
CAHPS[®] Hospital Survey (HCAHPS)

Supplemental Items for the Adult Survey

Language: English

Notes

- **Use of these items with the CAHPS Adult Hospital Survey (HCAHPS):** These supplemental items can be added to the Adult version of HCAHPS, which is implemented nationally by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). However, use of these supplemental items is *not* part of the national implementation requirements.
 - To learn more about HCAHPS and its implementation by CMS, visit www.hcahponline.org.
 - An overview of HCAHPS is available from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality at https://cahps.ahrq.gov/surveys-guidance/hospital/about/adult_hp_survey.html.
- **Technical assistance for HCAHPS:** For information and technical assistance in using the HCAHPS Survey, contact the HCAHPS Project Team: hcahps@HCQIS.org or 1-888-884-4007.
- **Technical assistance for these supplemental items:** For technical assistance in using these supplemental items, contact the CAHPS User Network: cahps1@westat.com or 1-800-492-9261.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Important Instructions	1
Health Literacy.....	2
Interpreter Services	9

Important Instructions

Supplemental items enable users to customize their CAHPS survey to meet their unique needs. Most of the supplemental items available for the Adult Hospital Survey are part of the Health Literacy Item Set, which means that the items were developed and tested together to address this specific topic.

Placing supplemental items in the core questionnaire. Under CMS’s rules for national implementation of HCAHPS, all supplemental items must be placed before the “About You” section of the survey. After the last item before the “About You” section, begin a new page and add the following text (bolded):

Now we would like to gather some additional detail on topics we have asked you about before.

Depending on which questions you choose to use, you may also need to insert an appropriate subheading. This document indicates whether and where subheadings should be added. The format of any new subheadings should be consistent with that of existing subheadings.

After you copy one or more supplemental items into the core questionnaire:

- **Fix the formatting** of the items as needed to fit into the two-column format.
- **Renumber** the supplemental item and **ALL** subsequent items so that they are consecutive.
- **Revise ALL skip instructions** in the questionnaire to make sure they point the respondent to the correct item number.

For additional guidance, contact the CAHPS User Network at cahps1@westat.com or 1-800-492-9261.

Health Literacy

For detailed information about this item set, refer to *About the Health Literacy Item Set for Hospitals*, available at <https://cahps.ahrq.gov/surveys-guidance/hospital/instructions/hospinstructions.html>.

Users of these items may also be interested in adding items about the use of interpreter services, which are available at the end of this document.

Before items H-HL1 – H-HL2, add a new subheading: **“Information About Medications.”**

Add a new instruction before H-HL1: **“If you were not given any medication when you left the hospital, go to Question X.”** Replace X with the number used for H-HL3, or the next question in your survey.

H-HL1. During this hospital stay, did hospital staff ask you to describe how you were going to take your medications when you were at home?

- ¹ Yes
² No

H-HL2. During this hospital stay, did hospital staff tell you who to call if you had questions about your medications?

- ¹ Yes
² No

Before items H-HL3 – H-HL9, add a new subheading: **“Talking With Nurses.”**

H-HL3. During this hospital stay, how often were nurses hard to understand because of the way they spoke your language?

- ¹ Never
² Sometimes
³ Usually
⁴ Always

H-HL4. During this hospital stay, how often did nurses use medical words you did not understand?

- ¹ Never
² Sometimes
³ Usually
⁴ Always

H-HL5. During this hospital stay, how often did nurses talk too fast when talking with you?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL6. During this hospital stay, how often did nurses interrupt you when you were talking?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL7. During this hospital stay, how often did nurses answer all your questions to your satisfaction?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL8. During this hospital stay, how often did nurses use a condescending, sarcastic, or rude tone or manner with you?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL9. During this hospital stay, how often did you feel nurses really cared about you as a person?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

Before items H-HL10 – H-HL18, add a new subheading: **“Talking With Doctors.”**

H-HL10. During this hospital stay, how often were doctors hard to understand because of the way they spoke your language?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL11. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors use medical words you did not understand?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL12. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors talk too fast when talking with you?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL13. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors use pictures, drawings, models, or videos to explain things to you?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL14. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors interrupt you when you were talking?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL15. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors answer all your questions to your satisfaction?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL16. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors make sure you understood all the information you were given?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL17. During this hospital stay, how often did doctors use a condescending, sarcastic, or rude tone or manner with you?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-HL18. During this hospital stay, how often did you feel doctors really cared about you as a person?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

Before items H-HL19 – H-HL23, add a new subheading: **“Talking About Tests.”**

H-HL19. During this hospital stay, did you have a blood test, x-ray, or other test?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No → **If No, Go to #H-HL24**

H-HL20. During this hospital stay, before you had a blood test, x-ray, or other test, how often did hospital staff explain what it was for?

- 1 Never → If Never, Go to #H-HL22
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

H-HL21. How often was the explanation of what the test was for easy to understand?

- 1 Never
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

H-HL22. During this hospital stay, when you had a blood test, x-ray, or other test, how often did hospital staff explain the results to you?

