WebMD Ignite™

Health Plans and HEDIS:

Implement change. Improve scores.

HEDIS ratings are becoming more heavily weighted, and will affect Star Ratings. Here's how you can adjust to take advantage.
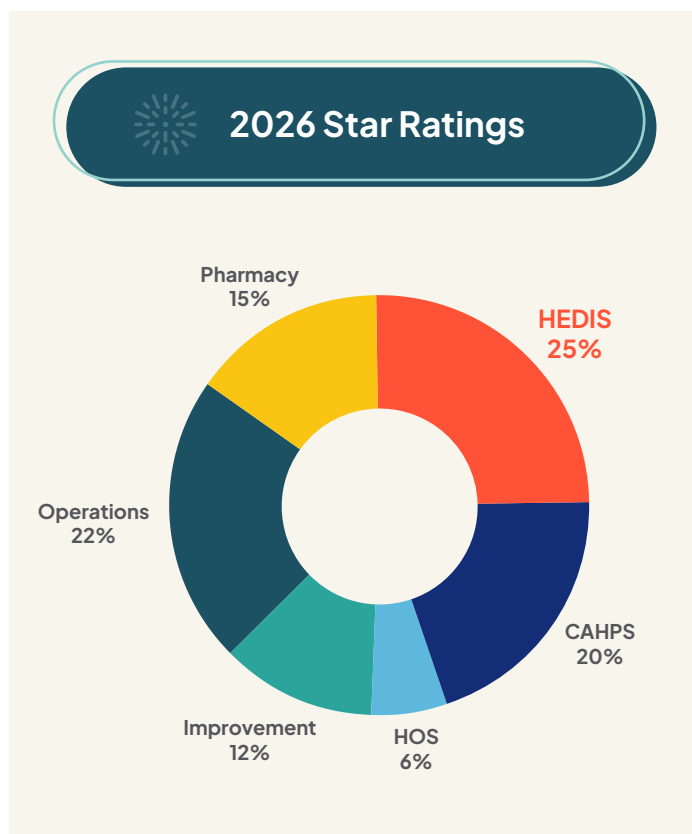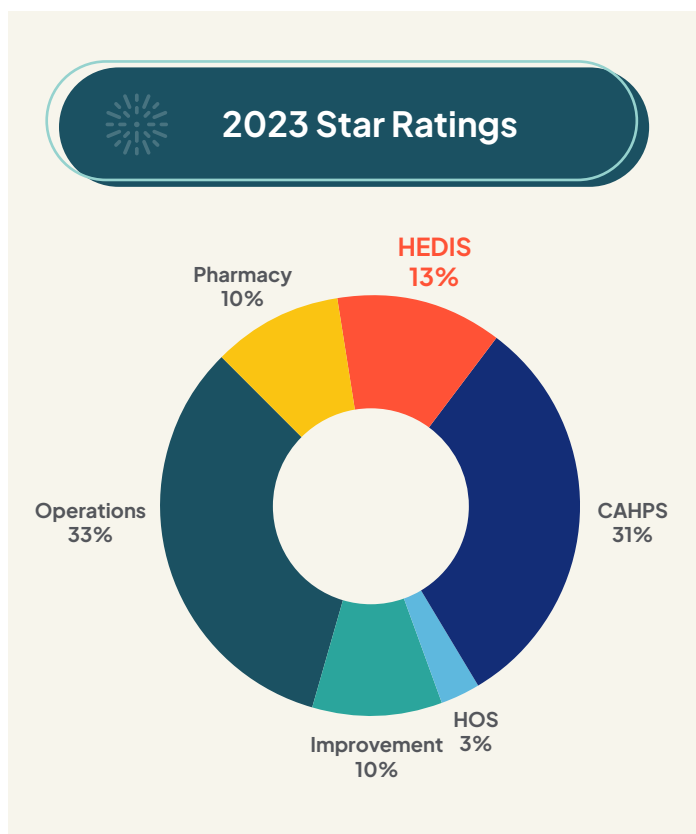
Table of contents

