VEC Analysis and Scoring

Item Coding:

- The 16 forced-choice items* about aspects of care (e.g., communication, support) are scored as either "**1**" or "**0**"

    - "**1**" indicates that the family member reported the highest quality care (e.g., staff "always" took time to listen; staff "always" provided desired amount of spiritual support)
    - "**0**" reflects all other possible responses (e.g., staff "usually" or "sometimes' took time to listen; staff "never" provided emotional support)

- The BFS-PM is also scored as either "**1**" or "**0**"

    - "**1**" indicates that the family member rated the overall care as "excellent"
    - "**0**" reflects all other ratings of care (very good, good, fair, poor)

- The two open-ended questions are disseminated to VISNs in qualitative data reports

- Items are coded as *missing* if respondents cannot answer and as *not applicable* if they were not relevant to the patient

    *The only exception is the "pain management" item. A "**1**" on this item indicates that the family member perceived that the Veteran received the worst possible pain management. "**0**" indicates all other possible options.

Survey scoring:

- The score for each item is expressed as a fraction corresponding to the number of families who reported that the Veteran received optimal care (numerator), divided by the number of valid, non-missing responses for that item (denominator)

- This scoring system produces a facility-or-VISN-level score that reflects the proportion of Veterans whose families said they received "Excellent" care in the last month of life and in specific areas corresponding to BFS items (e.g., pain management, communication, personal care).