

# HCAHPS

## Telephone Script (English)

### Overview

This telephone interview script is provided to assist interviewers while attempting to reach the patient. The script explains the purpose of the survey and confirms necessary information about the patient. Interviewers must not conduct the survey with a proxy.

### General Interviewing Conventions and Instructions

- All text that appears in lowercase letters must be read out loud
- Text in UPPERCASE letters must not be read out loud
- All questions and all answer categories must be read exactly as they are worded
- No changes are permitted to the order of the question and answer categories for the core and “About You” HCAHPS questions
- The five “About You” HCAHPS questions must remain together
- All transitional statements must be read
- Text that is underlined must be emphasized
- Characters in < > must not be read
- [Square brackets] are used to show programming instructions that must not actually appear on electronic telephone interviewing system screens.
- Only one language (i.e., English or Spanish) must appear on the electronic interviewing system screen
- MISSING/DON'T KNOW (DK) is a valid response option for each item in the electronic telephone interviewing system scripts. This allows the telephone interviewer to go to the next question if a patient is unable to provide a response for a given question (or refuses to provide a response). In the survey file layouts, a value of MISSING/DK is coded as “M - Missing/Don't know.”
- Skip patterns should be programmed into the electronic telephone interviewing system.
  - Appropriately skipped questions should be coded as “8 - Not applicable.” For example, if a patient answers “No” to Question 10 of the HCAHPS survey, the program should skip Question 11, and go to Question 12. Question 11 must then be coded as “8 - Not applicable.” Coding may be done automatically by the telephone interviewing system or later during data preparation.
  - When a response to a screener question is not obtained, the screener question and any questions in the skip pattern should be coded as “M - Missing/Don't know.” For example, if the patient does not provide an answer to Question 10 of the HCAHPS survey and the interviewer selects “M – Missing/Don't Know” to Question 10, then the telephone interviewing system should be programmed to skip Question 11, and go to Question 12. Question 11 must then be coded as “M - Missing/Don't know.” Coding may be done automatically by the telephone interviewing system or later during data preparation.

***NOTE: SEE INTERVIEWING GUIDELINES IN APPENDIX I FOR GUIDELINES ON HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT TO REACH PATIENTS.***

## **INITIATING CONTACT**

START Hello, may I please speak to [SAMPLED PATIENT NAME]?  
<1> YES [GO TO INTRO]  
<2> NO [REFUSAL]  
<3> NO, NOT AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW [SET CALLBACK]

### **IF ASKED WHO IS CALLING:**

This is [INTERVIEWER NAME] calling from [DATA COLLECTION CONTRACTOR] on behalf of [HOSPITAL NAME]. We are conducting a survey about healthcare. Is [SAMPLED PATIENT NAME] available?

### **IF ASKED WHETHER PERSON CAN SERVE AS PROXY FOR SAMPLED PATIENT:**

For this survey, we need to speak directly to [SAMPLED PATIENT NAME]. Is [SAMPLED PATIENT NAME] available?

### **IF THE SAMPLED PATIENT IS NOT AVAILABLE:**

Can you tell me a convenient time to call back to speak with (him/her)?

### **IF THE SAMPLED PATIENT SAYS THIS IS NOT A GOOD TIME:**

If you don't have the time now, when is a more convenient time to call you back?

## **SPEAKING WITH SAMPLED PATIENT**

INTRO Hi, this is [INTERVIEWER NAME] calling on behalf of [HOSPITAL NAME]. [HOSPITAL NAME] is participating in a survey about the care people receive in the hospital. This survey is part of a national initiative to measure the quality of care in hospitals. Survey results can be used by people to choose a hospital. Your answers may be shared with the hospital for purposes of quality improvement.

Participation in the survey is completely voluntary and will not affect your health care or your benefits. It should take about 7 minutes [OR VENDOR SPECIFY] to answer.

This call may be monitored [recorded] for quality improvement purposes.

### **OPTIONAL QUESTION TO INCLUDE:**

I'd like to begin the survey now, is this a good time for us to continue?

***NOTE: THE NUMBER OF MINUTES WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER HCAHPS IS INTEGRATED WITH HOSPITAL-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.***

S1 Our records show that you were discharged from [HOSPITAL NAME] on or about [DISCHARGE DATE]. Is that right?

