



# Patients' Experiences in CAHs: HCAHPS Results, 2017

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## INTRODUCTION

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This report summarizes reporting rates and performance among all U.S. Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey for calendar year (CY) 2017. The Flex Monitoring Team (FMT) also produces state-specific HCAHPS reports with more detailed results.

## BACKGROUND

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HCAHPS is a national, standardized survey of patients' perspectives of hospital care. It was developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to complement other hospital tools designed to support quality improvement. The survey is administered to a random sample of adult patients following discharge from the hospital for inpatient medical, surgical, or maternity care.

Ten HCAHPS measures are publicly reported on Hospital Compare. Six are composite measures that address how well doctors and nurses communicate with patients, the responsiveness of hospital staff, communication about medicines, and patient understanding of their care when they left the hospital. The provision of discharge information is reported as "yes/no." The other five composite measures, along with two measures regarding the hospital environment, are reported in response categories of "always," "usually," and "sometimes/never." Additional measures address the overall rating of the hospital on a 1-10 scale ("high" = 9 or 10, "medium" = 7 or 8, "low" ≤ 6) and the patient's willingness to recommend the hospital ("definitely would," "probably would," and "probably/definitely would not"). CMS adjusts the publicly reported HCAHPS results for patient-mix, mode of data collection, and non-response bias.

CAHs may voluntarily report HCAHPS measures to Hospital Compare. HCAHPS measures are a core improvement activity in the Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP).

## APPROACH

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This study used data publicly reported to Hospital Compare by CAHs for discharges during CY 2017 as well as data from MBQIP. In 2016, CMS began suppressing HCAHPS results from Hospital Compare for hospitals with fewer than 25 completed surveys. The FMT national and state HCAHPS reports include MBQIP HCAHPS data from 163 CAHs that agreed to participate in Hospital Compare, but whose results were suppressed from Hospital Compare because they had fewer than 25 completed surveys. Although some CAHs had very few surveys, the results are reported in aggregate for all CAHs in each state, and no states had fewer than 25 surveys for all CAHs in the state.

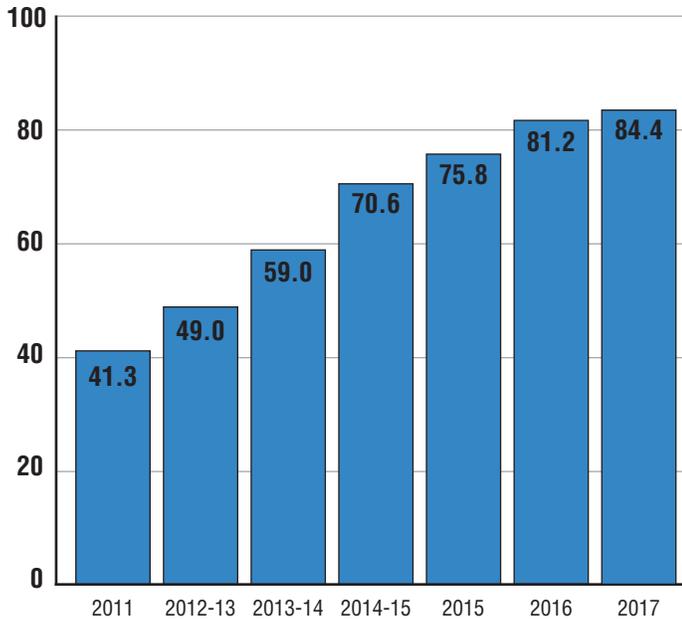
The national and state HCAHPS reports exclude results from 47 CAHs that submitted HCAHPS data to MBQIP but did not agree to publicly report to Hospital Compare. The reports include data from one CAH that reported HCAHPS data to Hospital Compare, but not to MBQIP.

For each HCAHPS measure, the percentages of patients reporting the highest response (e.g., "always") on each



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**Figure 1. Percent of CAHs Reporting HCAHPS Survey Data, 2011-17<sup>a</sup>**



a. Data for 2012 Q1 are unavailable due to Federal government shutdown. Bars with multiple years list rates for periods offset by one quarter, from April to the following March. Q1 2015 data are included in both the "2014-15" and "2015" rates.

measure were summed and averaged across all reporting CAHs within a state and all other states. Weights were applied to all calculations.

