

Evolution of the Clinician & Group Survey from Version 1.0 to 4.0

Each version of the CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey builds on previous versions of the survey, which has been available from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality since 2007.

Changes from the 1.0 to the 2.0 Version of the Survey

The CAHPS Clinician & Group Survey was updated from 1.0 to 2.0 in October 2011. The 2.0 version included three versions: **12-Month Survey 2.0** (34 items)

- **Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Survey 2.0** (52 items) – An expanded version of the 12-Month Survey that incorporated the CAHPS Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Item Set.
- **Visit Survey 2.0** (37 items) – A variation on the 12-Month Survey that asked about patients' experiences with providers and office staff at their most recent visit. These items used an expanded 3-point Yes/No scale: "Yes, definitely; Yes, somewhat; No." Questions about access to care and questions about development and prevention in the Child Survey retained the 12-month reference period and the standard 4-point frequency scale.

The changes in the 2.0 version reflected lessons learned from users and stakeholders as they implemented the original survey as well as further item development and testing. No changes made in the 2.0 version significantly affected trending. The following changes were made for the 2.0 version of the core surveys:

- **The Adult Visit Survey was finalized.**
- **All items referred to "this provider" rather than "this doctor."** This change in focus, which allows for the inclusion of other types of providers, such as physicians' assistants and nurse practitioners, was a response to requests from users and stakeholders. The term "this provider" was tested with patients to ensure that they interpreted the term as intended. Users could still use the term "this doctor," but all items in the Clinician & Group Surveys 2.0 referred to "this provider."
- **The items about access to urgent and non-urgent appointments** were modified to ask respondents if they were able to get an appointment "as soon as they needed," as opposed to "as soon as they *thought* they needed." This revision simplified the items and made them consistent with questions in other CAHPS surveys.
- **The item asking whether the respondent got easy to understand instructions about taking care of health problems or concerns** was modified to address whether the respondent got easy to understand information about health *questions* or concerns. This revision acknowledged that not all patients receive instructions about caring for health problems but most patients receive information about health questions or concerns.

- **The chronic condition screening items** were moved from the core items to the supplemental items. This revision shortened the length of the core survey.
- **The item asking whether respondents have seen a doctor or other health provider 3 or more times for the same health problem or condition** was simplified to ask respondents whether they got health care 3 or more times for the same health problem or condition. The simplified wording eliminated the need to define health providers.
- **An item asking about overall mental or emotional health status** was added to the core items in recognition of the importance of mental or emotional health in addition to physical health. Testing confirmed that the performance of this item was similar to the overall health status item already included in the core items.
- **The Child 12-Month Survey** was finalized. In addition to the other changes listed above:
 - A new prevention item addressed whether the respondent and the provider talked about how much time the child spends on a computer or in front of the TV. This item was also part of the composite measure on prevention.
 - The development and prevention items were changed from asking about whether the respondent and the provider talked about specific topics to whether anyone in the provider’s office talked with the respondent about specific topics. This change addressed the fact that communication about development and prevention is often the responsibility of members of the practice team other than the focal provider, such as nurse educators.
 - The item that confirmed whether “this provider” is the child’s usual source of care was revised to make it more similar to the adult version.
 - The term “or want advice about a health problem” was revised to “has a health problem.”

Changes from the 2.0 to the 3.0 Version of the Survey

The 3.0 version of the survey was released in July 2015 in response to input and lessons learned from users and stakeholders, a desire to minimize the burden of surveys on patients and providers, and an effort to maximize the reliability of reporting measures. Drawing on comments on proposed changes and subsequent analyses of multiple data sets, the CAHPS Consortium proceeded with changes that became version 3.0 of the survey.

The major changes to the CG-CAHPS Survey are summarized below:

- **One instrument**, in contrast to the three instruments available for the 2.0 version.
- **Use of a 6-month reference time period rather than a 12-month reference period.** This change makes the survey consistent with the implementation of the CG-CAHPS Survey by multiple stakeholders, including CMS’s ACO

CAHPS Survey and the CAHPS Survey for the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS).

- New and modified composite measures (Adult Survey):
 - **New composite measure for “Care Coordination.”** The new three-item composite measure is comprised of two existing core items and one new item based on an existing CG-CAHPS supplemental item.
 - **Modified composite measure for “Access.”** The revised three-item composite measure reflects multiple aspects of access that are important to patients and stakeholders.
 - **Modified composite measure for “Communication.”** The revised four-item composite measure is consistent with the communication measure in the CAHPS Health Plan Survey.
- **In the Child Survey, a shift of the prevention and development items** from the core instrument to the Patient-Centered Medical Home Item Set. These items are recommended for use by primary care providers and may not be applicable to all specialty care providers.
- **Reduced length.** These changes reduce the length of the core surveys:
 - The Adult Survey is 31 items rather than 34.
 - The Child Survey is 39 items rather than 55.
- **Modified and reduced Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Item Set.** The PCMH Item Set has also been updated to a 3.0 version. A prepackaged instrument that incorporates the PCMH Item Set into the core survey is not available for the 3.0 version; instructions for inserting the items into the survey are provided with the item set.
 - Changes to the Adult Item Set: One question from the 2.0 version was moved into the core survey and several were moved into the general set of supplemental items. These changes reduce the Adult Item Set from 18 items to 6 items. Only the measure of “Self-Management Support” remains unchanged.
 - Changes to the Child Item Set: Several questions about prevention and development were moved from the core survey into this item set. The 3.0 version also has minor revisions that mirror the changes to the Adult version of this item set.
- **CG-CAHPS Visit Survey 2.0.** While some organizations continue to field the CG-CAHPS Visit Survey, its use has been declining steadily. In order to promote consistency across versions of the CG-CAHPS Survey, including CMS’s CAHPS surveys, AHRQ is not releasing a 3.0 version of the CG-CAHPS Visit Survey. The 2.0 version remains available to interested users.
- **Minor changes to item wording.** Item wording was updated to be more consistent with current care practices (e.g., “did you contact” rather than “did you phone”).

Changes from 3.0 to 4.0

The 4.0 beta version of the survey, which was released in December 2020, asks patients about their most recent synchronous visit. In addition to asking the standard questions about the healthcare experience, this version asks respondents to specify the type of visit (in-person, video, or phone) and provide information about their experience with that mode.

Changes from 3.0 to 3.1

The 3.1 version includes minor changes to the wording of the introduction and a few questions to prompt respondents to consider their experiences with in-person, phone, and video visits over the past 6 months. This version was released in August 2021.