



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

Provider Tip Sheet



# What is CAHPS?

Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) is a survey designed to capture member experiences with their doctors and health plan. It is conducted by a certified and approved vendor on behalf of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The survey is sent to a random sample of Medicare, commercial, and exchange members in the spring, and Medicaid members in the fall, of each year.

# Why is CAHPS Important?

Responses garnered from the survey help us better understand our members' experiences and level of satisfaction with the care they receive from our provider partners. The data collected from CAHPS helps us track and trend results year-to-year, giving us the opportunity to proactively plan and target key areas for improvement. CAHPS also provides a standardized comparison between health plans so that consumers may make informed decisions when selecting providers and health plans. We look forward to collaborating with all our network providers to improve patient experience.

# 5 Ways to Improve Member Satisfaction Scores

You know your patients best and what works for your office. We compiled some evidence-based tips to help you increase your patients' (our members) satisfaction.

- **Two-way communication** — Make sure your patients feel heard. Some ways to do that are to: engage in shared decision making, ask for feedback, practice cultural sensitivity, communicate in plain language, ask about social needs, discuss care and treatment received by other doctors, and use a multi-channel approach to communicate (e.g., text, email, interactive voice response (IVR), phone, in person).
- **Equip patients with tools** — Confirm your understanding of a patient's needs and link them to appropriate resources. You can do this by providing materials about health conditions (handouts, posters, information sheets), letting patients view their health records, implementing reminder systems, and empowering patients with other tools, including those from our health plan.
- **Assess the need for increased appointment availability** — Some ways to enhance availability include offering same-day appointments, accommodating patients on evenings and weekends, offering a nurse line for after hours, using virtual visits (if appropriate), partnering with other providers for specialty referrals, and offering online scheduling.
- **Consider timeliness** — A few ideas to consider around timeliness are to limit telephone hold times, keep patients informed if you are running behind schedule, limit wait time to under 15 minutes, and try to schedule well visits/routine physicals within four weeks and non-urgent sick visits within 48 to 72 hours of request.
- **Create a welcoming environment** — Set the tone for a good visit by ensuring cleanliness around the office and waiting areas, communicating service standards to staff, and providing empathy and a personalized experience. You may also consider offering magazines, television, water, or other items in the waiting area to create a pleasant experience.



# CAHPS Domains

## Questions and Tips for Improvement

DOMAIN	QUESTIONS	TIPS FOR IMPROVEMENT	RESOURCES
Annual Flu Vaccine	Have you had a flu shot (in the past year)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Recommend a flu vaccine to all eligible patients and provide it during the office visit.</li> <li>✓ Use local and national public health resources, posters, etc. in the office to educate patients.</li> <li>✓ Have flu clinics where patients can get the vaccine without an office visit.</li> <li>✓ Promote flu vaccines through website, patient portal, and phone greeting.</li> <li>✓ Remind members they can get flu shots at any pharmacy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CDC:</b> <a href="#">Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Resources for Health Professionals   CDC</a></p> <p><b>NYC Health:</b> <a href="#">Seasonal Flu - NYC Health</a></p> <p><b>Connecticut State DPH:</b> <a href="#">Seasonal Influenza (ct.gov)</a></p>
Getting Needed Care	<p><b>In the last 6 months how often:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed?</li> <li>• Was it easy to get the care, tests, or treatment you needed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Build a relationship with a select network of specialists.</li> <li>✓ Help the patient understand why you are recommending certain types of care, tests, or treatments, especially if the patient requested or asked about other types.</li> <li>✓ Help patients make specialist appointments before they leave the office.</li> <li>✓ Ask patients if they had delays in receiving services.</li> </ul>	<p>If your patients need help locating a specialist within network, contact customer service:</p> <p><b>866-447-9717</b> (EmblemHealth)  <b>860-674-5850</b> (ConnectiCare)</p> <p>Or go to provider portal:</p> <p><a href="#">Provider Portal   EmblemHealth</a>  <a href="#">Provider Portal   ConnectiCare</a></p>
Getting Appointments and Care Quickly	<p><b>In the last 6 months how often did you:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get care as soon as you needed (when you needed care right away)?</li> <li>• Get an appointment for a check-up or routine care as soon as you needed?</li> <li>• See the person you came to see within 15 minutes of your appointment time?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ If a patient arrives early, greet them and set the expectation that they may not be able to be seen prior to their scheduled appointment time.</li> <li>✓ If behind schedule, update patients explaining delay causes and offer an expectation of when they will be seen (or offer to reschedule).</li> <li>✓ Encourage patients to make routine appointments for checkups or follow-up visits as soon as they can.</li> <li>✓ Set aside time slots each day for urgent visits and same-day appointments.</li> <li>✓ Consider extending office hours to accommodate evening and weekends.</li> <li>✓ Team up with a nurse hotline for after hours.</li> <li>✓ Educate patients on how to get care after hours.</li> <li>✓ Work collaboratively with your team to cover short notice requests. Offer telehealth appointments/ virtual visits.</li> <li>✓ Partner with specialists to create a cohesive system of care, reducing delays.</li> <li>✓ Implement a triage system to assure critical patients are seen right away.</li> <li>✓ Assess your access and availability standards by conducting an evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">EmblemHealth Appointment Availability Standards.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="#">ConnectiCare Access, Availability &amp; After-Hours Coverage Standards</a></p> <p>Contact customer service to explore options to help members seek more immediate care:</p> <p>866-447-9717 (EmblemHealth)  860-674-5850 (ConnectiCare)</p>