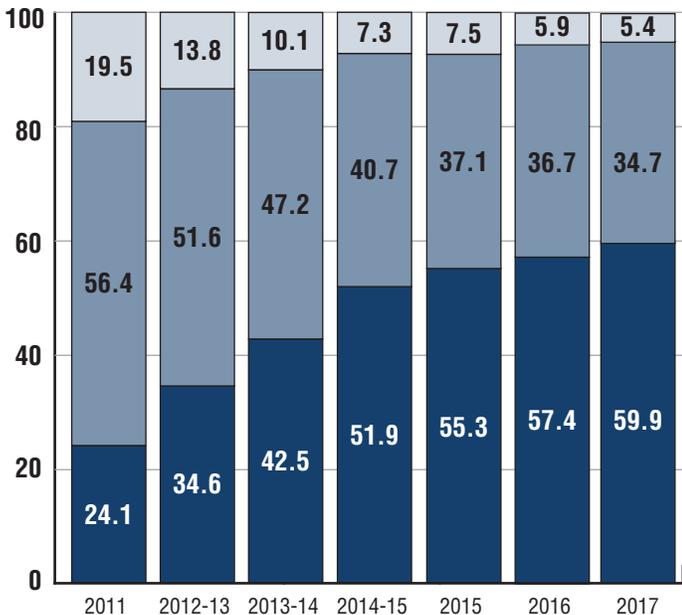
For the comparison of hospital inpatient volume and HCAHPS reporting, data on the number of completed surveys from CY 2017 were merged with data on hospital inpatient volume from the fiscal year (FY) 2016 American Hospital Association (AHA) Annual Survey.

**RESULTS**

Since 2011, HCAHPS participation among CAHs has more than doubled, from 41.3 percent to 84.4 percent nationally (Figure 1). However, the number of completed surveys per reporting CAH has also changed over that time. In 2017, the percentage of reporting CAHs with fewer than 100 surveys increased to 59.9 percent and the percentage with more than 300 surveys decreased to 5.4 percent (Figure 2).

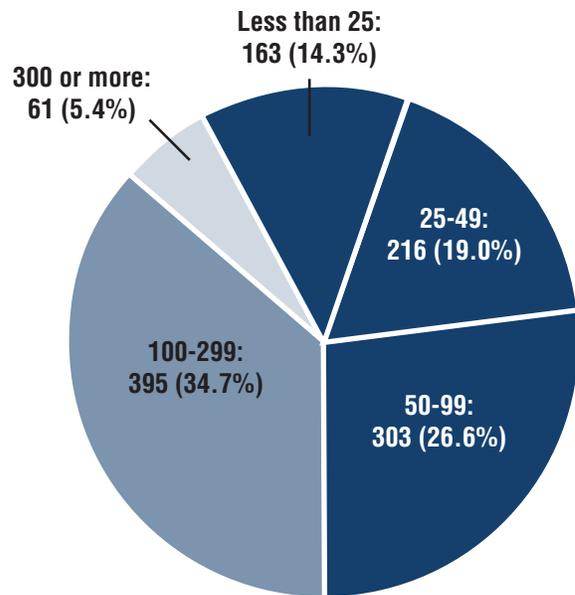
Hospitals with 100 or more completed HCAHPS surveys over a four-quarter period receive HCAHPS Star Ratings from CMS. Figure 3 provides additional

**Figure 2. Completed HCAHPS Surveys among CAHs Reporting Data, 2011-17**



□ % of reporting CAHs with more than 300 surveys  
 ■ % of reporting CAHs with 100-299 surveys  
 ■ % of reporting CAHs with less than 100 surveys

**Figure 3. Detail of HCAHPS Survey Completion Rates among CAHs Reporting Data, 2017**





**Table 1. Critical Access Hospitals by Number of Completed HCAHPS Surveys and Hospital Admissions, 2017**

# Completed Surveys	Total CAH Inpatient Admissions				Total
	0-250	251-500	501-800	800+	
Less than 25	134	22	7	0	163
25-49	101	83	26	6	216
50-99	31	149	90	33	303
100-299	0	42	125	227	394
300 or more	0	0	1	60	61
<b>Total<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>266</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>1137</b>

a. 1 CAH did not have AHA annual survey data and is excluded from this table.

