

# REPORT

## Medicare Star Quality Rating System Study: Key Findings

October 2011

### About the Study

This study of Medicare-eligible seniors was conducted by phone Sept. 21-25, 2011 by Harris Interactive on behalf of Kaiser Permanente. A population of 483 Medicare-eligible seniors was surveyed and has a sampling error of +/- 4 percent. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

### Overview

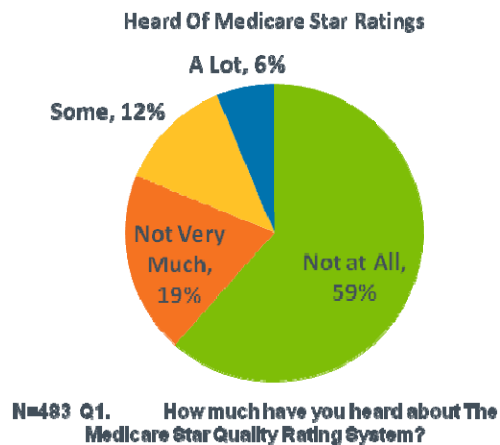
This study of seniors showed a fairly uneven level of knowledge and familiarity about the Medicare Star Quality Rating System – both at a surface level and on some very specific measures. There is not universal familiarity with the system, and less than one-third of those who have heard of the system are using it to make decisions about their own health plans.

And though only two percent of seniors could report their own plan’s rating, more than 20 percent knew they were eligible to switch to a 5-star plan outside of Medicare’s open enrollment period. More than one-quarter of those seniors surveyed reported they knew how to find information about the rating system.

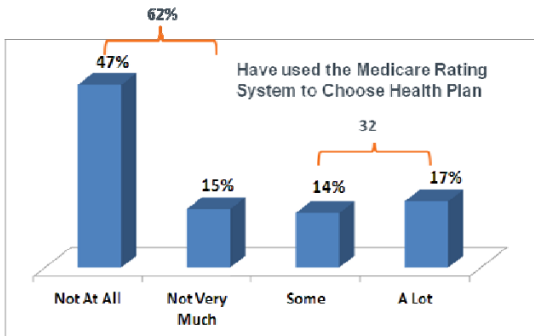
### Key Findings

#### One-third have heard of the Medicare Star Quality Rating System, but few are relying on it to make their health care decisions

Almost 60 percent of Medicare-eligible seniors have heard nothing at all about the Medicare Star Rating System. Research also reveals that those who are the most familiar with the rating system earn \$15,000 to \$50,000. High income earners, and those with more advanced educations, were less familiar with the program. African Americans reported a higher familiarity than white seniors.



Among the roughly one-third who have heard something about the rating system, close to one-half did not use the system to help select their Medicare Advantage health plan. Similarly, those who had only a high school education and earned between \$15,000 and \$50,000 were most likely to have used the ratings to select a plan. Women, high income earners and those with a higher education were most likely to have not used the system to inform their decisions about their health care plan.



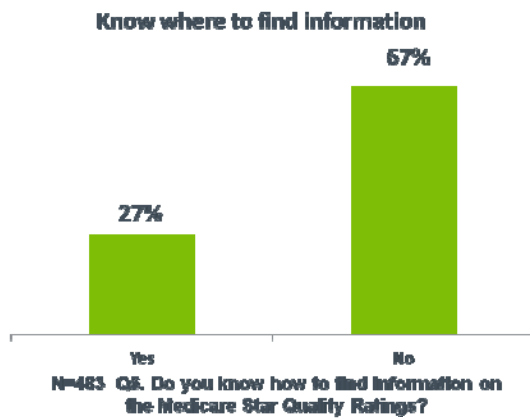
N=176 Q2. IF A Lot, Some, Not much on Q1, then ask: How much have you used The Medicare Star Quality Rating System to help you select a Medicare Advantage health plan?

**Almost one-third of Medicare-eligible seniors believe they know where to find information about the Medicare Star Quality Ratings**

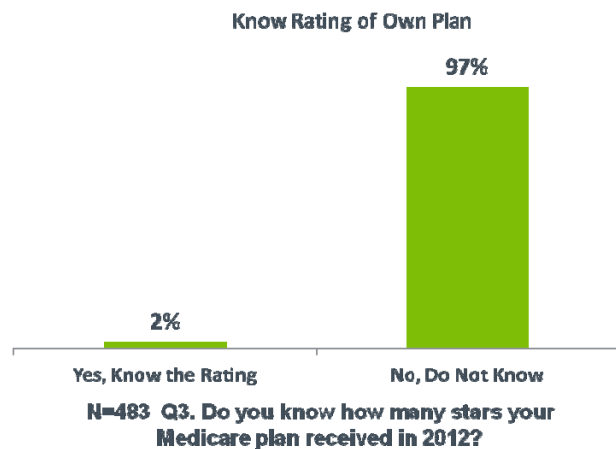
Twenty-seven percent of Medicare-eligible seniors say they know where to find information about the ratings system. Those who are most likely to report they know where to find information have some college education.

**However, only two percent report knowing their plan’s rating.**

An overwhelming majority say they do not know how many stars their plan received in 2012. This lack of knowledge is nearly universal.



N=483 Q8. Do you know how to find information on the Medicare Star Quality Ratings?



N=483 Q3. Do you know how many stars your Medicare plan received in 2012?