



Quality Patient
Experience Guide



Delivering a
Quality Experience
Together



Our members tell us how much they look to you for guidance

Through research, we know your interactions with our members – your patients – matter most. We greatly appreciate all that you do to provide quality care and want to support you.



Patient experience and satisfaction are key to providing quality care

We track and measure our plan performance and the perceptions our patients have of their health care team. Feedback from them helps us cultivate a positive patient experience.



Seven steps to ensure high-quality, accessible care

We know your team works hard to take care of your patients, and we want to help. We look forward to being your partner in delivering a high standard of care.

-  **1** *Help patients obtain timely appointments with **EASE***
-  **2** *Offer **FLEXIBLE** care options*
-  **3** ***MINIMIZE** patient wait times*
-  **4** *Ensure **READINESS** to deliver needed care*
-  **5** *Communicate with **EMPATHY***
-  **6** *Empower patients with helpful **INFORMATION***
-  **7** *Provide courteous and timely **FOLLOW-UP***

Patient Experience Touchpoints

Delivering a quality experience throughout a patient's care journey will contribute to higher satisfaction.



See relevant Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) and Qualified Health Plan Enrollee Experience (QHPEE) survey questions listed on page 11



1

Do your patients find it easy to make an appointment with you?

HOW WE SUPPORT

Patients can use the **preventive care and screening checklists** on [CareSource.com](https://www.caresource.com) to understand and keep track of the care they may need to stay healthy.

Patients can work with a CareSource **case manager** or call **Member Services** for help with finding a doctor and scheduling an appointment.

Our **Find-A-Doctor** online tool, available on [CareSource.com](https://www.caresource.com), helps connect patients to medical and behavioral health providers.

To help streamline prior authorizations, CareSource has a Procedure Code Look-up Tool, accessible on the **Provider Portal**, to determine if a prior authorization is needed. Use the Provider Portal to submit requests and check real-time status. Training tools and resources are available there as well.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Ensure understanding of need for appointment**
- **Proactively coordinate with health plans and specialists**
 - ✓ Advise patient on the importance of referrals
 - ✓ Coordinate with specialists to ensure they are accepting new patients and to secure earliest appointment available
 - ✓ Suggest more than one specialist
 - ✓ Ensure prompt submission of prior authorization requests with all required documentation for prescriptions, refills, and medical procedures
- **Make your appointment scheduling process easy**
 - ✓ Offer a variety of scheduling options (e.g., phone call, website, mobile app, patient portal)
 - ✓ Remind patients that it's time for a routine visit and offer to schedule it
 - ✓ Schedule next routine appointment before they leave your office
 - ✓ Arrange for follow-up visit within 7 days post hospital discharge



2

Do you offer flexible care options?

HOW WE SUPPORT

CareSource helps advise patients where to go for care based on their need. They can find this information on **CareSource.com** in the **Where to Get Care** section.

CareSource follows NCQA standards for access to care. We've developed **Access and Availability Training** for our providers to clarify these standards. This training is available on CareSource.com > Provider > Education > **Training & Events** page.

The CareSource **Find-A-Doctor** online tool includes listings of urgent cares, hospitals, clinics, specialists, dentists and pharmacies that are in close proximity to the member's location.

Patients can call the **CareSource24[®] Nurse Advice Line** any time for immediate health care needs.

CareSource covers telehealth services, and medication support is available through our **Medication Therapy Management** program.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Expand patient access to care**

- ✓ Allow walk-in or same day "sick" time slots and evening/weekend appointments
- ✓ Have a "stand-by" list for last minute cancellations
- ✓ Offer telehealth options
- ✓ Connect patients to alternative options (e.g., satellite offices, convenience care clinics and urgent care facilities) when unable to accommodate immediate appointment requests.



3

**Are your patients waiting more than 15 minutes to see you?
What is the patient wait experience like?**

HOW WE SUPPORT

Through all touchpoints, CareSource emphasizes the importance of arriving to appointments on time and notifying providers in advance if they need to reschedule or cancel.

