



## Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems

### Developing a CAHPS® Clinician & Group Survey to Measure the Medical Home

The patient-centered medical home (PCMH) is a model for delivering primary care that is patient-centered, comprehensive, coordinated, accessible, and continuously improved through a systems-based approach to quality and safety. The PCMH applies to care for adults, children, and adolescents. Learn more about PCMH at <http://www.pcmh.ahrq.gov>.

As this model is adopted across the country, many health care organizations are investigating its impact on the effectiveness, efficiency, and patient-centeredness of care. To that end, there is a growing interest in administering a standardized survey that could be used to assess patients' experiences in practices serving as medical homes. This brief discusses the development of the CAHPS Clinician & Group PCMH Survey to meet this need.

The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) surveys are free, non-proprietary instruments designed to support standardized measurement of the experiences of patients with care in a variety of settings. These survey instruments are developed and maintained by a team of prominent research organizations under the auspices of the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Learn more at <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov>.

The CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey, endorsed by the National Quality Forum in July 2007, is comprised of several instruments that enable users to assess and report on the experiences of adults and children in primary and specialty care settings.



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### Development Process for the CAHPS PCMH Survey

The CAHPS Team has been working with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to develop both adult and child versions of the PCMH Survey. This survey will be used to assess performance related to the NCQA standards for the Physician Practice Connections® - Patient-Centered Medical Home™ (PPC-PCMH) program. Many of the current PCMH demonstrations and

implementations use the PPC-PCMH program standards. Information on the PPC-PCMH program is available at <http://www.ncqa.org/tabid/631/Default.aspx>.

As with all other CAHPS surveys, the PCMH Survey is undergoing a rigorous development process that includes:

- **Literature review:** The CAHPS Team conducted a literature review to ensure that the survey captured the best research in this area.
- **Technical Expert Panel input:** The CAHPS Team assembled a panel of PCMH experts representing various stakeholders, including providers, health plans, payers,





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- **Psychometric analysis:** The data collected during field testing will be analyzed to determine the psychometric properties of the survey items. This analysis will inform the final version of the survey instruments.
- **Public release:** A final version of the survey will be released in 2011. It will be available on the CAHPS Web site and as part of the NCQA's updated specifications for the PCMH recognition program.

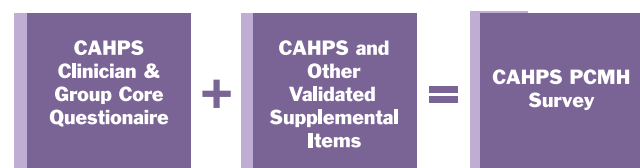
Organizations interested in testing the PCMH Survey may contact the CAHPS User Network at [cahps1@ahrq.gov](mailto:cahps1@ahrq.gov) for more information.

### Key Characteristics of the PCMH Survey

The PCMH Survey builds on the core items in the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey.

Every CAHPS survey is composed of core items and supplemental items. The purpose of the required core items is to allow comparisons across provider entities of interest (e.g., medical groups or physicians). Supplemental items offer users a variety of questions that they can add to the core items in order to address specific topics of interest.

The PCMH Survey begins with the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey core questionnaire then adds supplemental items to address the PCMH domains. The supplemental items derive from both existing CAHPS surveys as well as other surveys that were identified through the literature review or by the Technical Expert Panel and other stakeholders. Supplemental items drawn from other surveys are often amended to ensure that they are consistent with the design principles for CAHPS surveys.



professional organizations, and regional collaboratives, to provide input on the development and use of a CAHPS survey to assess patient experience with the medical home. Panel members were interviewed in late 2009 and early 2010; an in-person meeting was held in April 2010.

- **Stakeholder input:** Stakeholder input is critical to the CAHPS survey development process. NCQA has gathered extensive feedback from stakeholders on the development of a patient experience survey that will be part of the PPC-PCMH program standards.
- **Focus group input:** Adult patients and parents of children receiving care in medical home practices provided input in summer 2010 to:
  - ◆ Confirm the domains of interest identified by the Technical Expert Panel and other stakeholders;
  - ◆ Identify additional domains, if any; and
  - ◆ Convey how they describe the care they receive in their medical homes.
- **Cognitive testing (English and Spanish):** In August 2010, the CAHPS Team conducted cognitive testing of draft PCMH questionnaires for adults and children in both English and Spanish. The draft PCMH questionnaires will be revised as needed based on the findings from the cognitive interviews. This testing version will be available in Fall 2010.
- **Field testing:** NCQA will conduct a field test of the instrument in late 2010. The CAHPS Team is planning to do further field testing to inform implementation issues.

