



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

The USPI Practice Manager's Guide to Effective Communication

KNOW HOW PATIENTS WILL EVALUATE CLINICIAN AND GROUP

The Clinician and Group CAHPS®- *Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems* survey is a standardized tool to assess patient perception of care provided by physicians and medical groups.

Medical Group and individual provider performance will be based on a standard survey that measures physician communication, ease of access and responsiveness, as well as courtesy and respect. Only the top box response of "Always" or "Yes, definitely" will be used to determine performance and percentile ranking.

CAHPS® Physician Communication Questions

During your most recent visit, did this provider explain things in a way that was easy to understand? <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No
During your most recent visit, did this provider listen carefully to you? <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No
During your most recent visit, did you talk with this provider about any health questions or concerns? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
During your most recent visit, did this provider give you easy to understand information about these health questions or concerns? <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No
During your most recent visit, did this provider seem to know the important information about your medical history? <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No
During your most recent visit, did this provider show respect for what you had to say? <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No
During your most recent visit, did this provider spend enough time with you? <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

Overall Assessment of Provider Questions

In addition to the Physician Communication questions, patients will also provide an overall assessment of their care provider using a scale of 0 – 10. As with the physician communication questions, only top box responses of 9 or 10 will be used to determine performance and percentile ranking.

0 – Worst provider possible	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	Top Box response
10 - Best provider possible	Top Box response

CAHPS® Access and Responsiveness and Courtesy and Respect Questions

The following are the access and responsiveness questions that will be asked on the survey. For most questions, there is a qualifying question. For example, the patient must answer yes that they needed care right away, in order to answer the care right away question. Only the top box response of ‘Always’ is used to measure performance and percentile rank.

<p>In the last 12 months, when you phoned this provider’s office to get an appointment for care you needed right away, how often did you get an appointment as soon as you needed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Never <input type="radio"/> Sometimes <input type="radio"/> Usually <input type="radio"/> Always
<p>In the last 12 months, when you made an appointment for a check-up or routine care, how often did you get an appointment as soon as you needed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Never <input type="radio"/> Sometimes <input type="radio"/> Usually <input type="radio"/> Always
<p>In the last 12 months, when you phoned this provider’s office during regular office hours, how often did you get an answer to your medical question that same day?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Never <input type="radio"/> Sometimes <input type="radio"/> Usually <input type="radio"/> Always



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

In the last 12 months, when you phoned this provider's office **after regular office hours**, how often did you get an answer to your medical question that same day?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

Wait time includes the time spent in the waiting room and exam room. In the past 12 months, how often did you see this provider **within 15 minutes** of your appointment time?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

The last three questions focus on courtesy and respect and recommendation. Only the top box response of 'Yes, definitely' will be used to determine performance and percentile rank.

During your most recent visit, were clerks and receptionists at this provider's office as helpful as you thought they should be?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, somewhat
- No

During your most recent visit, did clerks and receptionists at this provider's office treat you with courtesy and respect?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, somewhat
- No

Would you recommend this provider's office to your family and friends?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, somewhat
- No

USE EFFECTIVE VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Breaking Down the Visit – Opening and Introduction for Patient Service Specialists

First impressions are formed in less than a minute. A solid introduction sets the stage not only for a good first impression, but puts patients at ease. Patients who are comfortable with their care provider are more likely to fully disclose their health concerns, payment and insurance concerns, and ask questions, leading to a collaborative plan of care and better patient outcomes.



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

AIDET®

AIDET® is an acronym for Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation and Thank you. Developed by the Studer Group and used throughout many healthcare organizations and medical practices. AIDET® establishes the foundation for a good first impression and conveys courtesy and respect. Here's what AIDET® looks like when used by care providers:

Acknowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greet patient by name as they enter the reception area• Smile and shake hands as appropriate• Safety Cue: Gel hands in front of patient• Safety Cue: Maintain patient privacy about their reason for the visit
Introduce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give your name and role• Welcome the patient and manage up the practice
Duration and Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm the physician and appointment time• Provide easy to understand explanations avoiding medical jargon and abbreviations• Give specific information about wait time before seeing the doctor• Apologize if there are known delays and provide options to the patient to wait, run an errand or reschedule if there are lengthy delays• Request insurance information as needed and explain how this information will be used• Review plan specifics if co-pay or payment is collected and ask if patient has questions about their coverage
Thank You	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank the patient for their information and for arriving on time• Ask if there is anything you can do for patient before they see the doctor• Shake hands if appropriate and provide business card to new patients



