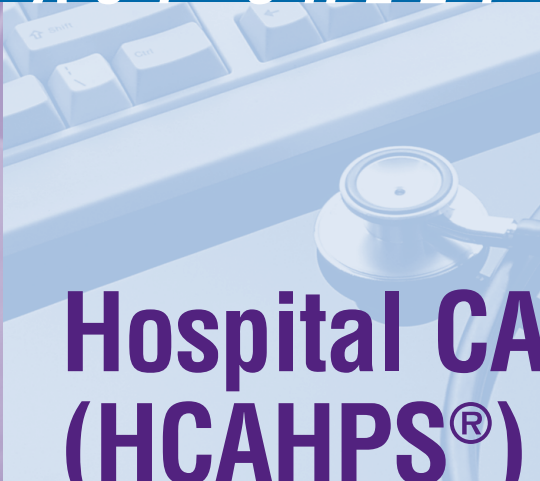


# FACT SHEET



## Hospital CAHPS® (HCAHPS®)

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality



[www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov)

AHRQ is the lead Federal agency charged with supporting and conducting research that will improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care for all Americans.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has been the Nation's lead Federal agency in developing standardized surveys for measuring patients' experiences with the U.S. health care system. The Agency's CAHPS (formerly the Consumer Assessment of Health Plans) initiative, begun in October 1995, has become the industry standard for obtaining consumers' assessment of their health plans. Since its inception, CAHPS has expanded to other health care settings and specific populations. The Hospital CAHPS (HCAHPS) initiative focuses on measuring and reporting patients' experiences with their inpatient care. It is designed to help consumers make more informed choices among hospitals and create incentives for hospitals to improve performance.

### HCAHPS® Development

Begun in July 2002, HCAHPS is a collaborative process sponsored by AHRQ and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). It has grown out of a need to assess the experiences of hospital patients, cited by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Quality Forum (NQF). As part of the development process, stakeholder meetings were held

to identify the issues, concerns, and interests of the health care community. Key organizations, representing both patients and providers, participated in these meetings. They included the American Hospital Association (AHA), the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the Federation of American Hospitals (FAH), NCQA, AARP, Ford Motor Company, the National Partnership for Women and Families, the American Medical Association, and the American Nurses Association, among others.

CMS pilot tested a draft HCAHPS instrument in spring 2003 through its Quality Improvement Organizations in three States (Arizona, Maryland, and New York). Additional testing of the HCAHPS survey, sampling, data collection processes, and assessment of survey implementation issues are currently underway.

### National Implementation

HCAHPS will be implemented in summer 2005 under the Quality Initiative, launched by AHA, AAMC, and FAH, and supported by AHRQ, CMS, and other organizations such as NQF and JCAHO. The initial effort



U.S. Department of Health  
and Human Services  
Public Health Service

## Sample Questions from HCAHPS®

- During this hospital stay, how often did doctors explain things in a way you could understand?
- During this hospital stay, how often did nurses treat you with courtesy and respect?
- During this hospital stay, after you pressed the call button, how often did you get help as soon as you wanted it?
- Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst hospital possible and 10 is the best hospital possible, what number would you use to rate this hospital?

asks hospitals to report the results of their performance on 10 quality measures for three medical conditions—acute myocardial infarction, heart failure, and pneumonia. Subsequent phases of the Quality Initiative will add measures on selected new conditions and will include HCAHPS survey measures pertaining to aspects of care in hospitals and patients' perspectives of their hospital care. When the survey instrument is completed, it will be included in the growing family of CAHPS tools and products. The final version of HCAHPS is expected to be available in English, Spanish, and other languages.

## HCAHPS® Survey Instrument

The HCAHPS survey was developed by the CAHPS II grantees from RAND, Harvard Medical School, and the American Institutes for Research. The survey drew upon existing hospital patient surveys submitted in response to an open call for measures published in the *Federal Register*, an extensive literature review, and previous experience with CAHPS surveys. The HCAHPS survey development started with the dimensions of patient-centered care, identified by the IOM and prior CAHPS research. After extensive focus group work and field testing, the HCAHPS survey was revised to include questions pertaining to nurse communication, nursing services, doctor communication, physical environment, pain control, communication about medicine, and discharge information.

## For More Information

To learn more about HCAHPS, please visit the following Web sites:

- For general information:  
[www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov) or [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov)
- To sign up for the HCAHPS listserv:  
[www.ahrq.gov/qual/cahpsix.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/cahpsix.htm)
- To communicate with AHRQ staff via e-mail:  
[Hospital-CAHPS@ahrq.gov](mailto:Hospital-CAHPS@ahrq.gov)

Or contact Charles Darby at [CDarby@ahrq.gov](mailto:CDarby@ahrq.gov) or by phone at 301-427-1324

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