

## The CAHPS Hospital Survey: Opportunities and Challenges



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## Connecticut Background

- ◆ 30 not-for-profit acute care hospitals
- ◆ 1 predominant patient satisfaction vendor
- ◆ Total of 4 vendors used
- ◆ Predominant survey method – one mailing
- ◆ One hospital conducting phone surveys
- ◆ Coordinated statewide public reporting efforts

## Connecticut Public Reporting

- ◆ In 2002, Connecticut legislation enacted requiring Department of Public Health to produce comparative report on hospital quality
  - Measures unspecified, except for “patient satisfaction”
- ◆ In 2003, all Connecticut hospitals agreed to submit quality data to CMS for public reporting, before the market basket update “incentive”
- ◆ In 2004, Connecticut hospitals began publicly reporting most recent quarter of data on CHA website ([cthosp.org/Quality/HPR.html](http://cthosp.org/Quality/HPR.html))
  - Hospital Quality Alliance clinical measures
  - JCAHO patient safety goal compliance



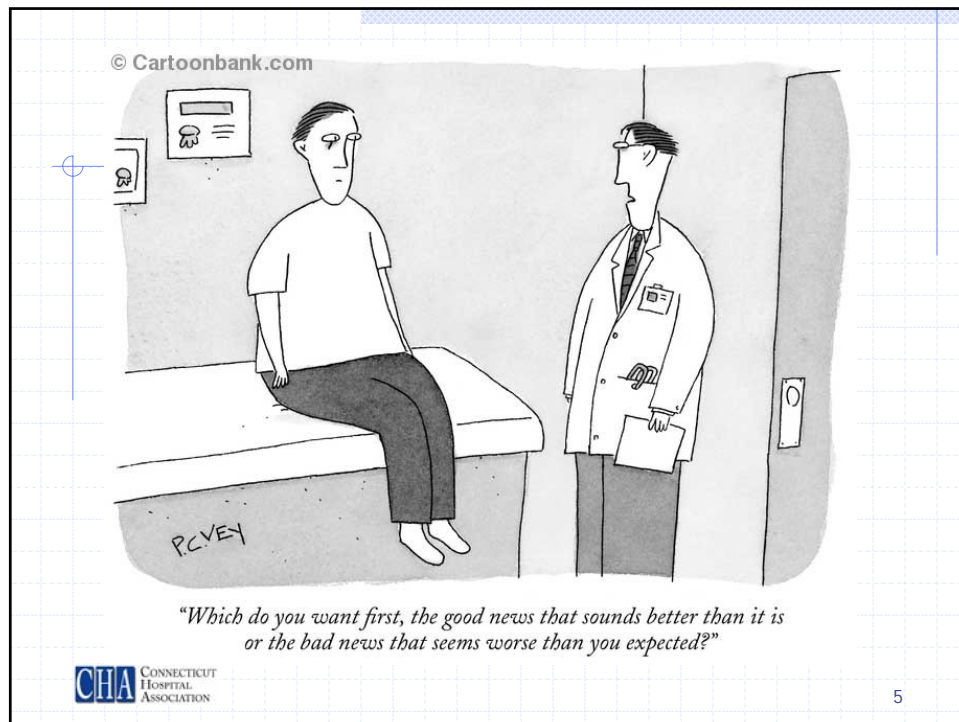
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## Connecticut H-CAHPS Survey Experience

- ◆ 2003 Pilot of 66-question survey
  - Conducted by CMS as part of special project aligning state and federal reporting efforts
- ◆ 2005 Pilot of 27-question survey
  - Conducted by 3 vendors (2 mail, 1 phone)
- ◆ Feedback to CMS and AHRQ
  - H-CAHPS Survey must be:
    - ◆ Practical for hospitals to implement
    - ◆ Provide actionable information



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## Challenges: Integrating H-CAHPS Survey with Current Surveys

- ◆ Determine whether to integrate H-CAHPS Survey in all surveys or select a minimum required sample
- ◆ Survey process changes required
  - second mailing
  - common exclusions not permitted
  - proxies prohibited
- ◆ Multiple response scales confusing

## Challenges: Integrating H-CAHPS Survey in Hospital Processes

- ◆ Incentive compensation
- ◆ Trending
- ◆ Mobilizing staff action
- ◆ Deriving meaningful information from overlapping sets of data
- ◆ Disproportionate weighting of H-CAHPS questions over other important aspects of patient experience

## Challenges: The Proper Context for H-CAHPS Results in Public Reporting

- ◆ What will patients think the H-CAHPS results mean and what will they do with the information?
- ◆ Does a positive patient experience promote better patient outcomes?

