



# HCAHPS Communication A Critical Strategy to Improve Physician Scores

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# Learning Outcomes

- Recall the HCAHPS questions in the Physician Domain
- Recognize differences between Patient and Physician Perspectives
- Describe 3 tactics that will improve the likelihood of more “Always” responses
- Describe how you can implement 1 tool/tactic to help improve your Physician Engagement



# HCAHPS

Improving patient satisfaction scores has become a top focus of hospital administration, but it can be a struggle especially for small hospitals with limited resources and staffing shortages. Many face provider turnover and shortage. Many hospitals are currently using a Hospitalist model for Inpatient Care which can be challenging for hospitals due to provider variance and turnover. As a result, physician engagement is often threatened leading to disengaged physicians. During our time together we will explore tactics and strategies to engage our physicians and provide tools and tips to improve patient satisfaction



# Risks and rewards



## Risks

Dissengaged Physicians

If physician turnover is high keeping everyone educated and informed

Consistency with established Best Practice model

## Rewards

Informed and engaged physicians

Better team work among disciplines

Highly satisfied patients

Improved HCAHPS scores

# Questions: Your Care From Doctors

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

# Critical Statements

- Courtesy and Respect
- Listen carefully to you
- Explain things

# Patient vs Physician Perspectives

- The manner in which a physician communicates information to a patient is as important as the information being communicated.
- When doctor communicate well, patients are more likely to acknowledge health problems, understand their treatment options, modify their behavior accordingly, and follow their medication schedules.
- Research has shown that effective patient-physician communication can improve a patient's health as quantifiably as many drugs—perhaps providing a partial explanation for the powerful placebo effect seen in clinical trials.
- Source: The HCAHPS Handbook

# Tactic: Communication

1. Using the white board in patient room for communication and names
2. Encouraging physicians to sit down in the patient's room
3. Managing-up team members
4. Regular communication to physicians. Both one on one and at departmental meetings.
5. Reward and Recognize



# Tactic: Rounding and structured feedback

1. Leadership rounding
2. Scripted questions
3. Real time feedback/communication given to the primary physician on the same day
4. Share positive patient feedback from rounding with the entire group.

# Tactic: Distribute business cards

1. Each physician provided business cards with name, contact information, and photo.
2. Measure the number of cards distributed and provide results to physicians.

# Tools

1. AIDET
2. Rounding
3. Manage-Up
4. Scripting
5. Feedback

# 10 Tips for Improving HCAHPS Scores

1. Scripting Works. Successful performers have demonstrated year in and year out that scripting works.
2. Don't assume your physicians know "this stuff". Teach, reinforce and recognize.
3. Be the broken record.
4. Publicly recognize your "top rated" docs.
5. One patient representative can do great things.
6. Provide your docs with their specific HCAHPS and satisfaction survey ranking.



# 10 Tips for Improving HCAHPS Scores

- 7. It's really all about culture.
- 8. Improve employee and physician morale.
- 9. Ask physicians to help you.
- 10. When all else fails, don't blame your physicians.

<https://www.gcckc.com/gcc-news/top-10-tips-for-improving-hcahps-scores>

# Summary

Communication is key

We cannot fix what we don't know or understand

HCAHPS is a Team effort

# Sharing time

- Please feel free to share any tactics you have implemented at your organizations

# Resources

- The HCAHPS Handbook. Tactics to Improve Quality and the Patient Experience
- Journal of Patient Experience
  - A Multifaceted Approach to Improve Physician Communication Scores  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/23743373519860041>
  - Top 10 tips for Improving HCAHPS Scores
  - <https://www.gcckc.com/gcc-news/top-10-tips-for-improving-hcahps-scores>



# Thank you

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