

Help Improve Patient Care and Quality of Life



Use the survey questions and tips to guide your patient engagement approach.

Patients' interactions with providers directly impact their health care experience and perception of quality care. Let's partner to improve the care your Health Net* Cal MediConnect (Medicare-Medicaid Plan) patient receives and raise scores on the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey measures.¹

This tip sheet outlines questions tied to CAHPS survey measures with suggestions to improve your patient's experience.

What is the CAHPS Survey?

- ✓ Annual health care experience survey, mandated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).
- ✓ Administered by mail and phone from March through June.
- ✓ Impacts CMS Star Ratings.





CAHPS Measures


Getting needed care	
	<p>Questions</p> <p>In the last 6 months...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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?
RECOMMENDATIONS	HELPFUL TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review authorization and referral processes to remove patient barriers to access care. • Follow up with patients to see that referrals to specialists are completed and assist with any issues. • Include the patient in decision-making about their care regarding tests, referrals, and treatment options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist patients to make specialist appointments before they leave the office. • Ask patients if they have had any delays in receiving services.

Getting appointments and care quickly	
	<p>Questions</p> <p>In the last 6 months...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you needed care right away, how often did you get care as soon as you needed? • How often did you get an appointment for a check-up or routine care as soon as you needed? • How often did you see the person you came to see within 15 minutes of your appointment time?
RECOMMENDATIONS	HELPFUL TIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside time slots each day to accommodate urgent visits. • Provide patients with addresses and phone numbers of urgent care options. • Educate patients regarding after-hours call process and telephone number. • Encourage patients to schedule routine visits in advance or before they leave office. • Make sure patients are supported by staff and excessive wait times are explained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain any delays for scheduling appointments or appointment times. • Offer appointment with a nurse or physician assistant for urgent issues. • Offer to call the patient if earlier appointment slots open up.

(continued)

	<h2>Care coordination</h2>
	<p>Questions</p> <p>In the last 6 months...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? • 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? • When your personal doctor ordered a blood test, X-ray or other test for you, how often did you get those results as soon as you needed them? • 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?
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have relevant information and medical history, including appointments with specialists, at hand during patient office visits. • Implement process for patients to easily and securely access test results. • Call patients about test results promptly and inform them if no calls are made for normal results. • Review patient medications during each visit. • Follow-up promptly with patients after inpatient stays. • Provide additional support to patients with multiple needs to coordinate and monitor delivery of health services. 	

	<h2>Annual flu vaccine</h2>
	<p>Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you had a flu shot since July 1 of the prior year?
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	<p>HELPFUL TIPS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend flu shot to all eligible patients and provide during appointment. • Ask why if patient refuses vaccine so you can address misconceptions. • Use local and national public health resources, posters, etc. in office to educate patients. • Order vaccine as soon as available and inform patients. • Have flu clinics where patients can get the vaccine without an office visit. 	<p>Visit www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/prepare-practice-tools.htm for techniques on how to talk to your patients about the flu vaccine and make a strong recommendation.</p>

	<h2>Doctors Who Communicate Well²</h2>
	<p>Questions</p> <p>In the last 6 months...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often did your personal doctor explain things in a way that was easy to understand? • How often did your personal doctor listen carefully to you? • How often did your personal doctor show respect for what you had to say? • How often did your personal doctor spend enough time with you?
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	<p>HELPFUL TIPS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure provider and office staff are trained to handle sensitive situations. • Treat patients with empathy and respect. Make eye contact, listen carefully and express understanding. • Use visual aids and plain language guidelines to provide patients with information they can understand and use to make informed decisions for their health. • Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and use interpreter services if needed. • Involve patients in decision making and share goals for treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting down during an appointment gives improved patient perception of care or interaction and a perception that the duration of the visit is longer. • Visit www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/developmaterials/understandaudience/index.html for cultural competency and health literacy tools and resources that promote effective communication.

Questions?

Contact Quality Improvement for more tools at CQI_Medicare@healthnet.com.



¹CAHPS is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

²This CAHPS composite measure is not a Star measure but is a top driver of members' perception of overall ease of getting care.

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