If a patient is having challenges making it to their appointments, CareSource case managers can assist by removing barriers such as transportation*, appointment reminders and arranging for telehealth visits

In cases where a patient needs reassignment to another health care provider, CareSource can assist with the transition of care process. Contact Provider Services for assistance.

**Not available for all plans. Ask your Health Partner Representative or contact Provider Services for more information.*

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Maximize efficiency with precision scheduling**
 - ✓ Set appointment lengths to type of medical visit
 - ✓ Cross train staff to handle multiple patient needs
- **Encourage patients to arrive on time**
 - ✓ Explain importance of arriving on time when setting appointment
 - ✓ Suggest patients arrive early to stay on schedule
 - ✓ Use a variety of appointment confirmation methods (e.g., phone call, text, email)
 - ✓ Thank patients who arrive early or on time
 - ✓ If patient is late, offer to reschedule or direct to alternative care option
- **Ensure office environment is welcoming and comfortable**
 - ✓ Consider ways to engage patients such as reading material, TV programming, WiFi, having patients update office forms or take a survey
 - ✓ Other welcoming ideas include soft music and activities for kids.
- **Keep patients informed as they wait**
 - ✓ Notify patients when there are delays, either in-person or through electronic means (e.g., text messaging or message boards) if possible
 - ✓ If wait time becomes unacceptable to patient, offer to reschedule or be seen by another provider such as a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner and apologize for the situation



4

Do your patients find your medical staff to be fully informed and ready to deliver care according to their specific situation or need?

HOW WE SUPPORT

CareSource encourages patients to track their health needs and prescriptions, and to keep their personal doctor up to date on their care. **MyHealth** accounts use the results from a patient's Health Risk Assessment to create a wellness plan and track progress.

Providers have access to patient information including gaps in care through **Clinical Practice Registry** on the **Provider Portal**.

CareSource has a form* to facilitate coordination of care between providers. Our **case managers** provide personalized assistance by identifying patient needs, removing barriers, and coordinating care. If your patient needs help managing their care, you can refer them for this service, and we will keep you informed of progress via the Provider Portal.

We recognize that behavioral health is as important as physical health. The **Behavioral Health** page on CareSource.com offers a comprehensive set of resources such as **Suicide Prevention and Opioid Toolkits** for providers, patients, and their caregivers.

CareSource Life Services[®] is the umbrella framework through which CareSource addresses social determinants of health including food insecurity, housing, social stability, workforce development and health equity that may impede our member's path to self-sufficiency. If your patient needs support outside of their medical care, you can refer them to this program*.

We support and encourage patients who want to stop using tobacco products by connecting them to tools and resources through our Member Services team.

**Not available for all plans. Ask your Health Partner Representative or contact Provider Services for more information.*

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Ensure pertinent information is obtained prior to visit**
 - ✓ Review patient medications, screenings, treatments and specialist care
 - ✓ Actively coordinate with other providers
 - ✓ Review care management notes in the Provider Portal
- **Ask patients to list key concerns at the start of their visit**
 - ✓ Review and discuss patient's medical history
- **Plan preventive health screenings**
 - ✓ Ensure screenings are up to date
 - ✓ Suggest and administer appropriate vaccinations such as COVID-19, flu, and pneumonia
 - ✓ Assess risks for falling and urinary incontinence
 - ✓ Address known health risks such as obesity, tobacco use, and sedentary lifestyle, and provide resources or information to support improvement
 - ✓ Use screening tools to assess **mental health and substance use**
- **Address barriers to care**
 - ✓ Discuss social determinants of health, such as finances, transportation, food insecurity, housing, under-insured, poor support system, poor health literacy and mental health and offer resources that can help
- **Review treatment options**
 - ✓ Provide information and resources



5

Do your patients find your health care team to be empathetic?

HOW WE SUPPORT

CareSource offers **interpreter services** for the hearing-impaired, those who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency. You can access information about interpreter services, including how to schedule interpretation services* for patients, by visiting the **Request Patient Services** page on CareSource.com.

Offering care in a culturally competent manner, removing language barriers to service, and accommodating a patient's unique ethnic, cultural, and social needs is important to CareSource. Training to support these topics is available on CareSource.com under **Primary Care Provider Roles & Responsibilities**.

