide primary care for US adults who have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, prediabetes or diabetes, obesity, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or cancer or who smoke. The result is a lack of data about this important area of health care. To address this problem, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a quality improvement assessment tool to help state and local public health programs identify what evidence-based strategies are being used in primary care health systems and whether primary care providers are using policies and protocols that have been shown to improve health outcomes. The scorecard can also help health systems assess their current primary care practices, identify possible gaps, and focus on strategies that are most effective at managing chronic conditions.

Purpose of the Scorecard

By providing a resource that will be useful to both public health agencies and their health system partners, the HSSC can (1) help establish relationships between local and state health departments and health systems and (2) provide standards for assessing primary care policies and practices.

The HSSC consists of about 70 binary questions about evidence-based strategies and interventions that can be used to prevent and manage chronic conditions among US adults. Health systems can use the HSSC to assess the policies and protocols they are using to treat patients with certain chronic conditions. The questions address strategies such as the use of multidisciplinary care teams; clinical guidelines; electronic functions for managing patient health and follow-up; clinical decision supports; patient education and self-management; tobacco use cessation; and screening for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer. The tool was pretested with practice managers from small to medium-sized primary care health systems.

The HSSC provides an overall rating that can be used for planning and benchmarking. Health systems can also potentially use their rating for when they apply to recognition or certification programs. In addition, the scorecard could be modified and used as a survey to collect and report regional, state, or local data on health care policies and practices.

The HSSC modules focus on the following strategies:

- Multidisciplinary team for care management approach (Module A).
- Clinical guidelines (Module B).
- Electronic health record (EHR) systems (Module C).
- Patient tracking systems (Module D).
- Clinical decision support and protocols (Module E).
- Patient education (Module F).
- Self-management and care management (Module G).
- Ask, Advise, Refer (AAR) guidelines on tobacco use cessation (Module H).
- Guidelines for screening for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer (Module I).

How to Use the Scorecard

CDC encourages state and local health departments to share this assessment tool with their health system partners. The HSSC is geared toward small to medium-sized health systems that primarily provide ambulatory care to adults. It is designed to be completed by staff who are most knowledgeable or familiar with the current policies and protocols being used in a specific health system.

The following resources are included in the HSSC package:

- Cover letter explaining the purpose and use of the HSSC.
- HSSC Formsite® Account Set-up Instructions.
- Sample e-mail template introducing the HSSC to health system partners.

It is CDC's hope that this quality improvement tool will help stimulate clinical-public health partnerships at local and state levels.

If you have any questions, please contact AREBheartinfo@cdc.gov*.*

HSSC Formsite® Account Instructions

Create a Formsite® Account:

1. Navigate to https://www.formsite.com/ using any web browser.
2. Click the "Sign up free" button on the Formsite® homepage.
3. Create a "Free" or "Pro trial" account by entering the username you wish to be associated with this account, a password, and the email you would like to use for this account.
   a. Write down and store your username. You will need to send your Formsite® account username to CDC to receive the HSSC.
4. After creating an account, you will be brought to your Formsite® account personal page. If you are not automatically brought to this page, you can reach it alternatively by returning to the Formsite® homepage (https://www.formsite.com/) and logging in by clicking the "Login in" button on the top right side of the page and entering the log in information created in step 3.
5. On your Formsite® account page, click the "Upgrade" button on the right side of the screen (a paid account is required to receive and implement the HSSC).
6. Select the desired account level. Pricing varies by level; the "Deluxe" ($14.95/month), "Pro 1" ($24.95/month), or "Pro 2" ($49.95/month) levels are recommended.
   a. When choosing the account level, pay attention to the "Results per form." The Results per form refers to the limit of the number of times your copy of the HSSC may be completed by an end user (health system). Once this limit is reached, your copy of the HSSC will not be usable until either the account level is raised to increase the "Results per form" limit or results data is deleted (see the "Managing HSSC Data in Formsite®" section below for more details on results data). If you plan to utilize the data that is automatically collected in Formsite® when a user completes the HSSC, an account with a higher "Results per form" limit may be desirable. If you do not plan to utilize this data, an account with a lower limit may be sufficient, provided you periodically check the results data to ensure it is not full.
      i. Deluxe includes 500 results per form; Pro 1, 1,000; and Pro 2, 2,500.
   b. If choosing a monthly payment plan, the account level can be changed as needed on a month to month basis.
7. Follow the "Billing information" instructions to order and pay for the paid account.
8. Once a paid account is created, proceed to the "Requesting Access to the HSSC" section below.