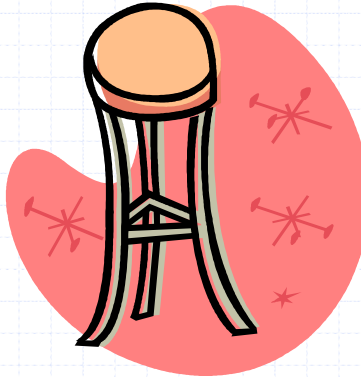
*“The art of medicine consists in amusing the patient while nature cures the disease.” Voltaire*

## Challenges: Uses of H-CAHPS Results

- ◆ Striking the appropriate balance between flexibility and opportunities for “gaming”
- ◆ The confusion of patient-mix adjustment
- ◆ The problem of the silent majority
- ◆ Pay-for-performance



## Opportunities: A More Complete Picture of Quality . . .



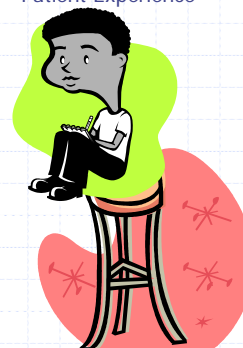
- Process - Structure - Outcome

## . . . That Validates the Importance of Patient Experience

### H-CAHPS Topics Include:

- ◆ Communication
  - Courtesy and respect
  - Listen carefully
  - Explain things
- ◆ Medication Education
  - Reason for the medicine
  - Possible side effects
- ◆ Discharge Planning
- ◆ Pain Control

Patient Experience



- Process - Structure - Outcome



## Opportunities: Enhanced Public Accountability

- ◆ Clinical measures are important, but difficult for consumers to assess and use effectively
- ◆ H-CAHPS results are traditional “word of mouth” codified

“[I]t is safe to say that word of mouth is – even in this age of mass communications and multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns – still the most important form of human communication.” . . . . The Zagat guides “real power derives from the fact that the reviews are the reports of volunteers – of diners who want to share their opinions with others. Somehow that represents a more compelling recommendation than the opinion of an expert whose job it is to rate restaurants.”

Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*



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## Opportunities: Reinforcing Patients as Partners



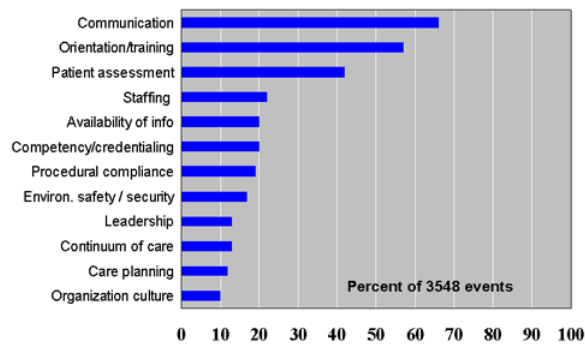
### Five Steps to Safer Health Care

- Ask questions if you have doubts or concerns.**  
Ask questions about your care and understand the answers. Choose a doctor you feel comfortable talking to. Take a relative or friend with you to help you ask questions and understand the answers.
- Keep and bring a list of ALL the medicines you take.**  
Give your doctor and pharmacist a list of all the medicines that you take, including over-the-counter medicines. Tell them about any other medicines you take. Ask about side effects and what to watch while taking the medicines. Keep the list where you get your medicines, including the hospital. Make sure your medicines if it is more obvious than you expect it to be. Ask the pharmacist about your medicines if it is more obvious than you expect it to be.
- Get the results of any test or procedure.**  
Ask when and how you will get the results of tests or procedures. Tell them the name of the test or procedure. Ask when and how you will get the results. Ask when the results will be ready for you.
- Talk to your doctor about which hospital is best for your health needs.**  
Ask your doctor about which hospital has the best care and results for your condition if you have a condition that needs to be treated. Ask your doctor about the condition if you have a condition that needs to be treated. Ask your doctor about the condition if you have a condition that needs to be treated.
- Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery.**  
Make sure you, your doctor, and your surgeon all agree on exactly what will be done during the surgery. Ask your doctor about the surgery. Ask your surgeon about the surgery. Ask your doctor about the surgery. Ask your surgeon about the surgery. Ask your doctor about the surgery. Ask your surgeon about the surgery.

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## Opportunities: The Link to Patient Safety

**Root Causes of Sentinel Events**  
(All categories; 1995-2005)



Source:

Joint  
Commission on  
Accreditation  
of Healthcare  
Organizations



Questions?