

# Improve Patient Experience and Quality of Care



## Provider CAHPS® Tip Sheet

Ambetter of North Carolina Inc. is dedicated to partnering with our providers to help maximize opportunities to improve patient care and patient satisfaction, for the benefit of you and the patient. Patients who have a positive experience are more likely to stay engaged with their healthcare. Use these tips to help guide your patient engagement approach and improve Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) scores.

Patient Experience Matters	
<b>Strengthen patient loyalty</b>	A high-quality relationship between patient and provider can greatly affect patient loyalty to your practice.
<b>Improve patient engagement and clinical outcomes</b>	<p>Positive patient experience led to higher adherence to medical advice and treatment plans.</p> <p>Engaged patients are more likely to take charge of their care plan and stay up-to-date with their care.</p>
<b>Uphold reputation</b>	<p>Satisfied and content patients are likely to share their experience with others.</p> <p>Positive reviews can also lead to new patient referrals to your practice.</p>

### What is a CAHPS® survey?

The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey is an annual health care experience survey that:

- Asks patients to evaluate their experience with their providers and health plan (i.e. access to care, provider communication and customer service)
- Includes select Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) quality measures

The survey is administered each spring via mail and phone and the survey results help identify opportunities for patient experience improvement.

### Provider-Driven CAHPS® Measures

CAHPS® Measure	Survey Questions	Tips and Best Practices
<b>Provider Communication</b>	<p>How often did your personal doctor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain things in a way that was easy to understand?</li> <li>• Listen carefully to you?</li> <li>• Show respect for what you had to say?</li> <li>• Spend enough time with you?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all staff are trained to handle sensitive situations.</li> <li>• Treat patients with empathy and respect. Make eye contact, listen carefully and express understanding.</li> <li>• Visit <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/culture.html">www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/culture.html</a> for cultural competency and health literacy tools and resources that promote effective communication.</li> <li>• No-cost interpreter services can be requested for your patients. Contact Member Services at the phone number on the member's identification (ID) card.</li> </ul>

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CAHPS® Measure	Survey Questions	Tips and Best Practices
<b>Getting needed care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How often did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed?</li> <li>How often was it easy to get the care, test or treatment you needed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set expectations with patients by informing them of any timeframes and/or turnaround times for scheduling routine appointments, prior authorizations and/or referral approvals.</li> <li>Review authorization and referral processes to remove patient barriers to access care.</li> <li>Continue offering telehealth appointments as a convenient option for patients.</li> </ul>
<b>Getting care quickly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you needed care right away, how often did you get care for illness/injury as soon as you needed?</li> <li>How often did you get care as soon as needed when sick or injured and got non-urgent appointments as soon as needed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set aside time slots each day to accommodate urgent visits.</li> <li>Offer early morning and/or evening appointment slots one day each week.</li> <li>Offer appointments with a nurse or physician assistant for urgent issues.</li> <li>If possible, offer a telehealth appointment.</li> <li>Provide patients with the addresses and phone numbers of local urgent care centers that accepts their health insurance plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Care coordination</b>	<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>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?</li> <li>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?</li> <li>How often did you and your personal doctor's office talk about all the prescription medicines you were taking?</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> <li>How often did your personal doctor seem informed and up-to-date about the care you got from specialists?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have medication list and medical history, including appointments with specialists, at hand to review during patient office visits.</li> <li>Ask patients if they have seen any other medical providers since their last visit with you. Discuss any visits and/or treatment plans with them.</li> <li>Set expectations by informing patients of when they can expect to get their test results back.</li> <li>Implement processes for patients to easily and securely access test results.</li> <li>Ask patients how they prefer to receive test results: phone call, email, etc.</li> <li>Share test results/ medical history with all of the patient's applicable providers.</li> </ul>

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CAHPS® Measure	Survey Questions	Tips and Best Practices
<b>Rating of Personal Doctor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst possible and 10 is the best possible, what number would you use to rate your doctor?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any interaction with a provider and/or provider office staff can impact patient experience and perceived access to care.</li> <li>Educate all providers and office on the importance of patient experience and its impact on CAHPS scores.</li> <li>Provide patient-centered care and service.</li> <li>Encourage patients to make their routine appointments for checkups or follow-up visits as soon as they can.</li> <li>Ensure that open care gaps are addressed during each patient visit.</li> <li>Make use of the provider portal when requesting prior authorizations.</li> </ul>
<b>Rating of Specialist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst possible and 10 is the best possible, what number would you use to rate your specialist?</li> </ul>	
<b>Rating of Healthcare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst possible and 10 is the best possible, what number would you use to rate your healthcare?</li> </ul>	

## For Questions

If you have additional questions, please contact Provider Services by phone at **1-833-863-1310** or your Provider Engagement Administrator directly.

## Sources

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\) The CAHPS Ambulatory Care Improvement Guide: Practical Strategies for Improving Patient Experience | Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(ahrq.gov\)](#)

[HEDIS measures performance in health care where improvements can make a meaningful difference in people's lives \(ncqa.org\)](#)