

Patient-Centered Medical Home CAHPS® Frequently Asked Questions

A Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) is defined by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) as “a health care setting that facilitates partnerships between individual patients and their personal physicians, and when appropriate, the patient’s family and caregivers.” NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and recognizes a wide range of health care organizations.

NCQA’s Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition program assesses whether physician practices are functioning as medical homes. Built on joint principles developed by the primary care specialty societies, the PCMH standards emphasize the use of systematic, patient-centered, coordinated care management processes. Practices can earn points by conducting the PCMH CAHPS survey to evaluate patient/family experiences.

NCQA has introduced an option Distinction in Patient Experience Reporting as part of their PCMH program. The distinction is earned by fielding the PCMH CAHPS survey using a certified vendor, such as Press Ganey.

Q: What is the Patient-Centered Medical Home CAHPS (CAHPS PCMH) survey?

A: The PCMH CAHPS survey uses the core set of Clinician and Group CAHPS (CGCAHPS) questions from the 12-month version of the survey. In addition to the core questions, there are 16 questions to assess four additional domains: Information, Comprehensiveness – Behavioral, Self-Management Support and Shared Decision Making.

Q: What is the level of measurement – physician, practice or group?

A: The NCQA program recognizes the practice as a medical home. Similarly, the sampling and data collection for PCMH CAHPS is done at the practice level.

Q: What types of practices are included?

A: The survey is intended for primary care practices including internal medicine, family medicine and pediatrics.

Q: How is a practice defined?

A: A practice is a single geographic location where clinicians use the same systems and procedures (e.g., scheduling, medical records, etc.).

Q: How frequently will data be collected?

A: Press Ganey can administer the survey at any time throughout the year. We submit the data to NCQA in April & September.

Q: Should I survey more frequently than once per year?

A: Our top performing clients have found that on-going surveying is necessary to drive their quality improvement efforts. Our visit specific survey option is the perfect complement to the PCMH CAHPS survey, and allows you to prepare for the annual survey while continuously improving performance over the course of the year. We recommend that the visit survey be done at the physician or provider level to provide the most actionable results.

Q: How many patients must be surveyed?

A: Instead of a required number of completed surveys, NCQA requires a minimum number of patients be selected to receive the survey. The minimum numbers are based on the number of eligible clinicians within the practice. Practices can sample more patients if they would like more returns or if they have historically had low response rates.

Number of Clinicians in Practice	Required Sample Size
1	128
2-3	171
4-9	343
10-13	429
14-19	500
20-28	643
29 or more	686

Q: Which patients are eligible to receive the survey?

A: The survey is intended for patients that had at least one visit with an eligible practice clinician during the course of the year.

Q: What modes can I use to survey?

A: Press Ganey conducts the PCMH CAHPS survey using mail. Two waves of surveying are required for the mail distribution mode.

Q: Can I administer the survey myself to earn the Distinction in Patient Experience Reporting?

A: Only vendors certified as CAHPS PCMH survey vendors by NCQA can administer the survey and submit the results for the Distinction in Patient Experience Reporting.

Q: Is participation in the program mandatory?

A: NCQAPMCH Recognition is voluntary. NCQA awards two additional points towards recognition to those practices that utilize the CAHPS PCMH survey option. Practices may also receive a Distinction in Patient Experience Reporting for 12 calendar months following each data submission.

Q: Is there another way practices earn a point towards level 1, 2 or 3 NCQA PCMH recognition with patient experience measurement?

A: Yes. Practices can earn one point towards level 1, 2 or 3 NCQA PCMH recognition by fielding a survey, using any instrument, to evaluate patient/family experiences on at least three of the following:

Access, Communication, Coordination, or Whole-person care. Clients that want to earn this point with the Press Ganey visit survey will need to add a custom question for Coordination or Whole Person care.

Q: Can I use the survey if I do not want to participate in NCQA PCMH Recognition?

A: The survey is available to the public and can be used outside of the NCQA PCMH Recognition program.

Q: Can Press Ganey handle the surveying for me?

A: Yes. Press Ganey is NCQA certified to conduct the CAHPS PCMH survey.

Q: How Do I Sign-Up?

A: Please contact Press Ganey at (800) 232-8032.

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