

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

Member Perception Star Measures

The annual CAHPS survey developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) asks Medicare Advantage (MA) patients to rate their experience with their providers and health plan. Survey questions focus on how patients experienced or perceived key aspects of their care, not how satisfied they were with their care.

CMS conducts the CAHPS survey every March - June and measures the consistency of MA patient experiences over the preceding 6 months. CMS draws the survey sample from all individuals who have been enrolled in the MA plan for at least 6 months.

## WHY IS THE CAHPS SURVEY IMPORTANT?

Research shows that a positive healthcare experience for patients is associated with positive clinical outcomes and better business outcomes, including lower medical malpractice risk and less employee turnover.<sup>1</sup>

## CAHPS SURVEY QUESTIONS AND PROVIDER IMPACT

Providers affect how patients assess their healthcare experience in response to the MA CAHPS survey questions. The table below lists three key CAHPS measures that the Premera Patient Experience (PX) team is focused on improving, along with tips to ensure patients have a positive experience.

Measure	Sample survey questions to patient	Tips
<b>Getting Care Quickly (GCQ)</b>	<p>In the last 6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you needed care right away, <b>how often</b> did you get care as soon as you needed?</li> <li><b>How often</b> did you get an appointment for routine care as soon as you needed?</li> <li><b>How often</b> did you see the person you came to see within 15 minutes of your appointment time? <i>(no longer included in Star Rating)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider implementing Open Access Model</li> <li>If using more traditional scheduling methods, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaving a few appointment slots open each day for urgent visits, including post-inpatient discharge visits.</li> <li>Offering appointments with a nurse practitioner or physician’s assistant to patients who want to be seen on short notice.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Measure	Sample survey questions to patient	Tips
Getting Needed Care (GNC)	<p>In the last 6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How often</b> did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed?</li> <li>• <b>How often</b> was it easy to get the care, tests, or treatment you needed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set realistic expectations about the time it could take from when the patient schedules an appointment with the specialist to when the appointment takes place.</li> <li>• If applicable, please schedule a patient's specialist appointment before they leave.</li> <li>• Help the patient understand why you are recommending certain types of care, tests, or treatments, especially if the patient asked about other types.</li> <li>• Review next steps with the patient (e.g., scheduling with specialists, timely appointments).</li> </ul>
Coordination of Care (COC)	<p>In the last 6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you visited your doctor for a scheduled appointment, <b>how often</b> 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, <b>how often</b> did someone from your personal doctor's office follow up to give you those results? <b>How often</b> did you get those results as soon as you needed them?</li> <li>• <b>How often</b> did you and your doctor talk about all the prescription medicines you were taking?</li> <li>• Did you get the help you needed from your doctor's office to manage your care?</li> <li>• <b>How often</b> did your doctor seem informed and up to date about the care you got from specialists?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before walking in the exam room, review the reason for the visit and determine if you need to follow up on any health issues or concerns from previous visits.</li> <li>• Implement a system in your office to ensure timely notifications of test results, ask patients how they would prefer to receive test results, and communicate clearly with patients on when they'll receive test results.</li> <li>• Implement a patient portal for test results and consider automatically releasing the results once they're final.</li> <li>• Ask your patients if they saw another provider since you last saw them. If you know patients received specialty care, discuss their visit and the treatment plan they received, including any newly prescribed medication.</li> <li>• Do medication reconciliation at every visit.</li> </ul>