Data Sources: Hospital Compare and MBQIP, CY 2017; AHA Annual Survey data, FY 2016

insight into the large group of CAHs reporting fewer than 100 surveys. More than 14 percent of CAHs reported fewer than 25 surveys in 2017 and nearly 27 percent reported 50-99 surveys.

Table 1 shows the wide variation in the number of completed HCAHPS surveys per CAH when compared to the annual volume of inpatient admissions. Six hospitals with over 800 inpatient admissions had only 25-49 completed surveys and no CAHs with 0-250 admissions had more than 99 surveys. Variation in the number of completed surveys may be due in part to the number of discharged patients who are eligible for the HCAHPS survey and in part to differences in response rates among surveyed patients. CMS requires hospitals to exclude some patients from HCAHPS, including patients discharged to swing-beds, nursing homes, or hospice care. While the majority of CAHs have swing-beds, the volume of patients discharged to swing-beds varies by CAH.

Caution should be exercised in comparing HCAHPS results for states that have few CAHs reporting results and/or CAHs whose results are based on fewer than 100 completed surveys. Table 2 ranks the 45 Flex Program states by their CAHs' HCAHPS participation rates. Table 3 (next page) provides the number of CAHs reporting HCAHPS survey data for each of the 45 states in the Flex Program, as well as the number of CAHs in each of the five survey completion and three survey response rate categories. Table 4 (page 5) provides performance rates for each state's reporting CAHs on the ten HCAHPS measures publicly reported on Hospital Compare.

**Table 2. State Rankings of HCAHPS Participation Rates for CAHs, 2017**

Rank	State	CAHs participating	% of CAHs
1	Illinois	51	100.0
	Indiana	35	
	Idaho	27	
	Oregon	25	
	Maine	16	
	Pennsylvania	15	
	New Hampshire	13	
	Utah	13	
	Vermont	8	
	Virginia	7	
	Alabama	4	
	Massachusetts	3	
13	Nebraska	63	98.4
14	Wisconsin	57	98.3
15	Ohio	32	97.0
16	Georgia	29	96.7
17	West Virginia	19	95.0
18	New York	17	94.4
19	Minnesota	72	92.3
20	Michigan	33	91.7
21	Iowa	75	91.5
22	New Mexico	9	90.0
23	Mississippi	27	87.1
24	Arkansas	25	86.2
25	California	29	85.3
26	Kentucky	23	85.2
27	Kansas	71	84.5
	<b>All CAHs</b>	<b>1,138</b>	<b>84.4</b>
28	South Dakota	32	84.2
29	North Dakota	30	83.3
30	Washington	32	82.1
31	Montana	39	81.3
	Wyoming	13	
33	Arizona	11	78.6
	Tennessee	11	
35	Colorado	23	71.9
36	Nevada	9	69.2
37	Missouri	24	66.7
	North Carolina	14	
39	Louisiana	17	63.0
40	South Carolina	3	60.0
41	Texas	49	57.6
42	Alaska	8	57.1
43	Florida	6	50.0
44	Oklahoma	16	42.1
45	Hawaii	3	33.3



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**Table 3. Number of Completed HCAHPS Surveys and Response Rates for CAHs, 2017**