Weighting changes to HEDIS will affect Star Ratings

The Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) is a set of performance measures used to assess the effectiveness of health insurance plans. The measures set goals for care across a wide range of health issues, with a preeminent focus on the value of preventative care. HEDIS scores are just one of six factors that can affect the Star Ratings (a similar tool that measures health plan effectiveness, but applicable to Medicare Advantage plans and Medicare Part D Prescription Drug plans) of a health plan. Star Ratings are partially determined by HEDIS scores (13% in 2023), and as you can see by the chart below, will become more heavily weighted in 2026 (bumping up to 25%).

More than 227 million people are currently enrolled in plans that report HEDIS results. So the bottom line is that HEDIS scores will become more important than ever to your organization. But with a proactive approach, you can start building the foundation to higher Star Ratings for your health plan.

2023 Star Ratings

- HEDIS 13%
- CAHPS 31%
- HOS 3%
- Improvement 10%
- Operations 33%
- Pharmacy 10%

2026 Star Ratings

- HEDIS 25%
- CAHPS 20%
- HOS 6%
- Improvement 12%
- Operations 22%
- Pharmacy 15%

WebMD Ignite™

Health Plans and HEDIS: Implement change. Improve scores. | 3

Start by implementing these 6 digital care management program improvements

Enhancing care managers' workflows and improving member outcomes and satisfaction creates a win-win situation that benefits all. A one-size-fits-all approach to member engagement is no longer sufficient. Health plans must adopt thoughtful, targeted strategies to deliver personalized outreach, increasing the chances of connecting with the right member, at the right time, with the right message. Partnering with the right technology and health content vendor is key, as they can be an extension of your messaging while members are actively engaging with content.

Step 1:
Confirm you have the right integrations in place

It's imperative to integrate health education, member data, and engagement analytics in a single portal for efficient workflows. This not only makes life easier for Care Managers, but also helps them be more effective. Start by ensuring they have easy access within their workflow. Good digital health education solutions integrate seamlessly into your current member management system. Information from a comprehensive health library should be easy to find, matched to an individual's diagnosis, medicines, demographics, and other specific information. Care managers should be able to track what people do with the information they receive, helping the care team understand the level of engagement.

According to McKinsey & Company, 70% of members said they prefer digital healthcare solutions to phone or in-person solutions for all major aspects of their care journey.[2]

Payers and care managers know how important it is that all members, throughout the enterprise, receive consistent, trustworthy health information. Education needs to be evidence-based, agnostic, and easy to understand, each and every time. Having a single voice adds consistency in messaging and reduces confusion or misinterpretation. There's another upside to having a single source of truth: When care managers can easily access a centralized, curated health education library, they don't have to scour the internet searching for appropriate (and vetted!) information. Instead, this valuable time can be used to have more meaningful and engaging conversations

Step 2:
Build programs with member populations in mind

Use demographics of member populations to build effective care plans aligned to member needs. A member engagement strategy that effectively boosts engagement, encourages member action, and improves health outcomes will aid in meeting key HEDIS measures. Providing members with accessible health tools can motivate members to take action and enhance the impact of your health coaching efforts.

Step 3:
Ensure easy access to self-management tools

Use the platform's digital tools to create education collections, track user engagement, and help members self-manage their health. It's imperative that members know they can always access health education in one place—the member portal—at any time, anywhere, within their preferred communication device (often their mobile phone). When you create user-friendly experiences, people are just naturally more likely to engage with and act on the important information they need.

According to the National Institutes of Health, self-management programs tailored to specific groups, and with a variety of delivery strategies, have proven successful at improving health outcomes in targeted populations.[3] As chronic conditions emerge as a major public health concern, self-management will continue to grow as a crucial approach to managing these conditions, preventing illness, and promoting wellness.

Step 4:
Provide integrated health information

Create collections with one source of consistent education offered in various formats to easily share with members. It's important to remember that we are all different—each of us has our preferred way(s) of learning, and the communication channel(s) we choose to use to do so. Information should be available and optimized for mobile phones (an increasingly utilized device), as well as desktops and laptops.

