

# Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey

**WHAT IS THE CAHPS SURVEY?** — An annual survey of patients that assesses their experience with providers and their health plan. The survey also measures patient satisfaction of health outcomes and allows patients to rate their provider.

**PROVIDER IMPACT ON CAHPS** — Providers play the most critical role in patient experience and health outcomes. By familiarizing yourself with the way patients are evaluating your care, you can better understand how to ensure your patients have a positive experience. Key components of the survey and tips for success are outlined below.

## CAHPS MEASURES: Getting Appointments and Care Quickly

The *Getting Appointments and Care Quickly* measure assesses how often members got the care they needed right way. It also evaluates if patients wait time exceeded 15 minutes and how often they were able to get routine care as soon as it was needed.

**Example question:** How often did you get an appointment for routine care as soon as you needed it?

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Patients are more tolerant of appointment delays if they know the reasons for the delay. Offer reasonable expectations of when the patient will be seen and explain the cause for schedule delays if needed.
- Consider implementing advanced access scheduling (same-day scheduling) or consider:
  - Leaving a few appointment slots open each day for urgent visits, including post-inpatient discharge visits.
  - Offering appointments with a nurse practitioner or physician assistant to patients who want to be seen on short notice.
  - Offering online appointments, making it convenient for patients to connect with the practice

## CAHPS MEASURE: Overall rating of Health Care Quality

*Overall Rating of Health Care Quality* allows patients to rate their healthcare.

**Example question:** Using any number between zero and 10, where zero is the worst health care possible and 10 is the best health care possible, what number would you use to rate all your health care in the last six months?

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Survey your patients, asking how you can improve their health care experience.
- Create a patient council for regular feedback

## CAHPS MEASURE: Care Coordination

*Care Coordination* measures how well providers support patients in navigating the health care system.

### Example questions:

- When your personal doctor ordered a blood test, X-ray, or other test for you, how often did someone from your personal doctor's office follow up to give you those results?
- How often did you and your personal doctor talk about all the prescription medicines you were taking? Did you get the help you needed from your personal doctor's office to manage your care among these different providers and services?
- How often did your personal doctor seem informed and up to date about the care you got from specialists?

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Before walking in the exam room, review the reason for the visit and determine if you need to follow up on any health issues or concerns from previous visits.
- Implement a system in your office to ensure timely notifications of test results, ask patients how they would prefer to receive test results and communicate clearly with patients on when they'll receive test results.
- Use or implement a patient portal to share test results and consider automatically releasing the results once they are reviewed by the provider.
- Ask your patients if they saw another provider since their last visit. If you know patients receive specialty care, discuss their visit and treatment plan, including new prescriptions.
- Complete a medication reconciliation at every visit.

## CAHPS MEASURE: Getting Needed Care

The *Getting Needed Care* measure assesses the ease of patients receiving the care they need, including how often they were able to get a specialist appointment as soon as needed.

### Example question:

- How often did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed?
- How often was it easy to get the care, tests, or treatment you needed?

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Support coordination of appointments with specialists, include realistic expectations around how long it could take to schedule with a specialist.

Help the patient understand why you are recommending certain types of care or treatments. Patients should know what role they play in securing care (e.g., scheduling with specialists, timely appointments).

## CAHPS MEASURE: Annual Flu Vaccine

The *Annual Flu Vaccine* measures assess if patients have had a flu shot in the season.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Administer flu shot as soon as it's available each fall.
- Eliminate barriers to accessing flu shots and offer multiple options for patients to get their shot (walk-in appointments, flu shot clinics, flu shots at every appointment type if the patient's eligible).
- Promote flu shots through website, patient portal, and phone greeting.



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