We regularly evaluate our customer care and frontline employee processes and procedures to ensure patients and providers are being treated with courtesy and respect. We measure our performance through the CAHPS, QHP and other satisfaction surveys. Likewise, patients rate their overall satisfaction with their personal doctor and specialists and evaluate how well they are communicating.

**Not available for all plans. Ask your Health Partner Representative or contact Provider Services for more information.*

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Express empathy during all patient interactions**
 - ✓ Demonstrate patience and be careful not to appear rushed
 - ✓ Address patient by name, actively listen to their concerns, ensure you've answered their questions fully, applaud positive behaviors, and show support for positive actions
 - ✓ Establish the patient's preferred method of contact (e.g., text or calls)
 - ✓ Make eye contact and speak directly to patient
 - ✓ If a tense situation arises, calmly seek to resolve – be creative in working through resolutions
- **Exercise cultural sensitivity**
 - ✓ Be mindful that patients' cultural norms may influence their perceptions and communication styles
 - ✓ Arrange for interpreter or other services as needed
- **Seek and review patient satisfaction feedback to develop improvement strategies**
 - ✓ Consider having a drop box available for patients to anonymously submit comments and suggestions
 - ✓ Ask the patient about how their experience was before they leave and if there is anything that they'd like to see improve



HOW WE SUPPORT

We offer an online **Formulary Search Tool** that helps providers quickly look up medications for CareSource patients.

Drug coverage information for our formulary is also available on **Fingertip Formulary**, an application that providers can download to their mobile device.

CareSource has a dedicated **Education** section on our website to help **patients** and **providers** better understand our health plans and benefits. Our **Member Services** team is also available to provide all patients with guidance and education about our programs as well as any costs associated with their health care and treatment.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Educate patients about ways they can improve their health**
 - ✓ An informed patient is a satisfied patient. When you prepare them for what to expect from accessing their care to treatment and follow-up, they will be more equipped and ready to handle their situation when needs arise.
 - ✓ Have educational resources available to guide patients through the health care experience.
- **Anticipate costs associated with health care needs**
 - ✓ Prescribe medications covered by their health plan when possible
 - ✓ Encourage patients to contact their health plan to understand cost implications of treatment



7

Do your patients think your follow-up care is considerate and timely?

HOW WE SUPPORT

To help reduce readmissions, our **Care Transitions team** or the patient's case manager will coordinate with health care providers to ensure a smooth transition between facilities or from the inpatient setting to home.

We help by answering questions, ensuring that patients understand their medications, coordinating follow-up visits and getting any needed equipment/supplies for their home.

Our case managers are available to collaborate with you on management of your complex and high-risk patients.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Ensure patients receive and understand their test results within an appropriate timeframe**
 - ✓ Establish expectations with your patients for how and when results will be communicated (See Step 5)
 - ✓ Provide follow-up contact information if patients have questions about their results
 - ✓ Use preferred communication methods to deliver test results and ensure understanding
 - ✓ If a preferred communication method is unknown, ask at the next point of contact and document it in the patient's records
- **Obtain release of information for care coordination**
 - ✓ Ask patient to sign release, especially for Behavioral Health (BH) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment.
 - ✓ Refer patients to our Care Transitions team for discharge planning and follow-up
- **Contact patient soon after making specialist referral to ensure they were able to get the appointment they need**
 - ✓ Establish expectations with your patients for how long it takes to secure a specialist appointment

The **Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®)** and **Qualified Health Plan Enrollee Experience (QHPEE)** surveys are industry standard tools which ask patients enrolled in a Medicaid, Medicare or Marketplace plan to report on their experiences and satisfaction with their health care system. CareSource is required to anonymously collect CAHPS® and QHPEE data and submit results to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) on an annual basis, to demonstrate quality improvement performance from the patient perspective.

CareSource annually assesses this data along with other satisfaction surveys and research, to develop strategies with the goal of continuously improving the patient experience with their health care. We know that by seeking to learn about and better understand our members' perspectives, we can be more aware of the areas that impact them most and make a difference in their health care, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

CAHPS® is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).



