# Frequently Asked Questions about the Family Satisfaction Survey and the Long-Term Care Consumer Guide (www.ltcohio.org)

**Questions and answers specifically related to persons participating in the Family Satisfaction Survey**:

1. ***Why was my name chosen to participate in the family satisfaction survey?***
   For all residents in a facility, a family member, friend, or other interested person was identified. You were identified by the facility staff as being the most involved person in the care of the resident.

2. ***How did nursing home staff identify me as the appropriate person to receive the family survey? What were the selection criteria for participating in the family satisfaction survey*?**
   An attempt was made to select one person who was 'most involved' in the care of a nursing home resident. Criteria to define being 'most involved' included identifying the person who visited the resident the most, talked to staff, participated in resident care planning etc. Thus, even though the survey is called the Family Satisfaction Survey, the most involved person could be a family member, a friend, or another interested party. Your name was identified as being the 'most involved' person in the care of the resident.

3. ***What about my privacy?***
   Nothing on the survey form identifies individuals; the code number on the pages identifies the nursing home where the resident lives. You mail your survey back to the Scripps Gerontology Center to conduct the analyses. They do not know who received surveys or who responded to the survey. When a facility receives the results from the survey they will receive only aggregate data; i.e., data that is averaged for their facility. They will not know individual answers or responses.

4. ***Will facilities get to see the individual answers to the family surveys?***
   No, all of the answers are anonymous. Facilities will never get to see individual answers. All answers will be reported in aggregate form using numbers and percentages. That is why objective research institutions have been hired to implement the survey. This system protects the anonymity of all the families who are participating in the survey.

5. ***Are residents completing a satisfaction survey?***
   Residents completed a satisfaction survey in summer 2011. The survey was developed and tested by the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio and The Margaret Blenkner Research Institute of Benjamin Rose with input from the Consumer Guide Advisory Council. The resident survey was a face-to-face interview (unlike the mailed survey approach that is being used with families) with randomly selected nursing home residents.

6. ***Why are there numbers on my survey?***
   This number is a facility code that identifies the nursing home in which your resident resides. This information will help the Scripps Gerontology Center track the responses for different facilities. There is also a 7-digit password that allows families to login and complete their survey online. This number does not identify you in any way since Scripps does not know family names and addresses.

7. ***Why did I receive two surveys?***
   If you are involved with residents living in more than one nursing facility, it is possible that you may receive more than one survey. The name of the facility that you should report about is printed on the front of the survey. However, if you are involved with only one resident in a nursing home in Ohio, you may have received a duplicate survey by mistake. If this is the case, please complete only one survey. Mark "duplicate" on the extra survey and return it in its business reply envelope or login to the survey online, leave it blank, and hit submit on the last page. If you have more than one relative in a nursing home, you may be asked to complete two surveys for the different nursing

homes. **In no case should any guardian or family member complete more than one survey for the same nursing home.**

8. ***Whom should I contact if I have additional questions*?**
   Please call The Ohio Department of Aging Ohio Family Satisfaction Survey Toll-Free Helpline at **1-888-300-6911**. The Scripps Gerontology Center is staffing the toll-free number. You may call the number any time and leave a message and your call will be returned the next business day. Calls will be answered from 9:00 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday until September 30.

**General questions and answers**

1. ***What is the Ohio Long-Term Care Consumer Guide?***
   The Ohio Long-Term Care Consumer Guide provides information about nursing homes in Ohio on a website developed and maintained by the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA). Ohio Revised Code Sec. 173.45-173.49, forms the legal basis for the Guide. To visit the guide, see www.ltcohio.org.

2. ***Who funds the Long Term Care Consumer Guide*?**
   The Ohio Long Term Care Consumer Guide is funded through the State budget and an annual fee of $650 from each nursing home and $300 from each residential care facility. These funds are used to help support the cost of both the resident and family satisfaction surveys.