State (# of CAHs)	CAHs reporting	Number of completed HCAHPS surveys					HCAHPS survey response rates		
		<25	25-49	50-99	100-299	≥ 300	< 25%	25-50%	> 50%
<b>United States (1,348)</b>	<b>1,138</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>35</b>
Alabama (4)	4	2	0	1	1	0	0	4	0
Alaska (14)	8	3	1	2	2	0	6	2	0
Arizona (14)	11	0	2	3	5	1	5	6	0
Arkansas (29)	25	2	6	11	6	0	10	15	0
California (34)	29	4	7	3	12	3	11	18	0
Colorado (32)	23	4	3	7	9	0	7	16	0
Florida (12)	6	0	2	1	3	0	5	1	0
Georgia (30)	29	3	10	8	7	1	17	12	0
Hawaii (9)	3	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	0
Idaho (27)	27	5	4	5	11	2	3	24	0
Illinois (51)	51	0	7	22	21	1	6	44	1
Indiana (35)	35	1	4	9	20	1	8	27	0
Iowa (82)	75	4	14	29	26	2	2	71	2
Kansas (84)	71	24	20	16	10	1	13	55	3
Kentucky (27)	23	1	1	10	11	0	8	15	0
Louisiana (27)	17	4	3	8	2	0	10	7	0
Maine (16)	16	0	1	3	11	1	4	12	0
Massachusetts (3)	3	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	0
Michigan (36)	33	4	4	3	19	3	0	33	0
Minnesota (78)	72	9	10	19	30	4	6	60	6
Mississippi (31)	27	4	14	7	2	0	11	16	0
Missouri (36)	24	0	2	7	13	2	6	17	1
Montana (48)	39	16	9	2	11	1	9	26	4
Nebraska (64)	63	16	10	17	19	1	2	54	7
Nevada (13)	9	2	1	1	4	1	5	4	0
New Hampshire (13)	13	0	1	2	9	1	6	7	0
New Mexico (10)	9	1	2	2	4	0	7	2	0
New York (18)	17	2	7	2	5	1	3	13	1
North Carolina (21)	14	0	1	4	4	5	5	9	0
North Dakota (36)	30	9	11	6	3	1	4	23	3
Ohio (33)	32	1	2	8	16	5	7	24	1
Oklahoma (38)	16	4	6	4	2	0	7	9	0
Oregon (25)	25	1	1	8	13	2	12	13	0
Pennsylvania (15)	15	1	1	2	7	4	0	15	0
South Carolina (5)	3	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	0
South Dakota (38)	32	9	9	12	2	0	8	24	0
Tennessee (14)	11	0	6	2	3	0	2	9	0
Texas (85)	49	15	10	11	13	0	23	26	0
Utah (13)	13	1	3	6	3	0	2	11	0
Vermont (8)	8	0	1	1	4	2	1	7	0
Virginia (7)	7	1	1	1	3	1	2	5	0
Washington (39)	32	3	7	10	7	5	15	17	0
West Virginia (20)	19	2	5	6	6	0	7	12	0
Wisconsin (58)	57	0	4	15	29	9	2	51	4
Wyoming (16)	13	2	2	5	4	0	3	8	2



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**Table 4. HCAHPS Performance Rates for CAHs by State, 2017**

