

## Home Health Line Tool

### Regularly use language in HHCAHPS questions

It's tough to get patients to respond to the HHCAHPS. When they do, they might not remember their experience well enough to rate your agency with top scores.

To help with their recollection, try incorporating language from the questions into patient interactions, notes Annette Lee, CEO and founder of Provider Insights of Des Moines, Iowa.

For example, one question asks whether the agency treated the patient "as gently as possible."

So, use that language. "This may stick a little. I'm trying to do this as gently as possible."

Several questions ask whether agency staff "talked with" the patient about pain, medications, etc. "That's the verb they use: talk," Lee stresses. Not "teach" and not "educate." So, when you're using those words, the patient might not be making the connection when the survey arrives.

"So, I'm going to use 'talk' with the patient," Lee says. "Did I talk with you about moving around safely? Did I talk with you about your prescriptions and over-the-counter medications? Did I talk to you about potential side effects?"

Below, Lisa McClammy, senior clinical education consultant with MAC Legacy, highlights some of the language in the HHCAHPS questions that clinicians should be familiar with and incorporate into their conversations with the patient and caregiver.

#### Care of Patients

- How often did home health providers from this agency **seem informed and up-to-date** about all the care or treatment you got at home?
- How often did home health providers from this agency **treat you as gently as possible?**
- How often did home health providers from this agency **treat you with courtesy and respect?**
- Did you have any **problems with the care** you got through this agency?

#### Communication Between Providers and Patients

- Did someone from the agency **tell you what care and services** you would get?
- How often did home health providers from this agency **keep you informed about when they would arrive** at your home?
- How often did home health providers from this agency **explain things in a way that was easy to understand?**
- How often did home health providers from this agency **listen carefully to you?**
- When you contacted this agency's office, **did you get the help or advice you needed?**
- When you contacted this agency's office, **how long did it take you to get the help or advice you needed?**

#### Specific Care Issues

- Did someone from the agency talk with you about **how to set up your home so you can move around safely?**
- Did someone from the agency talk with you about **all the prescription medicines you were taking?**
- Did someone from the agency ask to see **all the prescription medicines you were taking?**
- Did you and a home health provider from this agency **talk about pain?**
- Did home health providers from this agency talk with you about **the purpose for taking your new or changed prescription medicines?**
- Did home health providers from this agency talk with you about **when to take these medicines?**
- Did home health providers from this agency talk with you about the **important side effects of these medicines?**