### The PCMH Survey asks about experiences with providers and staff in the office.

Unlike other Clinician & Group Surveys that ask about “this doctor,” the CAHPS PCMH Survey asks patients about their experiences interacting with three different accountable entities in the practice:

- “This provider” (an individual clinician defined in the first question)
- “Care team” (all the people who work with your provider to give you health care)
- Clerks and receptionists at this provider’s office

### The PCMH Survey asks about experiences over the last 12 months.

The CAHPS PCMH Survey asks about care received in the last 12 months rather than just a single visit. The majority of stakeholders providing input into the development process felt that a 12-month timeframe was more appropriate than focusing on a particular visit because the medical home concepts do not necessarily occur at specific visits but represent care that is received over time and between visits.

### The PCMH Survey covers many aspects of patient-centered care.

The PCMH Survey focuses on the following domains:

- Access
- Communication
- Coordination
  - ◆ Care from other providers
  - ◆ Care from others on the care team
- Comprehensiveness
- Shared decisionmaking
- Whole person orientation
- Self-management support
  - ◆ Chronic disease management
  - ◆ Health promotion

The final number of survey items needed to cover all of these topics has not yet been determined. However, the length of the survey is not expected to pose a problem. The CAHPS

Team is aware that providers accustomed to obtaining patient input through just a few questions or a brief comment card are concerned that patients may not complete a survey that seems lengthy. However, research has confirmed that survey length does not negatively affect response rates even for surveys with over 75 questions.

### The PCMH Survey can be administered by mail, telephone, or both.

CAHPS surveys are typically administered through mail, telephone, or a mixed mode of mail with telephone follow-up. These modes are recommended by the CAHPS Team because they have been proven to achieve comparable survey results. The CAHPS Team is currently investigating the feasibility and impact of using the Web to administer the survey.

Some providers currently administer their patient surveys by handing the survey to the patient during an office visit. Survey researchers have found that data obtained through in-office administration is not comparable to that collected by mail and telephone administration.



### Additional CAHPS Survey Resources

Several free resources to support CAHPS surveys are available from the CAHPS User Network, which is sponsored by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

#### CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey and Reporting Kit

The CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey is part of a Survey and Reporting Kit that explains how to prepare and field a CAHPS questionnaire, analyze the results, and produce consumer-friendly reports. Many of the resources in the current Kit can be used for the PCMH Survey. Once the PCMH Survey is finalized, it will also be integrated into the Kit. The Kit includes:

- Final survey instruments
- Data collection protocols and related guidance
- Sample documents to help administer the survey, such as examples of notification and reminder letters
- Analysis programs
- Instructions for using analysis programs
- Reporting measures

The Kit can be downloaded from the CAHPS Web site at <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/cahpskit/CG/CGChooseQX.asp>.

#### CAHPS Database

The CAHPS Database is the national repository for data from the CAHPS Health Plan and Clinician & Group Surveys. The CAHPS Clinician & Group portion of the Comparative Database is currently under development. Comparative data for the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey will be made available as survey sponsors implement the CAHPS Clinician & Group Surveys and submit data to the CAHPS Database. Current plans include integrating the PCMH Survey into the CAHPS Database once the survey is finalized and implemented.

More information on the CAHPS Database can be found at [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/ncbd/ncbd\\_Intro.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/ncbd/ncbd_Intro.asp).



To remain up-to-date about the CAHPS Patient-Centered Medical Home Survey, visit [https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/CG/PROD\\_CG\\_PCMH.asp](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/CG/PROD_CG_PCMH.asp)

#### For free technical assistance and other resources:

- Contact the Help Line at [cahps1@ahrq.gov](mailto:cahps1@ahrq.gov) or 1-800-492-9261.
- Visit the CAHPS Web site at <https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov>.