3. ***What does the Long-Term Care Consumer Guide include?***
   The Long-Term Care Consumer Guide displays information provided by individual nursing facilities, the consumer satisfaction survey results, and inspection reports from the Ohio Department of Health. Information about Medicaid and Medicare, nursing home organizations, and other long-term care options are also provided. Links to existing websites are used to provide additional information about funding and other long-term care options.

4. ***How will ODA get information about nursing facilities*?**
   Nursing homes provide information about special services, policies, beds and rates and more through secured access to the site. After registering on the site, nursing facility staff can update information about their facility, provide pictures, and address inspection reports as needed. For registration instructions, email consumerguide@age.state.oh.us

   Regulatory performance data is provided by the Ohio Department of Health and CMS. Facilities with their own websites also have the opportunity to link to the Consumer Guide website.

5. ***Why should a facility participate in the family satisfaction survey*?**
   **Consumer Choice:** The Long-Term Care Consumer Guide receives an average of 5,000 visitors each month, evidence that choosing a nursing home is a difficult decision and consumers want more information about their options. The more information people have about every nursing home, the better decisions they can make. Consumers have shared a negative response to data missing from the website. This is likely to impact their impression of a nursing home.
   **Quality Improvement**: Nursing homes are provided reports of their survey results and may use that information for quality improvement purposes, newsletters, or marketing materials. By participating in the satisfaction surveys and providing other information on the Consumer Guide, a facility can convey commitment to quality and reach out to new customers.
   **Legal Requirement:** The Ohio legislature included a requirement that facilities participate in the consumer satisfaction surveys conducted by the Ohio Department of Aging. This includes all licensed facilities, not just those certified for Medicaid.

**Financial Incentive:** Performance on the consumer satisfaction surveys is used as a measure of quality in Ohio's Medicaid reimbursement formula. Your overall satisfaction score — the average of all scores on all items — is used to determine whether your facility qualifies for the consumer satisfaction incentive measure.

6. ***What is the Scripps Gerontology Center doing*?**
   Scripps Gerontology Center, located at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio has a contract with the Ohio Department of Aging to conduct the family satisfaction survey. Scripps will scan the returned surveys, compile the results, and provide a summary of responses for every facility. They will also answer questions from facilities and families on the toll-free helpline.

7. ***Who are the members of the LTC Consumer Guide Advisory Council?***
   Members include representatives of family members of nursing home residents, representatives from the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging, representatives from three nursing home trade organizations, the Ohio Assisted Living Association, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the Ohio Departments of Aging, Health and Job and Family Services.

8. ***How many nursing homes are likely to participate in the family satisfaction survey?***
   As participation is required, we anticipate receiving results from all Ohio nursing homes and sub-acute hospital units.

9. ***What will happen if a facility does not participate in the family satisfaction survey?***
   If a facility does not participate in the satisfaction surveys the statement *Refused to Participate* will appear next to a facility's listing on the Consumer Guide.
   Performance on the Family Satisfaction Surveys is also part of Ohio's Medicaid reimbursement formula for nursing homes. A lack of family satisfaction data may negatively impact the amount of reimbursement available to a facility.

10. ***What if my facility doesn't meet the margin of error?*** Overall satisfaction scores for your facility will not be calculated so no Medicaid reimbursement quality payment can be awarded. Encourage families to complete and return their surveys by using posters, flyers, and articles in your newsletter or other communications. Unfortunately, we cannot know if the margin of error has been met until scanning of over 20,000 surveys is completed.

11. ***What is the cost to an individual facility to participate in the Family Satisfaction Survey*?**
    Nursing homes are required by law to pay an annual fee of $650.00 to the Department of Aging to help cover the cost of the family and resident satisfaction surveys. This fee is subject to Medicaid reimbursement through the Medicaid program pursuant to sections 5111.20 to 5111.32 of the Revised Code.

12. ***How often are these surveys going to be completed*?**
    The law requires the family surveys and resident surveys to each be completed biannually. Resident satisfaction surveys are completed in odd-numbered years and family satisfaction surveys are completed in even-numbered years.