

# **AHRQ'S CAHPS<sup>®</sup> PROGRAM**

**Caren Ginsberg, Ph.D., CPXP,  
Director, CAHPS & SOPS**

**Center for Quality Improvement & Patient Safety, AHRQ**

# AHRQ's Core Competencies



- **Health Systems Research:** Invest in research and evidence to make health care safer and improve quality.
- **Practice & Quality Improvement:** Create tools for health care professionals to improve care for their patients.
- **Data & Analytics:** Generate measures and data to track and improve performance, and evaluate progress of the US health care system.

# The AHRQ CAHPS Program



- CAHPS = Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems
- Program advancing the understanding, measurement, and improvement of patients' experiences with their health care
- Initiated and funded by AHRQ since 1995
- CAHPS Consortium – AHRQ, Yale University, RAND Corporation, Westat

# CAHPS Research and Products



- The CAHPS program...
  - ▶ Conducts research to further...
    - our understanding of patient experience of care
    - our knowledge of measuring patient experience and collecting relevant data
    - informative reporting of patient experience data
    - quality improvement involving CAHPS
  - ▶ Develops surveys and related materials to assess patient experience in health care settings and with health plans and providers

# CAHPS Surveys



- CAHPS surveys are the gold standard for patient experience measurement.
- The CAHPS program captures the patient's voice.
- Surveys measure patient experience of care in different settings.
- Surveys are developed using standardized methodology and research findings.
- Trademark is held by AHRQ; all surveys must adhere to CAHPS design principles to earn the trademark.

# What We Learned 20 Years Ago



**Evaluating the use of a modified CAHPS® survey to support improvements in patient-centred care: lessons from a quality improvement collaborative**

**Conclusion:** Small measurable improvements in patient experience may be achieved over short projects. Sustaining more substantial change is likely to require organizational strategies, engaged leadership, cultural changes, regular measurement and performance feedback, and experience of interpreting and using survey data.

Davies E, Shaller D, Edgman-Levitan S, Safran DG, Oftedahl G, Sakowski J, and Cleary P (2008). *Evaluating the Use of a Modified CAHPS Survey to Support Improvements in Patient-Centered Care: Lessons from a Quality Improvement Collaborative*, *Health Expectations*, 11(2), 160-176.

# Foundational Elements of Patient Experience Improvement



- Leadership and governance
- Partnerships with patients and families
- Focus on the workforce
- Systematic measurement and feedback
- Supportive technology and infrastructure
- Built environment

Shaller D. "Patient-Centered Care: What Does It Take?" New York: The Commonwealth Fund. Publication No. 1067, November 2006.