



STAR Administrator's Manual

How to Use the NHPCO Survey of Team Attitudes and Relationships (STAR) A Guide for Hospice Administrators

I. Introduction

Employees play a fundamental role in the success of any organization, and astute administrators recognize the value of a stable and committed work force. Regular assessment of staff job satisfaction provides information that can be used for proactive and corrective modification of organizational behavior and work environment to promote workforce excellence. Research has shown that employees who have higher job satisfaction are more likely to care about the quality of their work, have higher retention rates, are more productive, and are more committed to the organization. Evidence also exists that job satisfaction correlates to the quality of patient care.

Other sectors of the healthcare industry use job satisfaction surveys tailored to their specific health care environments. However, until now, no tested comparable survey existed for hospice employees. The Survey of Team Attitudes and Relationships (STAR) is the first systematically developed job satisfaction measure that reflects the unique needs and work environment of hospice care delivery. The STAR is designed to be administered to all hospice staff members whether they hold administrative, clinical, or non-clinical positions.

The STAR was developed by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania in collaboration with NHPCO. The questions that comprise the STAR were generated from interviews with hospice staff and were refined with additional input from an expert panel. The tool then underwent multiple revisions, pilot testing, and psychometric analysis. The final survey consists of 45 core questions across 6 domains: individual work rewards, teamwork, management support, organizational support, workload issues, and global assessment of job satisfaction. An article delineating the development of the STAR was published in the October 2007 issue of the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management* and can be downloaded from the STAR page of the NHPCO Web site: www.nhpco.org/STAR.

Benefits of Using STAR

The STAR is the only job satisfaction survey designed specifically for the hospice field. Hospice team members face distinct challenges working with a population of patients and family caregivers who have unique care needs. Consequently, a specialized job satisfaction survey such as the STAR is essential to the effective evaluation of job satisfaction of hospice staff.

Administrators will find the STAR to be a valuable tool for promoting workforce excellence and delivery of quality hospice care. Participation in the NHPCO STAR administration and reporting process provides the information needed to make adjustments to improve staff satisfaction and retention. In addition, the NHPCO STAR National report will allow hospice administrators to



compare their results to others as part of the 360⁰ comprehensive evaluation critical to organizational quality.

NOTE TO HOSPICE EXECUTIVES: Even if you do not complete Part I (Job Satisfaction) of the STAR, you are urged to complete Part II of the survey. This section provides NHPCO with demographic information which is essential to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the national level report.

II. STAR Online Survey Administration and Reporting

STAR Administrator's Portal

NHPCO provides online survey administration and reporting of a hospice's results for the STAR via the STAR Administrator's Portal. Staff members complete the survey online. Results for an individual hospice are also compiled and presented in a downloadable report from the Portal.

The STAR Administrator's Portal allows your hospice's designated STAR Administrator to direct and monitor administration of the STAR. In the STAR Administrator's Portal, you can:

- approve your staff roster and initiate distribution of the survey to your staff;
- view participation progress once your staff has started the survey;
- view and print your hospice's STAR report which presents the results for your hospice.

The STAR Administrator's Portal is accessible only to a hospice's STAR Administrator. The role and designation of the STAR Administrator is explained in Step 2 of the Implementation section below.

III. Implementation

Step 1: Review the survey

For previewing purposes, a copy of the survey is available for download from the NHPCO STAR page at www.nhpc.org/star.

The downloadable survey on the STAR page of the NHPCO website differs slightly from the version in the online system. All of the questions relating to staff satisfaction are identical for both versions; however, the demographics section in the online system has been augmented to maximize reporting of staff characteristics at the national level.

NOTE: STAR is intended solely for online administration. The survey posted on the NHPCO page **should not** be copied and administered as a paper/pencil survey. Online administration is necessary to ensure confidentiality and to promote veracity of staff responses. Also, reporting for an individual hospice's results can only be done through use of the STAR Administrator's Portal.



Step 2: Connect and communicate with NHPCO

➤ *Assign roles and responsibilities*

Primary Contact/Roster Manager

Both the Primary Contact for a hospice and the person designated as the Roster Manager are able to manage the roster of a hospice's staff in the NHPCO member database. If the Primary Contact prefers not to update the roster for your organization, you can assign a Roster Manager to perform the update. To request the designation of a Roster Manager for your hospice in the NHPCO member database, send an email to star@nhpco.org with the name of the individual you wish to be assigned.