Requesting Access to the HSSC

1. Send an email requesting access to the HSSC to AREBheartinfo@cdc.gov.
    a. Include "HSSC access request" in the subject line of the email.
    b. In the body of the email, please include:
        i. The username you created for your Formsite® account exactly as it is written; you can view your username in the top right corner of your Formsite® account page.
        ii. The name of your health department.
2. CDC will send the HSSC directly to your Formsite® account within 5 business days or less. You will receive an email response confirming the HSSC has been sent to your Formsite® account. If you do not receive a confirmation response within 5 business days, please resend your HSSC access request email.
3. Once CDC has sent the HSSC to your Formsite® account, it will be visible on your Formsite® account page under "My Forms."
4. See the "Using and Sharing the HSSC in Formsite®" section below for instructions on how to send the HSSC to your health system partners.

Using and Sharing the HSSC in Formsite®

1. On your Formsite® account page, under "My Forms" there is a table of the Forms available to your account. In the "Form Name" column of the table you will see "Health Systems ScoreCard [*health department name*]." If this is your first time using Formsite®, the HSSC will be the only form available here.
2. Hover your mouse over the HSSC and you will see buttons for "Edit," "Settings," "Share," and "Results" directly under the name "Health Systems ScoreCard [*health department name*]."
    a. Please do not use the "Edit" or "Settings" buttons.
3. Select "Share" to be brought to the "Links" page.
4. On the Links page there are three link options titled "Form," "Pre-populated form," and "Printable form." The "Form" link is the link to the HSSC unique to your Formsite® account which can be clicked on by any user to complete the HSSC at no cost.
    a. This link can be copied and pasted into the email template provided below to send to your health system partners. Clicking on this link will bring them directly to the HSSC to complete.
5. Whenever this link is used, a result will be created in your Formsite® account, which houses the user's responses to the HSSC questions. For more information on the results data collected from the HSSC, see the "Managing HSSC Data in Formsite®" section below.

Managing HSSC Data in Formsite®

Whenever your unique HSSC link is used to access the HSSC, data will be collected in the form of a "result" in your Formsite® account. This data includes the answers the user enters each time the HSSC is accessed through your link, as well as the calculated scores corresponding to those answers. This data will be held in the "Results" page of your Formsite® account.

To access the "Results" page:

1. Start on your Formsite® account home page. Under "My Forms," hover your mouse over the HSSC (same as step 2 in the "Implementing the HSSC" section above).
2. Select "Results"

The Results page shows your "Results Table" for the HSSC. Each row of data in this table corresponds to one use of the HSSC through your unique HSSC link (i.e., each time your link to the HSSC is clicked on, a new row of results data is created). Each row of data contains the answers selected by the user and the scores calculated from those answers. Note that a row of results data will be created each time the link is clicked, whether the user fully completes the scorecard or not; the "Status" column of the results table shows whether each result was fully completed or incomplete.

The "Results per form" limit associated with the account level you pay for refers to the number of rows of results data in this table (Deluxe "Results per form" limit=500; Pro 1 limit=1,000; Pro 2 limit=2,500). Once this limit is reached in your results table, the HSSC will no longer be usable until results data are deleted to create more room or the account level is changed to increase the limit. To change your account level and increase this limit, follow steps 5–7 of the "Creating a Formsite® Account" section above. To delete results to create more room:

1. In the "Results Table" check the box next to each row you wish to delete. Alternatively, select the checkbox in the header of the table to select all rows on the page.
2. Click the "Delete" trashcan shaped button at the top left of the table.

