

Home Health Line Tool

Discharge Function: Quick Guide to GG0130B (Oral hygiene)

CMS has noted it plans to add the OASIS-based Discharge Function Score to the Home Health Quality of Patient Care Star Rating in the near future, according to the 2027 Home Health Prospective Payment System Proposed Rule. This is part of a series of one-page tools sharing expert tips and CMS instructions to help address challenges clinicians face with accurate scoring for the Discharge Function measures.

GG0130B (Oral hygiene): The ability to use suitable items to clean teeth. Dentures (if applicable): The ability to insert and remove dentures into and from mouth and manage denture soaking and rinsing with use of equipment.

Scoring

Remember: If helper assistance is required because the patient's performance is unsafe or of poor quality, score according to the amount of assistance provided. Activities may be completed with or without assistive devices.

6. **Independent** – Patient completes the activity by themselves with no assistance from a helper.
5. **Setup or clean-up assistance** – Helper sets up or cleans up; patient completes activity. Helper assists only prior to or following the activity.
4. **Supervision or touching assistance** – Helper provides verbal cues and/or touching/steadying and/or contact guard assistance as patient completes activity. Assistance may be provided throughout the activity or intermittently.
3. **Partial/moderate assistance** – Helper does LESS THAN HALF the effort. Helper lifts, holds or supports trunk or limbs, but provides less than half the effort.

2. **Substantial/maximal assistance** – Helper does MORE THAN HALF the effort. Helper lifts or holds trunk or limbs and provides more than half the effort.

1. **Dependent** – Helper does ALL of the effort. Patient does none of the effort to complete the activity. Or, the assistance of 2 or more helpers is required for the patient to complete the activity.

If activity was not attempted, code reason:

7. **Patient refused**
9. **Not applicable** – Not attempted and the patient did not perform this activity prior to the current illness, exacerbation or injury.
10. **Not attempted due to environmental limitations (e.g., lack of equipment, weather constraints)**
88. **Not attempted due to medical condition or safety concerns**

Important notes

If answered incorrectly at start of care (SOC) or resumption of care (ROC), the discharge assessment may fail to document real improvement the patient made under your care. (HHL 5/12/25)

- The item looks at the assistance required for the patient to complete the task safely, even in the absence of a caregiver. If the assessing clinician determines that the patient needs assistance through cueing, but there is no available caregiver to provide the cueing, you could still opt to use a score that shows the patient needs assistance since that would be the safest option for the patient when completing the task.
- You should attempt to assess the patient as they complete the task, but you can score based on information from an interview with the patient or others or on the patient's ability to complete similar activities.
- If a patient needs items moved and needs the toothpaste applied to their toothbrush then this would be scored a "05 — Setup or clean-up assistance." If you also need to remind them to rinse and spit, now you are verbal cueing at a "04 — Supervision or touching assistance."
- For a patient who is edentulous, code oral hygiene based on the type and amount of assistance needed from a helper to clean the patient's gums.

Consider these scenarios

Scenario 1: A patient is admitted to home health following hospitalization for CVA. The patient has right extremity weakness, which is the patient's dominant side. On admission, the patient is unable to access the grooming supplies kept in a bathroom cabinet below the sink. The caregiver states that the patient can wash face/hands if set up and brush his teeth independently after the caregiver puts the toothpaste on the brush and turns the water on.

How would you score this patient for GG0130B? The correct scoring would be "05 — Setup or clean-up assistance" since this item is focusing on oral hygiene and the caregiver states that she sets up the toothbrush and then the patient can do the rest.

Scenario 2: During the SOC/ROC assessment, the patient states they prefer to participate in oral hygiene twice daily. On assessment, the clinician identifies that the patient's caregiver completes more than half of this activity. The patient has severe arthritis, Parkinson's disease, diabetic neuropathy and renal failure. These conditions result in multiple impairments, including limited endurance, weak hand grasp, slow movements and tremors.

How would you score this patient for GG0130B? The correct scoring would be "02 — Substantial/maximal assistance" since the performance assessment revealed the patient's caregiver completed more than half of the activity.

Editor's note: Scenario one was provided by Diane Link, owner of Link Healthcare Advantage, based in Littlestown, Pa. Scenario two comes from CMS' *OASIS-E2 Guidance Manual*.