DOMAIN	QUESTIONS	TIPS FOR IMPROVEMENT	RESOURCES
Care Coordination	<p><b>In the last 6 months how often:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you and your personal doctor talk about all the prescription medicines you were taking?</li> <li>• Did your personal doctor seem informed and up to date about the care you got from specialists?</li> </ul> <p><b>In the last 6 months when your personal doctor ordered a blood test, x-ray, or other test for you how often:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did someone from your personal doctor’s office follow-up to give you those results?</li> <li>• Did you get those results as soon as you needed them?</li> </ul> <p><b>In the last 6 months:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you visited your personal doctor for a scheduled appointment, how often did he or she have your medical records or other information about your care?</li> <li>• Did you get the help you needed from your personal doctor’s office to manage your care among these different providers and services?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Have relevant information and medical history, including appointments with specialists, at hand during visits.</li> <li>✓ Implement a process for patients to view test results easily and securely. Provide information about the various means of getting results and confirm patient preferences for receiving their results.</li> <li>✓ Call patients about test results promptly and inform them if no calls are made or normal results.</li> <li>✓ Review patient medicines during each visit.</li> <li>✓ Follow-up promptly with patients after inpatients stays. Schedule follow-up visits as applicable.</li> <li>✓ Provide additional support to patients with multiple needs to coordinate and monitor delivery of health services.</li> <li>✓ If a patient needs specialty care, explain why the treatment is necessary for their care plan.</li> <li>✓ Help schedule the appointment for their referral and set expectations for the timeframe to obtain an appointment.</li> <li>✓ Coordinate care with specialists by transferring records and assuring lab results and other reports will be shared.</li> <li>✓ Set expectations regarding appropriate timeframes for communication of results (e.g., 5 days for normal results, 24 hours for urgent results).</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Connect with Care Management   EmblemHealth</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving the Patient Experience   ConnectiCare</a></p>
Getting Needed Prescription Drugs	<p><b>In the last 6 months how often was it easy to use your prescription drug plan to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get the medicines your doctor prescribed?</li> <li>• Fill a prescription at your local pharmacy?</li> <li>• Fill a prescription by mail?</li> </ul> <p>Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst prescription drug plan possible and 10 is the best prescription drug plan possible, what number would you use to rate your prescription drug plan?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider prescribing formulary medicines and generics whenever possible.</li> <li>✓ Suggest mail order for convenience.</li> <li>✓ Consider prescribing 90-day supplies.</li> <li>✓ Ensure patients have enough refills and that prescriptions have not expired. Encourage patients to enroll in automatic refills.</li> <li>✓ Reinforce the importance of medicine adherence and encourage patients to report side effects.</li> <li>✓ Attempt to get authorizations completed as soon as possible while setting patient expectations about resolution.</li> <li>✓ Utilize your EMR’s Real Time Pharmacy Benefit or Price a Drug tool to identify out-of-pocket costs.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Pharmacy   EmblemHealth</a></p> <p><a href="#">Pharmacy   ConnectiCare</a></p> <p>Members may view their pharmacy resources at:</p> <p><a href="#">Find a Pharmacy, Check Drugs Covered and More   EmblemHealth</a> (EmblemHealth)</p> <p><a href="#">Prescription Drug Coverage Pharmacy Benefits   ConnectiCare</a> (ConnectiCare)</p>



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