MetroHealth Patient Survey Questions: Frequently Asked Questions

The MetroHealth System evaluates our patients’ experience with the results of the HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) survey. The HCAHPS (pronounced “H-caps”) survey is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patients’ perspectives of hospital care. HCAHPS makes it possible to compare patient experience across hospitals locally, regionally and nationally.

The survey, created by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), is designed to produce and publicly share data about patients’ perspectives of care that allow objective and meaningful comparisons of hospitals on topics that are important to consumers. Below you’ll find answers to our patients’ frequently asked questions about how we conduct the surveys, how the information is reported, and what it means.

General FAQs

1. What is MetroHealth doing to improve the patient experience and their scores?
   We are continually working to create an extraordinary patient experience at MetroHealth. That means that we are as deeply committed to listening to our patients as we are to improving our scores. We carefully consider our patients’ viewpoints as we make decisions about our hospital, clinics and the care we provide.

   In the fall of 2013, MetroHealth created its Office of Patient Experience (OPX) and named Dr. Sara Laskey its Chief Experience Officer. The OPX team immediately began reviewing all aspects of the MetroHealth patient experience across the continuum of care. Soon they initiated Pathways to Patient Experience, an enterprise-wide training to educate all employees about the power of Service to Others, one of MetroHealth’s key values.

   Patient experience training is now part of every staff member and care provider’s orientation and ongoing training. We focus on purposeful hourly rounding, nurse communications, and various other processes to ensure ongoing improvement to the patient experience.

   In addition, the OPX team launched the Patient and Family Advisors program, and has placed former patients and their family members on key committees to ensure that the voice of the patient is heard and a considered part of all critical decisions.

2. What is the process of getting patient feedback?
   Patient surveys are sent to all inpatients (age 18 and older) who are discharged to home. To ensure transparency in the results, the federal government requires that hospitals use an approved third party vendor to conduct the surveys. (Surveys may be conducted by mail or phone.) MetroHealth uses Press Ganey as our third-party survey provider.

   Press Ganey conducts our surveys by mail, in two waves: They mail surveys to patients at discharge, then, a couple of weeks later, Press Ganey mails surveys again to all those who did not respond to the first mailing.
(MetroHealth also collects data on the patient experience from outpatients. We conduct these surveys by mail, phone, or email.)

3. **Where can I see local comparisons?**
   You can see results for individual hospitals on the “Survey of Patients’ Hospital Experiences” section of the Hospital Compare website ([http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare)).

4. **How are people selected to fill out a survey for MetroHealth?**
   We mail surveys to all inpatients who are discharged to home. (We also do a random sampling of people who make outpatient visits to MetroHealth.) We gather the survey information so that we can give our care providers at all locations enough information and guidance to make changes that improve patient experience.

5. **How can I help MetroHealth improve the patient experience with my feedback?**
   When you provide feedback to MetroHealth by completing a survey, the team in the Office of Patient Experience reviews it carefully, then distributes the feedback to MetroHealth leadership as well as appropriate staff at the individual, unit, division and site level. All patient comments are included with what we distribute. These surveys are anonymous.

6. **What types of questions are asked on the survey, and how are the questions selected?**
   The federal government requires us to ask certain questions on the survey; we include additional questions to help MetroHealth make improvements in specific areas. The questions are organized into nine key topics:
   - Communication with nurses
   - Communication with doctors
   - Responsiveness of hospital staff
   - Pain management
   - Communication about medicines
   - Cleanliness of the hospital environment
   - Quietness of the hospital environment
   - Discharge information
   - Transition of care

   [Click here](http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare) to see some of the specific questions we ask, as well as how we’re doing in the areas of communication with nurses, communication with doctors, cleanliness and quietness of the hospital environment and discharge information.

7. **What percent of patients respond to the survey?**
   On average, about 20 percent of MetroHealth inpatients respond to the survey. All patients who receive a survey are encouraged to respond to help improve our patient experience.
8. How do you read the chart that displays the data?

The federal government determines this number based on all the survey reports from hospitals across the country.

This date shows the time in which the survey results were submitted.

This reflects the topic of the survey question.

Our scores are calculated every three months, using the latest survey results from our patients.

9. Why is the national mean not as recent as MetroHealth's data?

It takes about nine months for the federal government to gather the data. Once they have the data, they adjust the scores based on the severity of illness in a hospital’s patient population. (This is because hospitals treating patients with a higher severity of illness will have lower HCAHPS scores.)

HCAHPS scores are published every three months.

10. Why do you report only the top scores?

The federal government publishes the “Summary of HCAHPS Survey Results Table with average “top-box” scores so that the public can quickly compare one hospital to another.

The top-box scores are the percentage of respondents who gave the highest responses possible on the survey scale. At MetroHealth, we track our progress by watching these scores improve as we continue our transformation to extraordinary patient experience.

The top box scores are:
- “Always” answers for communication with nurses, communication with doctors, responsiveness of hospital staff, pain management, communication about medicines, care transition, cleanliness or hospital environment and quietness of the hospital environment;
- “Yes” responses for discharge information
• “9” or “10” responses for the overall hospital rating system
• “Would definitely recommend” response in the recommend the hospital category

11. Where can I see the percentages?
   You can see results for MetroHealth and other hospitals on the “Survey of Patients’ Hospital Experiences” section of the Hospital Compare website (http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare).

12. Why do you compare to the national mean?
   The national mean is the only published mean that exists. It represents the most consistent data we have for comparison.

13. What kinds of hospitals are included in the national mean?
   All hospitals that participate in HCAHPS are included in the national mean. All hospitals that receive Medicare reimbursements must participate in HCAHPS.