State (# of CAHs reporting)	Nurses always communicated well	Doctors always communicated well	Patient always received help as soon as wanted	Staff always explained medications before giving them	Yes, staff gave patient info. about recovery at home	Strongly agree care understood when left hospital	Patient's room and bathroom were always clean	Area around patient's room was always quiet at night	Overall hospital rating of 9 or 10 (high)	Would definitely recommend hospital to others
<b>United States (1,138)</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>84.7</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>56.3</b>	<b>81.0</b>	<b>65.4</b>	<b>77.3</b>	<b>75.2</b>
Alabama (4)	88.5	86.3	85.2	74.7	92.5	59.1	86.2	81.2	82.6	79.1
Alaska (8)	81.7	80.6	76.7	67.1	88.7	54.2	74.3	60.4	75.1	74.4
Arizona (11)	80.6	80.6	73.7	69.6	86.9	49.4	75.9	59.0	72.0	69.2
Arkansas (25)	84.7	88.0	77.2	71.9	84.0	55.7	79.4	69.6	77.3	70.9
California (29)	80.6	80.6	72.3	66.1	88.0	54.1	77.6	56.8	72.5	72.0
Colorado (23)	81.4	83.1	76.2	67.5	88.9	55.5	77.0	65.2	72.3	70.6
Florida (6)	79.4	79.8	68.7	61.0	86.6	51.5	75.1	64.1	70.7	66.4
Georgia (29)	83.7	83.8	72.1	68.0	87.5	56.6	78.9	71.9	78.0	76.2
Hawaii (3)	75.6	76.5	75.3	57.5	81.1	43.2	72.2	53.4	66.9	69.1
Idaho (27)	82.6	86.1	77.5	68.8	90.4	55.8	81.6	61.6	76.4	75.7
Illinois (51)	85.7	86.4	78.4	71.2	89.9	57.8	84.3	66.1	79.4	75.9
Indiana (35)	84.2	84.9	76.1	67.9	88.7	55.2	82.3	64.5	77.4	72.7
Iowa (75)	83.6	85.5	74.7	67.9	89.0	58.3	82.9	69.0	81.3	79.3
Kansas (71)	82.7	86.9	76.2	67.1	87.6	58.0	81.1	65.0	79.5	77.6
Kentucky (23)	83.8	86.8	74.0	72.2	88.2	59.0	81.0	68.6	76.2	74.0
Louisiana (17)	88.0	89.0	80.9	75.9	89.5	60.7	83.8	74.8	82.4	78.6
Maine (16)	85.3	84.9	75.8	73.4	90.7	57.2	82.2	61.9	78.6	77.2
Massachusetts (3)	86.4	83.1	74.6	71.8	92.3	58.8	76.8	58.0	79.5	81.5
Michigan (33)	85.4	84.3	82.0	71.2	91.4	58.3	80.9	65.9	80.4	77.6
Minnesota (72)	83.8	85.4	77.6	68.8	89.9	57.6	82.5	69.7	78.3	77.0
Mississippi (27)	85.7	89.1	79.3	70.2	86.9	53.2	80.8	74.6	76.1	75.2
Missouri (24)	81.8	84.8	73.1	67.5	87.8	54.5	80.3	64.2	75.7	72.3
Montana (39)	80.7	83.7	73.7	67.4	85.7	54.4	75.4	63.2	72.8	73.1
Nebraska (63)	84.6	87.2	78.6	70.6	89.0	58.7	85.5	71.4	82.0	80.3
Nevada (9)	77.7	79.2	72.4	65.8	87.1	52.9	78.2	57.3	70.5	69.7
New Hampshire (13)	82.6	82.9	74.8	67.8	89.6	55.4	80.2	59.3	75.8	73.4
New Mexico (9)	81.8	82.0	75.7	70.4	86.5	49.0	75.4	63.7	71.4	68.6
New York (17)	85.2	84.4	76.6	71.2	89.7	56.0	79.1	63.6	76.4	75.1
North Carolina (14)	84.6	83.9	76.8	71.7	88.6	55.4	79.4	64.8	74.8	75.2
North Dakota (30)	83.5	85.3	78.4	69.0	87.7	55.9	76.8	67.2	74.4	74.7
Ohio (32)	84.6	83.4	78.6	69.5	91.2	57.3	83.3	62.5	78.5	76.0
Oklahoma (16)	83.4	86.3	79.5	69.8	86.2	57.6	83.0	73.0	77.4	72.8
Oregon (25)	81.6	82.9	76.4	69.3	89.4	54.3	77.0	59.6	73.0	72.3
Pennsylvania (15)	82.4	82.2	74.7	67.6	88.2	52.3	81.9	60.0	72.3	67.3
South Carolina (3)	87.6	89.9	84.1	73.9	88.9	64.5	80.9	73.9	81.7	84.2
South Dakota (32)	83.2	86.0	78.3	69.9	87.9	54.8	79.9	67.9	78.8	77.1
Tennessee (11)	84.1	85.2	80.8	74.0	87.1	54.7	80.4	70.8	78.1	74.8
Texas (49)	84.8	86.5	78.9	74.1	88.2	55.0	82.7	69.5	79.8	75.6
Utah (13)	82.4	84.7	78.6	70.4	91.7	60.6	78.9	62.6	80.7	81.6
Vermont (8)	81.9	84.8	72.3	67.1	90.1	53.7	78.4	56.0	74.5	73.7
Virginia (7)	82.6	82.6	72.2	65.3	87.1	51.4	80.9	60.2	72.4	69.7
Washington (32)	80.2	82.0	72.7	66.9	89.0	54.2	79.5	57.7	74.4	73.5
West Virginia (19)	84.2	85.6	76.4	70.9	89.3	55.2	80.9	64.6	75.6	71.6
Wisconsin (57)	85.0	84.9	78.0	70.6	90.4	58.1	83.4	69.1	79.7	77.4
Wyoming (13)	81.6	82.6	78.8	69.1	89.0	58.3	76.4	63.8	73.0	72.2



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Monitoring  
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