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

Breaking Down the Visit – Words and Actions to Impact Helpfulness, Courtesy and Respect for Patient Service Specialists

<p>During your most recent visit, were clerks and receptionists at this provider’s office as helpful as you thought they should be?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No 	
<p>Verbal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer the phone with appropriate greeting and smile in your voice • Offer options when scheduling appointments whenever possible – preferred day of the week, time of day • Give clear explanations for scheduling restrictions and provide alternatives. Flex and compromise when needed -- the patient comes first • Use open ended questions to see if patients need additional information about their appointment or insurance – <i>Mr. Jones, I’ve scheduled you with Dr. Smith on Tuesday, November 7th at 9:00 a.m., what additional information can I provide for you?</i>
<p>Non-Verbal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smile and use a welcoming tone of voice • Provide water and or coffee to waiting patients as appropriate • Make regular checks in the reception area to ensure space is tidy, refreshment supplies are refreshed and there is enough seating for patients

<p>During your most recent visit, did clerks and receptionists at this provider’s office treat you with courtesy and respect?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Yes, definitely <input type="radio"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="radio"/> No 	
<p>Verbal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly, welcoming greeting to patients as they enter the reception area • Use the patient’s preferred name, first name or Mr., Mrs., Ms., when addressing patient • Respect the patient’s time -- if there are delays, apologize and communicate early and often regarding length of delay. Explain the reason and provide option to wait, come back later or reschedule • Speak in confidential tone of voice when discussing medical issues or insurance matters • Maintain confidentiality and respect for all patients by never discussing others in public or reception areas of office • Thank patient for choosing the practice and/or referring others
<p>Non-Verbal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smile, make and maintain eye contact • Give your full attention when speaking with patient and avoid



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

	<p>distraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shake hands when appropriate or within cultural norms • Respect different cultural norms, for example touching or personal space • Maintain dignity of patients who are compromised or appear different from others
--	--

Breaking Down the Visit – Closing for Patient Service Specialists

Create a positive lasting impression at the end of the visit. Patients will forgive slight appointment delays and other things that can pop up from time to time when all members of the practices have built a strong relationship through good communication and respect. Very few individuals select a practice or physician without asking friends or neighbors who they see and like. Communicating effectively every step of the way is as important as diagnosing and treating when it comes to delivering good patient outcomes.

Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the patient about their visit “How was your visit today? Is there anything we could do better or improve?” • If collecting payment or co-pay, provide specific explanation of benefits and maintain a private speaking voice • Provide options when scheduling next visit, day of week, time of day, preferred physician • Thank the patient for choosing the practice and that you look forward to seeing them again
Non-Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smile, make and maintain eye contact • Shake hands when appropriate or within cultural norms • Give business card to new patients

Other factors that can impact Overall Provider and Group assessment

In addition to strong communication skills, other factors may influence the overall provider score (0 – 10 scale) or likelihood to recommend (Yes, definitely)

Late appointments	<p>Most patients understand that every now and then a medical appointment may run late.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask receptionist to keep patients informed about wait times, provide alternatives such as rescheduling and always apologize for delays. • Apologize to any patient who has had a delay as you enter the exam room. Acknowledge that their time is valuable.
Ease of making and getting appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a friend to call the office to schedule an appointment. Was the phone answered professionally and pleasantly? Was it easy to make an appointment? Were appointments readily available?



PHYSICIAN STRATEGY GROUP

SERVING THE USPI PHYSICIAN NETWORK

Helpful, courteous and respectful staff	Every member of the office is a reflection of the medical practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hire for attitude• Ask patients if they were greeted with a smile and if the office staff has been friendly and courteous• Don't accept unprofessional behavior from any member of the team – no matter how long they have been with the practice
Nurse and Medical Assistant Communication	While the Clinician and Group CAHPS [®] survey do not ask specific questions about nurse and medical assistant communications, these individuals have an important role in the patient's overall perception the practice. <u>The USPI Nurse and Medical Assistant Guide to Effective Communication</u> identifies the key actions and words for these important members of the patient care team.
Physician Assistant and Nurse Practitioner Communication	In practices where these roles are used, the PA and NP serve as extensions of the physician. <u>The USPI Physician and Care Provider's Guide to Effective Communication</u> identifies the key actions and words for physician assistants and nurse practitioners.