

CAHPS® Tip Sheet

How Well Doctors Communicate

Measure Description

The How Well Doctors Communicate measure evaluates patients' satisfaction with the quality of communication with their personal doctor in the last six to twelve months.

This is self-reported by patients and collected annually as part of the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers Systems (CAHPS®) Survey.

Survey Questions

- 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?

Ways to Improve Patient Satisfaction

- Use easy to understand language, avoid use of medical terminology.
- Sit down to show you are dedicating and taking time with each patient, even if only for a few minutes.
- Provide training on how to manage sensitive situations to providers and office staff.
- Display cultural awareness and, if necessary, utilize interpretation services.
- Maintain eye contact, listen intently and demonstrate comprehension. Empathize with and respect patients.
- Employ visual aids and plain language standards to provide patients with information they can comprehend and use to make informed decisions for their health.
- Include patients in decision-making and communicate goals for treatment.

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