

Improving Member Satisfaction

Our network providers, their physical offices, staff, and office policies play a fundamental role in affecting patient perceptions surrounding their health care experiences. Every spring, the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey is sent to a random sample of Medicare, commercial, and Health Insurance Marketplace® (exchange) members to capture those patient experiences. Medicaid members receive the survey in the fall.

What is the purpose of the CAHPS survey?

The CAHPS survey provides a standardized understanding of patient experience and level of satisfaction with their personal providers and our health plan. There are some simple and effective ways that providers can positively influence their patients' impressions regarding their health care encounters.

The tips and techniques below may help you enhance your patients' health care experience.

Easy Ways to Provide a Positive Patient Experience Year-Round

Improvement Tips:



Patient Needs Care

- Limit telephone wait times.
- Implement online appointment scheduling.
- Offer same-day, weekend, and evening appointments.
- Offer appointments with nurse practitioners (NPs) or physician assistants (PAs) to patients who cannot be seen quickly by their doctor.
- Implement a nurse line to help answer patients' immediate questions and concerns.
- Offer telehealth visits.
- Target physicals within four weeks and sick visits within 48-72 hours of request.



Patient Arrives to Appointment

- Ensure a clean waiting area.
- Employ friendly and empathetic office staff.
- Offer a welcoming environment (e.g., television, water in waiting area, comfortable seating).
- Limit wait times to under 15 minutes. Acknowledge and explain longer wait times.
- If clinicians are running late, keep patients informed.
- Develop service standards for front desk staff.



Patient is Seen by Provider (Your Biggest Influence)

- Upon entering the room, introduce yourself to make an immediate connection.
- Listen carefully to your patient. Make eye contact.
- Be as respectful as possible about patients' thoughts and beliefs.
- Explains things in plain language. Avoid medical jargon. Consider asking patient to repeat back what they heard in their own words to ensure understanding.
- Discuss the care patients received at the emergency room and from other providers. Make sure they understand the information they may have received at those visits.
- Discuss test results and specialist reports. Inform patients of realistic test/report result timeframes and how the results will be communicated to them.
- Review medicines from all providers during office visits.
- Encourage them to get the flu shot, if indicated.
- Screen for social determinants of health (SDOH) (e.g., food, transportation, economic stability).



After Visit

- Help patients schedule follow-up and specialist appointments.
- Continue communication through various channels (text, email, interactive voice response (IVR)).
- Provide collateral materials about health conditions that reinforce topics discussed with provider.
- Educate patients on how to view their health records.
- Implement reminder and follow-up systems for test/report results.
- Help patients schedule appointments with specialists. Transfer records to specialist.
- Inform patients of realistic appointment wait times for seeing a specialist.