STAR Administrator

The person designated as STAR Administrator will have special access within the STAR online system that allows him/her to initiate survey administration/dissemination, view participation progress, and view the hospice's report. A hospice can designate more than one STAR Administrator if desired. To request the designation of a STAR Administrator, send an email to star@nhpco.org with the name of the individual you wish to be assigned.

The above roles/designations may be fulfilled by the same individual or different individuals. Possible scenarios are illustrated in the examples below.

Example 1. Your hospice chooses to designate three different individuals to function as Primary Contact, Roster Manager, and STAR Administrator.

Example 2. The Primary Contact is also the STAR Administrator.

Example 3. A hospice's Primary Contact is not involved in the STAR process. Instead, the hospice designates one individual as both STAR Administrator and Roster Manager.

You determine the configuration of roles/designations that works best for your hospice.

NOTE: In order to participate in the STAR, your hospice must designate a staff member who can update your staff roster in the NHPCO membership database (as Primary Contact or Roster Manager) *and* designate a STAR Administrator. These are separate designations and may be, but do not have to be, assigned to the same individual.

➤ *Provide your Average Daily Census*

For complete and accurate comparative statistics in our National STAR report, we ask that you provide us with your Average Daily Census (ADC) when you contact us to designate a Primary Contact and/or STAR Administrator. Your ADC may fall into the following ranges:

1 to 50

51 to 100

101 to 200

>200



➤ *Update your hospice's roster in the NHPCO member database**

A link to the online STAR survey is distributed to employees via email. In order to gain access to the online survey, an employee must be listed in your hospice's roster in NHPCO's membership database along with his/her email address. Therefore, it is imperative that the staff roster for your hospice be up-to-date prior to the administration of the STAR.

Either the Primary Contact or the Roster Manager should log onto the NHPCO main site and review the names of those individuals listed on the roster and make any necessary corrections, deletions, and/or additions. * **(More detail on this process is provided at the end of this Guidelines document.)**

NOTE: Updating your hospice's roster can only be completed by Primary Contacts or Roster Managers. If your hospice has more than 150 staff members, or your hospice has multiple locations, NHPCO will assist with your roster update. Send an email to star@nhpco.org for more details.

➤ *Contact NHPCO for STAR Administrator's Portal Access*

After your staff roster is updated in the NHPCO membership database, review it for omissions and corrections. When you have confirmed that your roster is correct and you have designated a STAR Administrator, send an email to star@nhpco.org with that information.

NHPCO will then contact you with information about how to access and navigate the STAR Administrator's Portal.

NOTE: NHPCO creates an account in the STAR online system for access to the STAR Administrator's Portal only after you have notified us that your roster is updated and you have provided the name of the individual assigned as STAR Administrator. You must contact star@nhpco.org in order to gain access to the STAR Administrator's Portal.

Step 3: Final Preparation

➤ *Decide on the timing of survey administration*

You determine the timeframe for your staff to complete the STAR. Choose both a start date and a deadline and clearly communicate both to your staff. **Many hospices choose a timeframe between 2 and 4 weeks to complete the survey.** We recommend that you regularly monitor the number of staff who has completed the survey (via Participation Progress in the STAR Administrator's Portal – see below) to determine if you need to extend the survey deadline.



NOTE: The link to the online survey remains operable for 60 days. The link will no longer function at the end of 60 days and cannot be reactivated. This means that STAR administration must be completed within 60 days after the start date.

➤ ***Access the STAR Administrator's Portal***

The STAR Administrator's Portal allows you to begin distribution with the click of a button, the 'Approve and Send' button. This begins distribution of an email with the survey link to each of your staff. In the STAR Administrator's Portal, you will also be able to view participation progress rate, and view your hospice's report after survey completion. The STAR Administrator's Portal can be accessed only by your hospice's STAR Administrator.

Home Tab

The Home tab provides an overview of the portal and the content of the other tabs - Review Roster and View Report.

