

Inside The Patient Perspective

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Doctor-Patient Communication – The Foundation of Trust and Better Care



Why “Doctor Communication” Matters to You as a Provider?

- Clear, respectful, and empathetic communication is one of healthcare’s most powerful tools. The CAHPS® “How Well Doctors Communicate” measure reflects how patients’ perceive their interactions with providers, specifically whether they feel heard, respected, and understood.
- This measure deserves your attention because:
 - **Builds Trust:** Patients are more likely to follow care plans when their concerns are heard and valued.
 - **Reduce Errors:** Clear explanations improve understanding of diagnoses, treatment plans, and next steps
 - **Enhance Satisfaction:** Strong communication consistently leads to higher patient satisfaction scores.
 - **Promotes Equity:** Effective communication helps bridge cultural, language, and literacy gaps.

Tips for Frontline Staff

- **Set the Tone:** Greet patients warmly and explain what to expect during their visit.
- **Support Language Needs:** Offer interpreter services and translated materials when needed.
- **Encourage Questions:** Let patients know it’s okay to ask for clarification or more information.
- **Document Preferences:** Note communication preferences (e.g., visual aids, slower pace) in the EHR.
- **Follow Up Thoughtfully:** Reinforce key messages during check-out or follow-up calls.



Provider Best Practices for Improving Communication Ratings

- **Practice Active Listening:** Maintain eye contact, listen without interrupting, , and restate the patient’s key points for clarity.
- **Use Plain Language:** Avoid medical jargon explain conditions and treatments in everyday terms.
- **Check for Understanding:** Ask patients to restate instructions or summarize their care plan.
- **Show Empathy and Respect:** Acknowledge patient emotions and concerns without judgment.
- **Engage in Shared Decision-Making:** Involve patients in choosing treatment options that align with their values.

Meridian Resources and Support:

- Missed an edition of “Inside The Patient Perspective” Find all editions located [HERE](#).