Relevant CAHPS®/QHP Survey Questions

Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst health care possible and 10 is the best health care possible, what number would you use to rate all your health care in the last 6 months?

Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst personal doctor possible and 10 is the best personal doctor possible, what number would you use to rate your personal doctor in the last 6 months?

We want to know your rating of the specialist you saw most often in the last 6 months. Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst specialist possible and 10 is the best specialist possible, what number would you use to rate your specialist?

In the last 6 months...

- »...how often was it easy to get the care, tests, or treatment you needed?
- »...how often did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed?
- »...when you needed care right away, how often did you get care as soon as you needed?
- »...how often did you get an appointment for a check-up or routine care at a doctor's office or clinic as soon as you needed?

Wait time includes time spent in the waiting room and exam room. In the last 6 months, how often did you see the person you came to see within 15 minutes of your appointment time?

- »...how often did your personal doctor seem informed and up to date about the care you got from these doctors or other health providers?
- »...how often did your personal doctor seem informed and up to date about the care you got from specialists?
- »...how often did you and your personal doctor talk about the prescription medicines you were taking?
- »...when your personal doctor ordered a blood test, x-ray, or other test for you, how often did you get those results as soon as you needed them?
- »...how often did your personal doctor listen carefully to you?
- »...how often did your personal doctor show respect for what you had to say?
- »...how often did your personal doctor spend enough time with you?
- »...how often did your personal doctor explain things in a way that was easy to understand?
- »...how often did you get the help that you needed from your personal doctor's office to manage your care among these different providers and services?

Have you had the flu shot since July 1 (of the previous year)?

- »...when your personal doctor ordered a blood test, x-ray or other test for you, how often did someone from your personal doctor's office follow-up to give you results?
- »...when your personal doctor ordered a blood test, x-ray or other test for you, how often did you get those results as soon as you needed them?



Contact Us

Our desire is to make it an easy and seamless experience every time you need to communicate with us. If you need more information on how to use any of the resources we've described, you have several options in addition to contacting your Health Partner Engagement Specialist.

Georgia Provider Overview

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/

Provider Services

Dual Special Needs Plan

- www.caresource.com/ga/providers/contact-us/dsnp/
- 1-833-230-2176

Marketplace

- www.caresource.com/ga/providers/contact-us/marketplace/
- 1-855-230-2155

Provider Portal

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/provider-portal/

Find-A-Doctor tool

<https://findadoctor.caresource.com/>

Care Management referrals

1-844-438-9498

Care Transitions referrals

1-833-230-2032

Resources for Your Health Care Team:

Prior Authorization

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/provider-portal/prior-authorization/

- Dual Special Needs Plan 1-833-230-2176
- Marketplace 1-833-230-2155

Tools & Resources

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/tools-resources/

Request Patient Services | Transportation (DSNP only)

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/tools-resources/request-patient-services/medicaid/

Interpreter Services

1-833-230-2030

Drug Formulary

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/tools-resources/drug-formulary/

Provider Education

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/education/

Behavioral Health

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/education/patient-care/behavioral-health/

Suicide Prevention Toolkit

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/education/patient-care/behavioral-health/suicide-prevention-toolkit/

Opioid Toolkit

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/education/patient-care/behavioral-health/opioid-toolkit/

Training and Events Page

www.caresource.com/ga/providers/education/training-events/

Resources for Your CareSource Patients

Member Services

1-833-230-2030

Medication Therapy Management

www.caresource.com/ga/members/tools-resources/find-my-prescriptions/medication-therapy-management/

CareSource24® Nurse Advice Line

- Dual Special Needs 1-833-687-7301
- Marketplace 1-833-687-7342

CareSource Telehealth

www.caresource.com/ga/members/tools-resources/where-to-get-care/telehealth/

Educational Resources & Helpful Tools

- Member Education www.caresource.com/ga/members/education/
- Member Overview www.caresource.com/ga/members/
- MyHealth <https://my.caresource.com/>
- Where to Get Care www.caresource.com/ga/members/tools-resources/where-to-get-care/
- Preventive Care www.caresource.com/ga/members/education/preventive-care/