WebMD Ignite™

Health Plans and HEDIS: Implement change. Improve scores. | 5

Content should vary to fill the need for different learning styles. Some people love to watch videos to learn more. Or interact with programming tools that educate. Others prefer a more traditional method of reading articles and similar text pieces, allowing them to go at their own pace (be sure to keep information at a 5th- to 6th-grade reading level to reach everyone). And many prefer all of the above. By varying the learning approaches and combining videos, images, and text, a patient's recall of information can increase by 30%. So make sure it's available to your members in the ways they'll make use of it most.

Se habla espanol? Many folks do as their first language, so be sure to include all pertinent information in Spanish and other languages likely to be used by your member base.

Step 5:
Use data from members to boost engagement

Use analytics to track member activity and see how they engage with content. Then be ready to adjust strategy as needed, to ensure you're optimizing the use of your materials. Many health education solutions include tracking tools that show how members have engaged with digital education. Care managers can know what documents were opened and which videos were watched (or weren't). Having these insights help shape effective conversations and care plans for each member.

Here's how to get there:

- **Track member use** — Individual reports show whether your members are reading and using the resources sent to them. You may discover individuals have preferences for certain types or formats of information.

- **Provide follow-up** — Coaches can provide members with informed and personalized follow-up, based on reports that capture member responses and progress. Remember, communicating with your members is key.

- **Make data-informed improvements** — Use reports on entire or key populations to measure engagement and identify specific areas of concern.

- **Improve staff usage** — See how coaches use health education to pinpoint who uses it effectively and who might need more training.

WebMD Ignite™

Health Plans and HEDIS: Implement change. Improve scores. | 6

Step 6:
Leverage available tools to improve process

Take advantage of new tech and its features like automation and sharing through platforms. The best tech will allow care managers to consolidate information from a variety of sources, providing a clear picture of the member's needs, as well as their health history. This also lets them differentiate high-risk patients from those who need less intervention. The goal here is to let care managers focus on improving outcomes with the fewest resources possible (in other words, less time and money). And by creating an automated way to identify opportunities and unmet needs within the existing workflow, new programs and health education can be recommended for your members.

Finally, provide reliable, accurate, efficient health education that's easy to find and send, so the member receives it quickly while it's still fresh in their mind. This is the most important — and the easiest to implement, if you use a health education solution that integrates with your current health management solution. Consistent health education ensures that members always receive accurate, user-friendly information that never contradicts itself.

Final thoughts

With HEDIS scores becoming more heavily weighted in the Star Ratings for 2026, now's the time to heighten your HEDIS performance through education and platforms that support care management and member health. Remember, people crave information about their health. Your organization needs comprehensive (and comprehensible) health content to ensure that you're meeting member expectations and becoming a highly-rated, digital-savvy, customer-centered business.

WebMD Ignite can help you heighten your HEDIS performance through education and platforms that support care management and member health.

Learn more

WebMD Ignite™

As the premier growth partner for healthcare organizations, WebMD Ignite empowers decision-making insights across the health journey. By integrating proprietary technology, unrivaled reach, strategic targeting, business intelligence, and educational resources, our solutions solve healthcare industry challenges to boost acquisition, build loyalty, and ignite action. To learn more about our complete suite of care management and member wellness programs, visit WebMD Ignite.com, email us at IgniteInfo@WebMD.net or connect with us:

in

References

1 Five Health Plans Earn Five-Star Ratings From NCQA, Healthcare Innovation, https://www.hcinnovationgroup.com/population-health-management/payers-providers/news/55140408/five-health-plans-earn-five-star-ratings-from-ncqa

2 Next-generation member engagement during the care journey, McKinsey & Company, https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/healthcare/our-insights/next-generation-member-engagement-during-the-care-journey

3 Self-Management: A Comprehensive Approach to Management of Chronic Conditions, NIH, National Library of Medicine, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4103232/