Note that Formsite® will not automatically delete results data when the "Results per form" limit is reached. The only way to delete results and create more room is by following the above steps to delete the data manually.

This data can be exported to an Excel file. CDC recommends exporting any data to an Excel file prior to deleting results data. To export data:

1. On the results page, on the right side of the page, select "Export" from the list of options.
2. On the "Export" page:
   a. Under "Results format" choose "Summary"

b. Under "Data delimiter" choose whether you would like the file to be a standard Excel file or a CSV file

c. Under "Results View" select "Detailed Results" from the drop down menu.

3. Click the "Export" button at the bottom of the page to download the results file.

Sample E-Mail Template Introducing the HSSC to Health System Partners

Dear [Health System *Partner*],

Addressing chronic diseases and associated risk factors is a pressing and costly challenge for the Unites States (US) health care system because the majority (86%) of the nation's health care dollars are dedicated to treating people with one or more chronic diseases. Two chronic diseases—heart disease and cancer—are the leading causes of death in the US. Preventable conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and tobacco use are risk factors for both of these diseases. The third leading cause of death, chronic lower respiratory disease, is largely attributable to a single risk factor—tobacco use.

Unfortunately, no standard approach exists to assess the strategies, policies, and protocols that health systems are using to provide primary care for US adults who have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, prediabetes or diabetes, obesity, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or cancer or who smoke. The result is a lack of data about this important area of health care. To address this problem, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a quality improvement assessment tool called the Health Systems Scorecard (HSSC).

Information collected by the HSSC will help your health system determine opportunities to strengthen implementation of evidence-based policies and systems that can improve care for patients with chronic conditions. Information from the HSSC will also help [*state health department name*] identify what evidence-based strategies are being used in your health system and the extent to which you are delivering care in ways that have been shown to improve health outcomes.

Steps for Using the Health Systems Scorecard (HSSC)

1. Access the [*state health department name*] HSSC at [*web address*] and complete the HSSC using the instructions provided on the landing page.

2. Complete any or all of the modules.

3. Document or save the End Report with scores and resources by module.

4. Review your HSSC scores and use them as a planning tool. Your scores are intended to help you set priorities to support short- and long-term goals for developing a comprehensive plan for using effective health care promotion, disease prevention, and overall wellness strategies. Review your scores to identify potential gaps in your system's health care plan—that is, topic areas where your system currently has few strategies in place.

5. Communicate with [*contact at state health department chronic disease office*] for resources to help you strengthen areas that need improvement.

*Please note: Information entered into the Formsite® account will only be shared with the [*state health department name*] and no other entities.

Instructions for Completing the HSSC

1. We recommend that the person who completes the HSSC work at the health system level. This person should be knowledgeable about or familiar with your health system's policies and protocols related to treatment of patients with chronic conditions.

2. Answer "yes" or "no" for each question in the module. Consult the Glossary to better understand terms used in the questions. All questions should be answered consistently according to the policies and protocols currently in place or established within the last 12 months in your health system.

3. For most questions, provide a response based on a typical patient in your health system who has or is at risk of developing one or more chronic conditions.

4. The HSCC has nine modules. You may complete each module at any time and in any order. Module-specific scores will be calculated upon completion of each module. A combined total score for the HSSC is calculated once all sections are completed. Completing the entire tool will take about 30 minutes.

5. Visually scan each module before attempting to respond. If you do not know the answer to a question, leave the box empty, and then ask staff members in your health stem who are more knowledgeable about that particular policy or protocol to help answer the question. A team-based approach will allow for more accurate responses, increase ownership and involvement among your team, and decrease the workload for any single team member.

It is our hope that this quality improvement tool will help stimulate clinical-public health partnerships so that we can work together to improve health outcomes across our state.

If you have any questions, please contact *[Name]* at *[e-mail].* Thank you.