Federal Employee Program:
Want More Happy, Healthy and Productive Patients?

Imagine if all your Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) Federal Employee Program® (FEP) patients led healthy, happy and productive lives! As mighty a goal as this is, any positive development toward this means success -- for your patients, you and us, as well.

To measure your Florida Blue FEP patients’ well-being as well as perception of their health care physician, services and plan, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) administers consumer assessments. Understanding these assessments and knowing how you can positively impact their results are keys to healthier and happier patients and higher patient-experience ratings.

One major assessment is the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey. This is sent annually to a random sample of Florida Blue FEP patients. The results of this survey impact the quality rating of the care physicians provide to their patients.

The CAHPS survey is administered in February and March. It assesses Florida Blue FEP patients’ health care experiences and is focused on quality aspects patients are best qualified to evaluate (i.e., physician / practitioner communication skills and ease of access to care). More information is available in the CAHPS Health Plan Surveys, Adult Commercial Survey 5.0.

How You Can Make a Difference

You can influence progress by talking with your Florida Blue FEP patients about CAHPS and downloading a pre-visit assessment for them to complete before their office visit. Be sure you and your staff first reference the related instructions and assessment key. These documents are also located at floridablue.com under Providers > Tools & Resources > Federal Employee Program > Provider & Member Communications > Provider Communications > Misc. Provider Communications.

To assist you, we’ve included tips for CAHPS quality measures on the next page. Engaging in these activities is a great start to helping your patients improve their well-being and health care experiences.
CAHPS Quality Measures’ Tips to Success

Annual Flu Vaccine: Measured by the percent of sampled patients who report they received a flu vaccination within the past year and the percent of sampled patients who reported ever getting a vaccine.
- Ask your patients if they received their flu vaccines; encourage them to get the vaccines.

Obtaining Needed Care: Patients rate how often it was easy to get appointments with specialists, tests or treatment they needed in the prior six months.
- Make scheduling as easy as possible.
- Ask staff to schedule specialist appointments and write down the details for your patients.
- Help with pre-certifications / authorizations.

Getting Appointments and Care Quickly: Patients rate how often they could schedule an appointment and get care as soon as needed in the prior six months. Patients rate how often they were seen within 15 minutes of appointment time.
- Contact your patients when delays are expected using telephone, text or email.
- Advise patients of the best days or times to schedule appointments.
- Break up wait times by moving patients from the waiting room into an exam room to take vitals. Make sure there is something for your patient to read in case you are delayed.

Overall Rating of Health Care Quality: On a 0-to-10 scale, patients rate their health care in the last six months.
- Ask open-ended questions to give patients a chance to share health issues and concerns.
- A quick explanation for lengthy wait times is proven to markedly improve patient satisfaction.

Overall Rating of Plan: On a 0-to-10 scale, patients rate their health plan.
- Remind your Florida Blue patients about potential rewards for some preventive services, like flu shots.

Coordination of Care Composite Measure: Patients rate their physicians’ familiarity with their medical history and prescriptions, how well physicians are following up with patients after tests and how well “personal doctors” are managing care with specialists or other providers.
- Expedite the time it takes to follow up on blood tests, X-rays and other tests.
- Remind patients to bring a list of their prescriptions.
- Prior to appointments, speak with patients’ specialists to review the care they’ve provided.

Reducing the Risk of Falling: Patients who had a fall, or problems with balance, and discussed it with their doctor or other health care provider are asked if they received a fall-risk intervention in the last year.
- Falls are the top source for hospital admissions for older adults per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Remind patients that installing handrails, using a cane and removing scatter rugs can prevent falls.