Review Roster Tab

NHPCO imports your staff roster from the membership database into the STAR portal. **Before the survey is distributed, you must review your roster *one more time* in the STAR Administrator's Portal to make sure all staff who should have access to the survey are listed and their email addresses are correct. The way the survey software is designed makes it very difficult to add individuals to the panel *after* clicking the 'Approve and 'Send' button.**

New staff? We recommend that employees who have been with your hospice for at least 3 months take the STAR.

NOTE: If any roster changes are needed in the STAR Administrator's Portal, send an email to star@nhpco.org with corrections. We will email confirmation that the changes have been made. These must be made before clicking the 'Approve and Send' button. Once NHPCO imports your roster into the STAR Administrator's Portal, you must email star@nhpco.org for any corrections to your roster. **What appears in the Portal may be different from the roster you see on the NHPCO main site.**

Approve and Send Button

The survey start date for your hospice is the same day that you click the 'Approve and Send' button. This button, once clicked, generates an email that is distributed to the staff listed on your roster in the STAR Administrator's Portal. The email has a de-identified individualized link to the survey. Employees click on the link to the survey to be taken directly to it. Employees who do not have an email address will not receive the link to the survey. Each employee must have a unique email address. Once an employee has taken the survey, he/she will not be allowed to take it a second time.

The deadline you set is important to communicate to your staff. Deadline information is not input in the STAR Administrator's Portal.



SPAM Filter

The STAR email that is distributed to your staff comes from 'NHPCO STAR'; the email address listed in the From field is: star@nhpco.org

Your hospice may have a SPAM filter that prevents the STAR email from reaching your employees' email inboxes. To ensure this does not happen, you must have your IT staff whitelist the following domain name:

nhpco.org

REMINDER: Before clicking 'Approve and Send', be sure your IT department has whitelisted the domain name nhpco.org. Also ensure that all individuals who need to take the survey are listed correctly on the Review Roster tab. Contact star@nhpco.org for any additions/corrections before clicking 'Approve and Send'.

Step 4: Administer STAR

Introduce STAR to your staff by explaining the purpose of completing the survey and emphasizing that all responses will be confidential. Provide them with the start and deadline dates that you have set.

A Participant's Manual is available on the STAR page (www.nhpco.org/STAR). NHPCO recommends that you provide staff members with a copy of the participant's manual or direct staff to access the manual on the STAR page. Staff will find it helpful to review this information, particularly the detailed explanation of the confidentiality of survey responses.

After employees have been informed about the survey process, and you have clicked the 'Approve and Send' button in the STAR Administrator's Portal, they are ready to complete the online survey.

Tell your staff to let *you* know if someone did not receive the email with the survey link, or if it was accidentally deleted. When you send corrections to star@nhpco.org, we will resend the email with the survey link to that individual. **** (See NOTE below. More detail on this process is provided at the end of this Guidelines document.)**

NOTE: After distributing the STAR email, you may find that an employee did not receive the email, accidentally deleted it, or was mistakenly left off the roster. Allow one week after clicking the 'Approve and Send' button to accumulate a list of corrections and/or additions. *Ideally, you will not need to implement this step as the goal is to have a correct and up-to-date roster before clicking 'Approve and Send'.*

Send your list of employee name and email address corrections/additions to star@nhpco.org. This correction update can only be done **one time, one week after your survey has started.**



REMINDER: After your survey has started, changes you make on the NHPCO website for staff email addresses do not update in the STAR Administrator's Portal. You must email corrections to star@nhpco.org.

Example Email Sent to Staff

From: NHPCO STAR

Subject: It's time to take the STAR!

Hello _____,

Your hospice's STAR Administrator has launched the survey! The timeframe for completing the survey, including the deadline, is set by your hospice. If you are uncertain about whether or when you should complete the STAR survey, check with your supervisor.

STAR is designed to be administered to all hospice staff members whether they hold administrative, clinical, or non-clinical positions.

How to Participate in STAR:

Click here! [STAR Survey](#)

Thank you!