- 1 Never → If Never, Go to #H-HL24
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

H-HL23. How often were the results of your blood test, x-ray, or other test easy to understand?

- 1 Never
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

Before items H-HL24 – H-HL31, add a new subheading: “**Communication About Forms.**”

H-HL24. During this hospital stay, did you have to sign any forms?

- 1 Yes
2 No → If No, Go to #H-HL26

H-HL25. During this hospital stay, how often did hospital staff explain the purpose of a form before you signed it?

- 1 Never
2 Sometimes
3 Usually
4 Always

H-HL26. During this hospital stay, did you have to fill out any forms?

- ¹ Yes
² No → **If No, Go to #H-HL32**

H-HL27. During this hospital stay, how often did hospital staff offer you help to fill out a form?

- ¹ Never
² Sometimes
³ Usually
⁴ Always

H-HL28. During this hospital stay, how often were the forms easy to fill out?

- ¹ Never
² Sometimes
³ Usually
⁴ Always

H-HL29. During this hospital stay, how often were you given enough time to fill out forms?

- ¹ Never
² Sometimes
³ Usually
⁴ Always

H-HL30. During this hospital stay, did you ever need forms in a language other than English?

- ¹ Yes
² No → **If No, Go to #H-HL32**

H-HL31. During this hospital stay, how often were the forms that you had to fill out or sign available in your language?

- ¹ Never
² Sometimes
³ Usually
⁴ Always

Before items H-HL32 – H-HL39, add a new subheading: **“Information About How to Care for Yourself.”**

H-HL32 repeats question 18 in the Adult HCAHPS Survey in order to set up the subsequent questions. Add the following instruction before H-HL32: **“We need you to answer the following question again although you have already answered it in the first part of the survey.”**

H-HL32. After you left the hospital, did you go directly to your own home, to someone else’s home, or to another health facility?

- ¹ Own home
² Someone else’s home
² Another health facility → **If Another, Go to <core question> #26**

H-HL33. During this hospital stay, did hospital staff give you a telephone number to call if you had problems after you left the hospital?

- ¹ Yes
² No

H-HL34. During this hospital stay, did hospital staff tell you how to take care of yourself at home?

- ¹ Yes
² No → **If No, Go to #H-HL36**

H-HL35. Was this information about how to take care of yourself at home easy to understand?

- ¹ Yes
² No

H-HL36. During this hospital stay, did you get instructions in writing about how to take care of yourself at home?

- ¹ Yes
² No → **If No, Go to <core question> #26**

H-HL37. Were the written instructions about how to take care of yourself at home easy to understand?

- ¹ Yes
² No

H-HL38. Did you need written instructions about how to take care of yourself at home in a language other than English?

- ¹ Yes
² No → **If No, Go to <core question> #26**

H-HL39. Were the written instructions about how to take care of yourself at home available in your language?

- ¹ Yes
² No

Interpreter Services

Add a new subheading: **“Interpreter Services.”**

For a shorter set of questions on this topic, use H-IN1 – H-IN6. Questions H-IN8 – H-IN10 are available to provide additional information if desired.

Why are friends and family members included as interpreters? Testing has shown that respondents often include friends and family members as interpreters even when they are given a definition of “interpreters” that specifically excludes them. In order to collect uniform data from all respondents, question H-IN2 includes friends and family members in the definition of interpreters. Question H-IN5 or questions H-IN8 – H-IN10 can be used to identify the type of interpreter, which provides information you can use to analyze the questions about interpreter services.

H-IN1. What is your preferred language?

- ¹ English → **If English, Go to <core question> #26**
² Spanish
³ [INSERT LANGUAGE]
⁴ [INSERT LANGUAGE]
⁵ Another language

H-IN2. An interpreter is someone who helps you talk with others who do not speak your language. During this hospital stay, did you need an interpreter to talk with someone at this hospital?

- ¹ Yes
² No

H-IN3. During this hospital stay, did hospital staff tell you that you had a right to interpreter services free of charge?

- ¹ Yes
- ² No

H-IN4. During this hospital stay, how often did you have an interpreter at this hospital when you needed one?

- ¹ Never
- ² Sometimes
- ³ Usually
- ⁴ Always

H-IN5. During this hospital stay, how often did you use a friend or family member as an interpreter when you talked with hospital staff?

- ¹ Never
- ² Sometimes
- ³ Usually
- ⁴ Always

H-IN6. Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst interpreter possible and 10 is the best interpreter possible, what number would you use to rate this interpreter?

- 0 Worst interpreter possible
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 Best interpreter possible

H-IN7. During this hospital stay, how often did you have to wait 15 minutes or longer for the interpreter provided by the hospital to come help you?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

If you include H-IN8-10, do not use H-IN5.

H-IN8. During this hospital stay, how often did you use a friend or family member as an interpreter when you talked with hospital staff?

- 1 Never → **If Never, Go to <core question> #26**
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always

H-IN9. During this hospital stay, did you use a child younger than 18 to help you talk with hospital staff?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

H-IN10. During this hospital stay, did you use friends or family members as interpreters because that was what you preferred?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No