

7 Proven Ways to Increase HCAHPS Scores

Every member of your organization influences HCAHPS scores, from housekeeping to surgeons to the CEO – making each point of contact crucial to a patient’s stay experience.

The current HCAHPS survey includes 29 questions covering everything from medical staff communication to discharge information to hospital environment – as well as overall hospital rating. To improve your scores, you must develop a culture of excellent communication and responsiveness to patient needs.

To get started, think of the short game and the long game:

The long game involves broad cultural change. The first step is a thorough assessment of your current status. Identify gaps and what you can improve. The root causes of a broken culture will be different for every organization. Fixing them demands time and resources, but the payoff is enormous.

A great culture means employees perceive your hospital as a premier workplace. They feel engaged, recognized, and supported in what they do. Because they take ownership, they show up to deliver consistent quality. They make personal connections that elevate patient care.

The short game involves strategies you can put in place immediately.



Seven Short-Game Tactics:

- 1. Sit at the bedside:** Sitting when you talk to patients increases their satisfaction, creates better communication, and patients perceive that you spent more time with them. Try having staff sit while they explain a diagnosis, options, or patient education materials.
- 2. Scheduled rounding:** Hourly rounding brings many benefits. Patients feel secure and confident that their nurse will come to their room. Patient satisfaction scores increase. Staff report more efficient workflows.

- 3. Team-based care:** Most studies show a significant improvement in patient satisfaction with care from a multidisciplinary team over a single provider. One concrete way to work towards this is through multidisciplinary rounds.
- 4. Bedside shift reports:** It is very disconcerting for hospitalized patients not to know who is caring for them. When units use bedside shift reports, patients get introduced to the next nurse in a warm handoff – with a recent study showing a 3.9% lift in overall satisfaction.
- 5. Communication boards:** A whiteboard in the patient’s room is a simple, evidence-supported way to improve communication. Have staff note planned medications and treatments and the names of staff and physicians on duty.
- 6. Enhance cleanliness and comfort:** Patients want a clean, comfortable, and safe environment when they visit your hospital. Take the necessary steps to ensure each space that welcomes patients is well maintained. A peaceful environment can go a long way.
- 7. Multiple forms of communication:** Tell the patients what they need to know, show them, and give them materials to take home. Something that seems obvious and routine to your staff will not always be that way to patients. Arm yourself with the highest-quality education resources to give your patients. The Patient Guide Solutions’ medical team has designed our materials to give patients the information they need most in a way that is easy to understand.



Connect with our team of experts!



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Resources:

[Hospital CAHPS \(HCAHPS\)](#)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

[HCAHPS Fact Sheet](#)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

[Patient-mix Coefficients for July 2023 \(4Q21 through 3Q22 Discharges\) Publicly Reported HCAHPS Results](#)

HCAHPS

[Team-Based Care and Patient Satisfaction in the Hospital Setting: A Systematic Review](#)

Journal of Patient-Centered Research and Reviews

[Sitting at the Bedside: Patient and Internal Medicine Trainee Perceptions](#)

Journal of General Internal Medicine

[Effect of sitting vs. standing on perception of provider time at bedside: A pilot study](#)

Patient Education and Counseling

[Impact of Physician Sitting Versus Standing During Inpatient Oncology Consultations: Patients' Preference and Perception of Compassion and Duration. A Randomized Controlled Trial](#)

Journal of Pain and Symptom Management

[Patient whiteboards to improve patient-centered care in the hospital](#)

Postgraduate Medical Journal

[Do Bedside Visual Tools Improve Patient and Caregiver Satisfaction? A Systematic Review of the Literature](#)

Journal of Hospital Medicine

[Using Standardized Whiteboards to Improve Patient Engagement](#)

Journal of Patient Experience

[The effect of hourly nursing rounds on patient satisfaction at Debre Markos Referral Hospital, Northwest Ethiopia: A non-randomized controlled clinical trial](#)

International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences

[Moving Shift Report to the Bedside: An Evidence-Based Quality Improvement Project](#)

The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing