Outpatient Ambulatory Surgery Patient Perception of Care—and How to Prepare for the Upcoming CMS Survey

Are you ready for the next government-mandated survey? Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) is being launched in the Outpatient Ambulatory Surgery arena. Referred to as OAS CAHPS, this patient perception of care survey aims to improve the nation’s quality of healthcare.

Background

With the significant shift of surgical volume to outpatient ambulatory options, health systems are advancing their strategic positions within the perioperative surgery space. The opportunity to strengthen margins and fully integrate ambulatory surgery models will position health systems to grow this important service line even more. As the choices for consumers expand, the ability to differentiate your facility from others will become even more paramount. With the launch of OAS CAHPS by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2017, the outpatient perioperative landscape will shift considerably. Public reporting will follow in 2018 and will be the opportunity to differentiate your outpatient ambulatory surgery services from others.

As we have seen with the implementation of CAHPS in a variety of other healthcare settings, the data demonstrating the correlation of the patient’s experience to outcomes, patient engagement, readmissions, and overall quality of care are compelling. As we have learned with current measures of the patient experience, it is no longer good enough to be clinically competent - that is the minimum expectation from our patients. The ability to create an “always” experience for your patients is what will differentiate and set you apart from your competitors. Below are some statistics that will highlight the shift as well as the planned timeline for the roll out of OAS CAHPS.

Statistics

As of December 2012:

- **2,357** Medicare-certified Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs)
- **3,360** Hospital Outpatient Surgery Departments (HOPDs)

Medicare payments to ASCs have increased 24%:

- **$2.9 BILLION** in 2007
- **$3.6 BILLION** in 2012

Timeline

- **2014**: CMS Conducts Initial Survey Field Test
- **2015**: CMS Conducts Mode Testing & Vendor Training
- **2016**: Voluntary National Implementation
- **2017**: Anticipated Mandatory Implementation
- **2018**: Public Reporting
The OAS CAHPS Survey

As with the other CAHPS launched over the past few years, OAS CAHPS will be aggregated into five specific Domains. Each Domain will consist of various questions that will be measuring consistency of behavior demonstrating a continuum of a patient experience verses the historic satisfaction measuring care in more of an episodic fashion.

The survey measures patients perception of the quality of care in 5 Domains, comprised of 37 questions (13 of which are focused on demographics) The Domains are categorized as:

1. Before Your Procedure
2. About the Facility and Staff
3. Communications About Your Procedure
4. Your Recovery
5. Your Overall Experience

Patients 18 years old and older undergoing surgeries and/or procedures are eligible for the survey.

Five Domain Question Breakdown; plus Demographic Questions

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE
Consists of 2 questions around information and instructions the patient received prior to their procedure.

ABOUT THE FACILITY AND STAFF
Consists of 6 questions around check-in, cleanliness of the facility, helpfulness, courtesy and respect from the doctors, nurses and clerks/receptionists.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT YOUR PROCEDURE
Consists of 5 questions around the level of explanation related to the procedure by the doctors and nurses, anesthesia use, side effects of anesthesia and discharge instructions (verbal and written).

YOUR RECOVERY
Consists of 9 questions around what to expect during the patients recovery, pain management, other medication use/explanation, e.g. antibiotics, nausea and other signs and symptoms to watch for during the recovery phase.

YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE
Consists of 2 questions around Overall Rating of Care and Likelihood to Recommend.

PLUS, QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PATIENT
Consists of 13 question around demographics.
Steps leaders can take now to prepare for OAS CAHPS

There are many advantages to preparing for this survey implementation now, from getting your staff and providers familiar with the survey questions to targeting areas needing improvement before OAS CAHPS scores become public. Talking with staff and providers about the impact of OAS CAHPS and what they can expect as a result will help raise awareness of what is expected and what they can do to help drive improvement results.

Studer Group has several solutions and tactics to aid in improvement efforts in your Outpatient Ambulatory Surgery areas, including execution of our Evidence-Based Leadership℠ framework and Must Haves® tactics.

Tactics that have been successfully deployed to improve results in Outpatient Ambulatory Surgery areas include:

- Goal Alignment
- Transparent Data Reporting
- Standards of Behavior
- Rounding for Outcomes:
  - Leader Rounding on Staff & Providers
  - Leader Rounding on Patients and Families
- Managing expectations (timeliness)
- Transition of care report/preparation
- AIDET® & Key Words at Key Times
- Transition of Care Calls
- Selecting Talent – 30/90 Day Questions
- Coaching for Performance

Preparing now for the future will allow you to position your organization well for the upcoming mandatory reporting, but more importantly, will assist your team in being successful in achieving their desired ambulatory surgery goals. If we know through evidence that improving our patients’ experience subsequently improves their outcomes and level of engagement in their recovery, wouldn’t we feel compelled to embed those evidence based practices now?

Organizations coached by Studer Group outperform and improve faster than the nation across the various CAHPS surveys and quality measures. What’s more, the gap is widening. Studer Group coaches have significant experience providing patient care, leadership, and coaching in the Ambulatory Surgery space. It uniquely positions us to partner with you on the resources and tactics needed to succeed and hardwire an approach that leads to improved surgical outcomes and patient experience for your community and beyond. To learn more, please visit StuderGroup.com or to connect with a Studer Group expert, please email Partnerships@StuderGroup.com.