READ YES/NO RESPONSE CHOICES ONLY IF NECESSARY

- <1> YES [GO TO Q1\_INTRO]
- <2> NO [GO TO INEL1]
- <3> DON'T KNOW [GO TO INEL1]
- <4> REFUSAL [GO TO INEL1]

### CONFIRMING INELIGIBLE PATIENTS

INEL1: Were you ever at this hospital?

- <1> YES [GO TO INEL2]
- <2> NO [GO TO INEL\_END]

INEL2: Were you a patient at this hospital in the last year?

- <1> YES [GO TO INEL3]
- <2> NO [GO TO INEL\_END]

INEL3: When was this?

IF ANY DATE WAS WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF [DISCHARGE DATE], GO TO Q1\_INTRO; OTHERWISE, GO TO INEL\_END.

INEL\_END: Thank you for your time. It looks like we made a mistake. Have a good (day/evening).

### BEGIN HCAHPS QUESTIONS

Q1\_INTRO Please answer the questions in this survey about this stay at [HOSPITAL NAME]. When thinking about your answers, do not include any other hospital stays. The first questions are about the care you received from nurses during this hospital stay.

**BE PREPARED TO PROBE IF THE PATIENT ANSWERS OUTSIDE OF THE ANSWER CATEGORIES PROVIDED. PROBE BY REPEATING THE ANSWER CATEGORIES ONLY; DO NOT INTERPRET FOR THE PATIENT.**

Q1 During this hospital stay, how often did nurses treat you with courtesy and respect? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always?
  
- <M> MISSING/DK

Q2 During this hospital stay, how often did nurses listen carefully to you? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always?

<M> MISSING/DK

Q3 During this hospital stay, how often did nurses explain things in a way you could understand? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always?

<M> MISSING/DK

Q4 During this hospital stay, after you pressed the call button, how often did you get help as soon as you wanted it? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually,
- <4> Always, or
- <9> I never pressed the call button?

<M> MISSING/DK

Q5\_INTRO The next questions are about the care you received from doctors during this hospital stay.

Q5 During this hospital stay, how often did doctors treat you with courtesy and respect? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always?

<M> MISSING/DK

- Q6 During this hospital stay, how often did doctors listen carefully to you? Would you say...
- <1> Never,
  - <2> Sometimes,
  - <3> Usually, or
  - <4> Always?
- <M> MISSING/DK
- Q7 During this hospital stay, how often did doctors explain things in a way you could understand? Would you say...
- <1> Never,
  - <2> Sometimes,
  - <3> Usually, or
  - <4> Always?
- <M> MISSING/DK
- Q8\_INTRO The next set of questions is about the hospital environment.
- Q8 During this hospital stay, how often were your room and bathroom kept clean? Would you say...
- <1> Never,
  - <2> Sometimes,
  - <3> Usually, or
  - <4> Always?
- <M> MISSING/DK
- Q9 During this hospital stay, how often was the area around your room quiet at night? Would you say...
- <1> Never,
  - <2> Sometimes,
  - <3> Usually, or
  - <4> Always?
- <M> MISSING/DK
- Q10\_INTRO The next questions are about your experiences in this hospital.
- Q10 During this hospital stay, did you need help from nurses or other hospital staff in getting to the bathroom or in using a bedpan?  
READ YES/NO RESPONSE CHOICES ONLY ***IF NECESSARY***
- <1> YES
  - <2> NO [GO TO Q12]
- <M> MISSING/DK [GO TO Q12]

Q11 How often did you get help in getting to the bathroom or in using a bedpan as soon as you wanted? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always?

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]  
<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q10 = "2 - NO" THEN Q11 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" OR IF Q10 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q11 = "MISSING/DK"]

Q12 During this hospital stay, did you need medicine for pain?  
READ YES/NO RESPONSE CHOICES ONLY *IF NECESSARY*

- <1> YES
- <2> NO [GO TO Q15]

<M> MISSING/DK [GO TO Q15]

Q13 During this hospital stay, how often was your pain well controlled? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always?

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]  
<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q12 = "2 - NO" THEN Q13 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" OR IF Q12 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q13 = "M - MISSING/DK"]

Q14 During this hospital stay, how often did the hospital staff do everything they could to help you with your pain? Would you say...

