

# CAHPS®

Gathering patient feedback.  
Measuring health care experiences.  
Improving outcomes.



## WHAT

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires all Medicare Advantage (MA) plans to participate in the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey. CMS administers the survey along with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

## WHO

A random sample of our Commercial, Medicare and Medicaid health plan members get the survey. Their participation is voluntary.

## WHEN

March – June each year

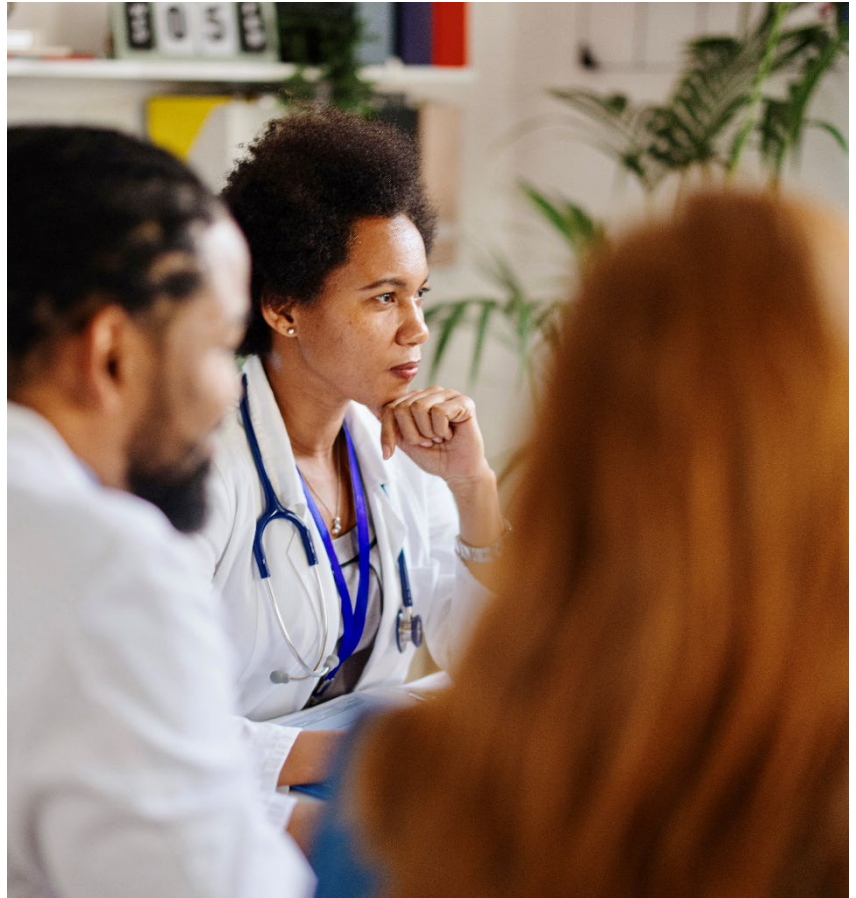
## WHY

Survey results help us – health plans and providers alike – to better understand patients' overall health care experiences. We can use this information to make changes and implement programs to enhance these experiences in the future.

Through continued collaboration and partnership, we can use these surveys to improve the healthcare experience for your patients, our members. Additional resources regarding the CAHPS survey and tips and best practices can be found at [\*\*CAHPS and HOS Surveys.\*\*](#)



As a provider, **you're the most critical component** of your patients' health care experience. **We're here to partner with you**, offering resources to help you improve this experience.



## CAHPS survey focus areas

2023 weighted value	Measure	Questions assess the following related to patient experience with their provider
1	Annual Flu Vaccine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whether the patient has had their flu shot</li></ul>
4	Getting Needed Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The ease with which patients received the care, tests or treatment they needed</li><li>• How often they were able to get a specialist appointment scheduled when needed</li></ul>
4	Getting Appointments and Care Quickly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How often patients received care as soon as needed when sick or injured</li><li>• How often patients' appointment wait-times exceeded 15 minutes</li></ul>
4	Care Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How well providers manage patient care, including access to medical records, timely follow-up on test results and discussion/education on prescription medications</li></ul>
4	Rating of Health Care Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall health care the patient received from their primary care provider (PCP) and specialists</li></ul>