Step 5: Participation progress and your hospice's STAR report

Participation Progress

Once staff members have begun to complete the survey, you can view the Participation Progress update from the Home Page or the Review Roster tab. Participation Progress is shown in a blue bar at the top of the Home Page and the Review Roster tab. Below is what the Participation Progress bar looks like:

Participation progress: **0/41** of your roster have responded to date.

Remember to regularly check back and view participation progress to determine if you should extend the deadline in order to maximize participation. The participation progress shows the number of employees who have completed the survey. Also, keep in mind that the survey link is only active for 60 days.

STAR Report

After survey administration is completed, you can see your hospice's results by clicking on the View Report tab. You can also download and print a PDF copy of the report.

NOTE: Your hospice's STAR report begins displaying results as soon as the first survey is submitted. To ensure accurate reporting of your hospice's results, wait until STAR administration is completed before downloading and printing the report.



IV. National STAR Report

In addition to providing individual hospice STAR reports, NHPCO creates an annual National STAR Report every spring that provides a summary of results at the national level. Based on STAR survey responses entered throughout the year, the National STAR report includes overall national averages for STAR domains and questions, as well as results broken down by selected demographics, such as clinical/non-clinical, discipline, and hours worked, categorized by hospice size and location. The report also includes hospice staff demographic information and salaries.

The National STAR Report is available for purchase through the NHPCO Marketplace, and is an invaluable tool for comparisons across hospices and evaluation of the hospice workforce as a whole.

To ensure inclusion of your hospice's survey results in the annual National STAR Report, administration of the survey must be completed by **December 15** each year.

* Updating Your Hospice's Staff Roster through NHPCO main site

To update your hospice's staff roster on the main NHPCO website, you must be designated as the Primary Contact or Roster Manager. Log on to www.nhpc.org using your email address and password for NHPCO. Once logged in, click on 'My Account' in the left menu bar. Then click 'My Organization' in that same left menu bar. From there you can make changes to your roster and demographic information for your locations. NHPCO strongly recommends that you update your roster on a regular basis.

NOTE: You may see the same person listed multiple times. This does not indicate duplicate entries, but represents each relationship/role the individual has within the organization.

First – review your roster(s). By clicking on the column titles you can sort by first name, last name and relationship. You can edit or delete those relationships by clicking on 'Edit/End Relation.'

Next – if you need to remove personnel who have since left your organization, click on 'Edit/End Relation' by the name of the person you want remove. On the next screen click 'End Relation.' You may choose to type in the day that the employee left, if you know it. Use today's date if you don't know their actual date of termination.

Last – add new people. To add people click on the 'ADD' link above the roster of names and fill in the required information. Note: Each staff member must have a *unique email address* in order to participate in STAR.

NOTE: When staff are added to your organization's roster, they will automatically be enrolled as an NCHPP member with the email address on file for them and will receive a welcome email from NHPCO detailing their complimentary member benefits.



****Making Roster Corrections**

After clicking the 'Approve and Send' button to begin distribution of the STAR emails, you may find that an employee did not receive the email or accidentally deleted the email. Allow one week after clicking the 'Approve and Send' button to accumulate a list of roster corrections or additions. Send your list of roster corrections to star@nhpco.org. This correction update can only be done one time, one week after clicking 'Approve and Send'. Ideally, you will not need to implement this step because the goal is to have a correct and up-to-date roster before clicking 'Approve and Send'.

Tips to Ensure a Clean Roster

Initially, you will update your roster on the NHPCO main site. Once you approve your roster, NHPCO staff imports it into the STAR Administrator's Portal. It is important to make sure all current employees are listed on this roster with their correct email addresses. Utilize the tips below as guidance for seamless administration of STAR:

- Each employee must have a unique email address. Most hospices have a work email address for their employees. If an employee does not have a work email address with your hospice, they may utilize a personal email address.
- The most common reason why someone did not receive the STAR email is because their email address contained errors. Check for misspellings in both the local part of email addresses (text preceding the '@' symbol) and the domain part of email addresses (text appearing after the '@' symbol).
- A second set of eyes is very helpful in reviewing your roster. NHPCO will review your roster for obvious errors and ask you to verify, but we also suggest a second administrative employee review your roster to check for errors.
- Make sure your IT department has made newer employees' email addresses 'active', ready to receive email.