

HCAHPS

(Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems)

Several years ago, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) began a program known as Value-based Purchasing (VBP). Initially this consisted of a hospital's performance in Core Measures and HCAHPS.

The HCAHPS program data collection actually began in October, 2006 with the data publicly reported starting in March, 2008. Surveys are administered 48 hours to six weeks after hospital discharge to a random sample of adult inpatients across various medical conditions. Surveys may be conducted by mail, telephone, mail with telephone follow-up or active interactive voice recognition (IVR).

The surveys consist of 27 questions regarding a patient's hospital experience: 18 relate to key aspects, 4 direct patients to relevant questions, 3 adjust for mix of patients across hospitals and 2 support congressionally-mandated reports.

Patients rate the "frequency" of an event during their care using a scale of "Always", "Usually", "Sometimes" or "Never".

Three questions pertain to physicians:

1. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors treat you with courtesy and respect?
2. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors listen carefully to you?
3. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors explain things in a way you could understand?