# Tips to improve patients' experience (and your CAHPS ratings)

## Provider access: Getting needed appointments and care quickly

CAHPS survey question	Benefits	Tips
How easy was it to get an appointment with your personal doctor as soon as you needed for illness or injury?	Provides better access to care when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider offering walk-in, evening, weekend and/or virtual appointments for care needed right away</li> <li>Allow patients to schedule appointments online</li> <li>Schedule patients' next follow-up and/or annual physical appointments at the end of their visits</li> </ul>
<p>I saw the provider I came to see within 15 minutes of my appointment time.</p> <p><i>*Wait-time includes time spent in the waiting room and exam room.</i></p>	Helps your patients feel their time and satisfaction is valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have staff engage your patient in visit-related activities, such as weight, blood pressure and health issues</li> <li>Offer a brief explanation for any provider delays and provide updates</li> </ul>
Did you receive follow-up from your doctor's office after any blood test, x-ray or other test that you may have completed?	Provides your patients with timely and reliable communication of test results and appropriate follow-up care as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Let your patient know in advance if any tests are planned for their upcoming appointment (fasting vs non-fasting, etc.)</li> <li>Be clear about what tests are being ordered, what the tests are for, when and how the patient can expect results (patient portal, phone call, mailed letter, etc.) as well as if a follow-up appointment will be required</li> <li>Summarize and review any tests ordered with the patient. Give them a copy of any information they need to take home and post it to the patient portal if possible, so they have it in electronic form</li> </ul>
Did you have any difficulty getting an appointment to see a specialist?	Builds trust and shows patients you're their advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggest more than one specialist</li> <li>Use <a href="#">Find a Doctor</a> to see preferred providers for your patient's plan</li> <li>Call the specialist to coordinate the soonest appointment date or schedule the appointment online for the patient</li> <li>Discuss and plan for possible appointment delays</li> </ul>

Care coordination

CAHPS survey question	Benefits	Tips
Did your doctor seem informed and up to date about the care you received from a specialist?	Conveys your engagement, creating confidence and compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask patients to list their current specialist on registration forms or in their patient portal prior to their appointment</li><li>• Ask questions about past care, including results and treatment</li><li>• Summarize and review any specialist information with your patient. Give them a copy of any information they need to take home and post it to their patient portal, if possible, so they have it in electronic form.</li></ul>
Did your doctor or other health care provider review all your prescription medications with you?	Helps your patients feel involved and prepared for new and existing medication regimes and better adhere to the medication plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask patients to list their current medications on registration forms or in their patient portal prior to their appointment</li><li>• Review each patient’s current medication list, including their concerns, side effects, barriers, etc. Explain what the medications are for. Summarize and review prescription medications. Give them a copy of any information they need to take home and post it to their patient portal, if possible, so they have it in electronic form.</li></ul>





## Actively listening: How well doctors communicate

CAHPS survey question	Benefits	Tips
My personal doctor showed respect for what I had to say.	Ensures your patients feel respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen patiently and express understanding</li> <li>• At the end of the visit, ask if all questions and concerns have been addressed</li> </ul>
My personal doctor listened carefully to me.	Shows patients their concerns are heard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain eye contact while your patients share their concerns</li> <li>• Ask questions to ensure understanding and show concern</li> </ul>
My doctor explained things in a way that was easy to understand.	Improves communication between you and your patient, resulting in them being informed and able to make better decisions, take their treatment more seriously and trust you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain things in a way that is easy for your patients to understand</li> <li>• Use natural language, avoiding medical terminology or concepts that could be commonly confused</li> <li>• Provide educational material specifically catered towards patients</li> </ul>
In the last six months, did a doctor or other health provider talk to you about your prescription medicine?	Helps your patients feel involved and prepared for new and existing medication regimes so they're adherent to the medication plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current medication list, including your patient's concerns, side effects, barriers, etc.</li> <li>• Ensure your patient understands the schedule and encourage adherence</li> </ul>
In the last six months, how often were you advised to quit smoking or using tobacco by a doctor or other health provider?	Promotes better health outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide education on the risks of tobacco use and resources to assist in quitting</li> </ul>



### Find more resources online

Visit our **Quality Improvement** webpage for additional resources to support your efforts to improve your patients' health care experiences, including our HEDIS Provider Reference Guide.

**Log into prism** and visit the Provider Incentives Program section to learn more.