

The New CAHPS Outpatient Mental Health Survey: Who, Why, and How?

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Who may use the CAHPS Outpatient Mental Health Survey?

- Payers (Private and Public)
- Accountable Care Organizations and health systems
- Outpatient mental health and substance use disorder treatment organizations
- Practices with co-located mental health and primary care services
- Survey allows for monitoring changes in patient's experience of care over time
- Also useful for making comparisons between practices in the same system
- NOT Intended for making comparisons between individual clinicians

Why use the CAHPS Outpatient Mental Health Survey?

- The Institute for Healthcare Improvement suggests improving quality through a focus on:
 - ▶ reducing per capita cost of care for the benefit of communities
 - ▶ improving the health of the population
 - ▶ improving the patient experience of care
- Substantial efforts are focused on improving care through performance measurement of outcomes such as A1c, blood pressure, and self-reported depression
- The CAHPS Survey allows us to supplement our focus on process and outcome measures with a validated patient experience measure

Advice for Practices and Clinicians

- Administrators and medical directors should alert clinicians and patient facing staff **BEFORE** surveys are administered
 - ▶ Many patients are concerned about privacy and may raise questions about why they received the survey
 - ▶ Individuals with mental health concerns often have heightened vigilance regarding issues of privacy and safety

Potential Text for Practices

“Next week our practice will mail patients a survey inquiring about their experience with mental health services. These surveys are intended to improve our ability to address our patient’s mental health concerns.

The surveys are optional, patients are not required to complete them. If a patient raises questions or concerns about the survey, please reassure them that personal health information is kept private. Their individual responses are not connected to their names or any other identifying information.

If patients have additional questions or concerns, please connect them with the practice administrator.”