



## CAHPS & the Patient Experience

### Did You Know?

Your patients answer questions on the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & System (CAHPS) surveys about care coordination and their involvement in health care decisions.

### Why Is It Important?

CAHPS survey results reflect your patients' perception of both their office visit experience and interactions with the health plan. Survey responses contribute to performance results on Medicare STAR and NCQA CAHPS scores.

### 5 Easy Tips to Improve the Patient Experience

**Tip:** Have a follow-up system in place for labs, X-rays and other tests. It can be something like a phone call or a postcard that the patient receives quickly after the results are in and before their next appointment.

- Patients may be nervous about test results, and letting them know that your office is getting the results to them quickly can alleviate unnecessary concern or prompt the patient to come back in for follow up if needed.

**Tip:** Ask your patients about the care they received outside of your practice since their last visit and discuss any referral responses you have received from specialists.

- Patients need to know that their total health is your top priority. Asking about care received outside of your office gives you a more complete picture of your patients and their needs, and discussing it with them lets your patients know that you are coordinating care with all members of their medical team.

**Tip:** Discuss your knowledge of the patient's ER visit(s).

- Patients feel confident in your care when they know that you pay attention to what goes on outside of your office setting. Discussing ER visits may point to a more serious medical issue or may provide an opportunity for the patient to seek care in your office setting when it's more appropriate.

**Tip:** Check for impact and understanding when discussing a treatment plan.

- Patients come to you for medical advice. When you prescribe a course of action and/or medication, it is important to see if the patient understands what is being recommended and if he or she agrees to carry out the plan.

**Tip:** Talk to your patients about medication initiation, termination and adjustments.

- When patients understand the reasons behind medication and how to take it, they are more likely to be compliant with the medication regimen, and they are more likely to have a conversation about any needed adjustments in dosage.