

Massachusetts Health Quality Partners

MHQP's Pre-Notification Toolkit for Patient Experience Survey Program



Improving Response Rates for Your Patient Experience

Take our
SURVEY



Provider organizations seeking strong response rates from their patients in the statewide Patient Experience Survey (PES) are interested in strategies to encourage their patients to participate. We have summarized information about such tactics, frequently known as “pre-notification” efforts, and crafted a series of communications that you may find helpful and want to incorporate into your organization’s campaign efforts to increase response rates.

How can pre-notification help? These efforts focus on:

- Communicating the value of the survey and establishing the legitimacy of the survey,
- Building expectation that a survey may be arriving and reducing the likelihood of respondents disregarding the survey when it arrives.

Pre-survey communications should generate awareness and enthusiasm for the survey. Communicating with your patients about the importance of completing the upcoming survey shows your organization’s commitment to excellence. In this toolkit, we describe content, suggest several methods, and provide sample communications. Practices should adapt these or create their own. Graphics provided in the templates are also suggestions; organizations should consult with their in-house communications staff to determine any graphics they may want to use.

In addition to pre-notification efforts for the 2018 Patient Experience Survey, we encourage you to share information about your practice’s performance in MHQP’s 2017 Annual Patient Experience Survey, especially its impact on your improvements in the past year. Publicizing your efforts and commitment to hearing from your patients can help to inform patients of the importance and value of the survey results for your practice/organization.

Content of Pre-Notification Message



What should be included in the pre-notification message?

The message should communicate clearly and succinctly the following:

Purpose and Personal Encouragement. Briefly describe the background and objectives of the survey. Utilize first-person language to ask for patient's feedback and offer appreciation for helping with continuous improvement.

WIIFM (What's In It For Me). Justify why the participant should complete the survey. Be sure to state any direct or indirect benefits the stakeholder might receive as a result of the survey, such as improved quality of care. It is also useful to point to specific examples of how information obtained from past surveys has been used by the practice.

Introduce the Survey Sponsor. Include one-sentence introduction to identify Massachusetts Health Quality Partners, the organization conducting the survey on your behalf.

Confidentiality. Remind participants that responses will be confidential since your third-party vendor will collect and analyze the results.

How Long the Survey Will Take. Indicate the estimated time commitment involved. The Patient Experience Survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Additionally, it is important to announce when the surveying period ends - scheduled for July 9, 2018.

Survey Results. Let respondents know when the results will be ready and how they will be communicated (e.g., Healthcare Compass website, email, newsletter, webcast). Explain how the results will be used.

Survey Support. Provide a support contact that will assist the participants if they have any technical difficulty with completing the survey or have general questions.

Methods of Pre-Notification

EMAIL OR LETTER

- *The letter should describe the purpose of the survey, who will get the survey, and a description of who is conducting the survey. Here is a chance for you to reintroduce yourself to your patients who have had visits, or introduce yourself if the communication goes to all patients, regardless of their visit history. It can also serve as a notice that you would like their feedback on improvements in quality of care based on any actions you have taken.*
- *The letter provides you an opportunity to alert respondents that they may receive this survey. Tell them exactly why you are surveying your patients, the importance of their feedback, and that their opinions matter. With a pre-notification letter, you are providing the reasons why their time and effort help you and other patients.*
- *When to send it? These communications should be sent just before the expected date for launching the survey, and a second notice may be sent approximately a week after the surveys are distributed. The 2018 Statewide Patient Experience Survey is expected to be launched on April 19, 2018.*

Sample Pre-Notification Email/Mail Template

Dear [First Name],

The annual survey of patient experience conducted by Massachusetts Health Quality Partners (MHQP) is one of the important ways we receive feedback from our patients. You may be randomly selected to participate because you received care from this practice within the last 12 months. Your participation is voluntary, but your answers really do make a difference.

Your responses tell us what works well and where we need to improve. Survey results will be reported to us in summary form and will not include any personally identifying information.

If you receive a survey in the mail or via email in the next several weeks, [practice name] would appreciate your taking the time to participate. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your contribution to improving the care we provide. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at [XXX-XXX-XXXX].

FLYERS/POSTERS/ SOCIAL MEDIA

- *Place notices about the annual survey prominently in your office. This gives you and your office colleagues an opportunity to answer questions from patients who are physically in the office about the survey and its importance. Please see the sample “elevator speech.” It may help you create a simple and clear message that everyone in your office uses to explain the survey.*
- *When to place messages in your office: This can be done immediately and remain in the office until the survey closes on July 9, 2018.*
- *If you have a social media component to your patient communications, consider creating a version of the “office poster” for your social media outreach.*

Survey Reminder Template

**[Post 1 week after
survey fielded]**

Thank you to all the patients/families who have completed the Massachusetts Health Quality Partners Patient Experience survey! For those of you who have received a survey but not had an opportunity to complete it yet, please help us improve. Your opinion matters.

WHAT?

Massachusetts Annual Patient Experience Survey:

An opportunity to provide feedback on:

- Your care experiences

WHY?

Because...

- We care about your opinions!
- Results will be used to help improve the quality of care we deliver to our patients

WHO?

Patients randomly selected to complete a survey. The survey is confidential and being conducted by Massachusetts Health Quality Partners, a nonprofit organization. Results will only be reported in summary form -- It will not be possible to identify individual respondents.

WHERE?

You can answer **online or by mail**. If you answer the survey online, you will be able to answer in other languages and also leave written comments.

HOW?

Watch for invitations in your email and/or regular mail. The survey should take 10 minutes to complete.

WHEN?

April-July 2018

ELEVATOR SPEECH

- *A short (less than one minute) description of why your practice is conducting the survey and what patients will be asked to do. Office staff should be aware of the survey so that every employee can give the elevator speech and convey the same message.*

Take the MHQP Survey

Let your voice be heard!

Sample Elevator Speech Template

“We want to hear from our patients about the care we provide. The Massachusetts Health Quality Partners statewide annual patient experience survey is a great way for us to see how we are doing in general, where we are getting better based on results from earlier surveys, and where we can improve the care we provide to you and other patients. It is easy to complete online or on paper (it should take approximately 10 minutes). It is confidential, and we use the feedback. We are encouraging everyone who gets a survey to complete it. If you receive a survey and have any questions, please contact us.”





NEWSLETTER AND SOCIAL MEDIA ALERTS

- *Organizations can promote awareness and embed pre-survey alert information in a website, intranet, newsletter, and social media accounts. This approach could be as simple as including a brief notice about the upcoming survey in the "What's New" (or equivalent) section of a website or newsletter. Doing so will help lend legitimacy to the study and broaden the awareness that the organization desires and respects patient feedback about their experiences.*

Sample Newsletter/Social Media Template

2018 Patient Experience Survey Coming Soon!

[NAME OF PRACTICE/ ORGANIZATION, along with other providers, Massachusetts health plans and Massachusetts Health Quality Partners conduct an annual survey of our patients' experiences with the care they receive from this office/organization. Your feedback is important to our future work and care we deliver so [NAME OF PRACTICE/ ORGANIZATION] urges you to participate in the survey. The 2018 Patient Experience Survey may be arriving at your home or in your email inbox soon and we hope to get as many responses as possible.