

**The Least You Need to Know:** CMS is looking for additional hospices to assist in the next round of testing the Hospice Outcomes and Patient Evaluation tool (HOPE). The HOPE tool is known to be more of a comprehensive assessment, with quality measures and process measures built within the assessment. The tool has been through a couple of rounds of field testing- and CMS is looking to complete more testing!

## How Can Your Hospice Help?

Hospices have a KEY role in ensuring the new assessment is right for hospice. CMS is specifically seeking hospice providers with sufficient registered nurse, social worker, and chaplain staffing to conduct at least 1 – 2 joint visits per week. HOPE assessments are completed at hospice admission, for symptom reassessment and at live discharge.

Hospices must be Medicare-certified and training for this round of hospices is anticipated to occur mid-July 2022 with data collection slated to begin in August 2022 and continue through early fall 2022.

It appears that CMS is still aiming for completion of the beta testing in early fall of this year. Should this occur, there may be time for CMS to analyze the results of the testing and formulate a proposal for use of the HOPE by all hospices in the FY2024 proposed rule. This proposed rule would be posted in Spring 2023 for public review.

Joint visits are typical in beta testing standardized assessment instruments such as the HOPE for inter-rater reliability, but it is not expected that joint visits will be required when a HOPE tool is implemented in hospice. CMS is allowing the “joint visit” to be done remotely on platforms like “Zoom”.

## Actions of a Prudent Hospice™

**ONE. Continue to monitor** the evolution of the HOPE tool by CMS.

**TWO. Consider your agency’s ability** to be able to be an effective testing agency, including the ability to do tandem visits during the testing.

**THREE. Those interested in participating should email** [HOPETesting@abtassoc.com](mailto:HOPETesting@abtassoc.com) by June 30, 2022.

### Links to More Information

**Recruitment will continue until CMS reaches the desired number of participants (number not specified). Those interested in participating should email** [HOPETesting@abtassoc.com](mailto:HOPETesting@abtassoc.com) **by June 30, 2022.**