- <1> Never,
- <2> Sometimes,
- <3> Usually, or
- <4> Always

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]  
<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q12 = "2 - NO" THEN Q14 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" OR IF Q12 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q14 = "M - MISSING/DK"]

Q15 During this hospital stay, were you given any medicine that you had not taken before?

READ YES/NO RESPONSE CHOICES ONLY *IF NECESSARY*

<1> YES

<2> NO [GO TO Q18\_INTRO]

<M> MISSING/DK [GO TO Q18\_INTRO]

Q16 Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff tell you what the medicine was for? Would you say...

<1> Never,

<2> Sometimes,

<3> Usually, or

<4> Always?

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]

<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q15 = "2 - NO" THEN Q16 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" OR IF Q15 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q16 = "M - MISSING/DK"]

Q17 Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff describe possible side effects in a way you could understand? Would you say...

<1> Never,

<2> Sometimes,

<3> Usually, or

<4> Always?

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]

<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q15 = "2 - NO" THEN Q17 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" OR IF Q15 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q17 = "M - MISSING/DK"]

Q18\_INTRO The next questions are about when you left the hospital.

Q18 After you left the hospital, did you go directly to your own home, to someone else's home, or to another health facility?

READ RESPONSE CHOICES 1, 2 AND 3 ONLY IF NECESSARY

<1> OWN HOME

<2> SOMEONE ELSE'S HOME

<3> ANOTHER HEALTH FACILITY [GO TO Q21]

<M> MISSING/DK [GO TO Q21]

Q19 During this hospital stay, did doctors, nurses, or other hospital staff talk with you about whether you would have the help you needed when you left the hospital?  
READ YES/NO RESPONSE CHOICES ONLY *IF NECESSARY*

- <1> YES
- <2> NO

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]  
<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q18 = "3 - ANOTHER HEALTH FACILITY" THEN Q19 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" IF Q18 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q19 = "M - MISSING/DK"]

Q20 During this hospital stay, did you get information in writing about what symptoms or health problems to look out for after you left the hospital?  
READ YES/NO RESPONSE CHOICES ONLY *IF NECESSARY*

- <1> YES
- <2> NO

[<8> NOT APPLICABLE]  
<M> MISSING/DK

[NOTE: IF Q18 = "3 - ANOTHER HEALTH FACILITY" THEN Q20 = "8 - NOT APPLICABLE" IF Q18 = "M - MISSING/DK" THEN Q20 = "M - MISSING/DK"]

Q21 We want to know your overall rating of your stay at [FACILITY NAME]. This is the stay that ended around [DISCHARGE DATE]. Please do not include any other hospital stays in your answer.

Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst hospital possible and 10 is the best hospital possible, what number would you use to rate this hospital during your stay?

IF THE PATIENT DOES NOT PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE,  
PROBE BY REPEATING: "Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst hospital possible and 10 is the best hospital possible, what number would you use to rate this hospital during your stay?"

- <0> 0
- <1> 1
- <2> 2
- <3> 3
- <4> 4
- <5> 5
- <6> 6
- <7> 7
- <8> 8
- <9> 9
- <10> 10

<M> MISSING/DK

Q22 Would you recommend this hospital to your friends and family? Would you say...  
<1> Definitely no,  
<2> Probably no,  
<3> Probably yes, or  
<4> Definitely yes?

<M> MISSING/DK

Q23\_INTRO This last set of questions is about you. Please listen to all response choices before you answer the following questions.

Q23 In general, how would you rate your overall health? Would you say that it is...  
<1> Excellent,  
<2> Very good,  
<3> Good,  
<4> Fair, or  
<5> Poor?

<M> MISSING/DK

Q24 What is the highest grade or level of school that you have completed? Please listen to all six response choices before you answer. Did you ..

<1> Complete the 8<sup>th</sup> grade or less,  
<2> Complete some high school, but did not graduate,  
<3> Graduate from high school or earn a GED,  
<4> Complete some college or earn a 2-year degree,  
<5> Graduate from a 4-year college, or  
<6> Complete more than 4-year college degree?

<M> MISSING/DK

ACADEMIC TRAINING BEYOND A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA THAT DOES NOT LEAD TO A BACHELORS DEGREE SHOULD BE CODED AS 4. IF THE PATIENT DESCRIBES NON-ACADEMIC TRAINING, SUCH AS TRADE SCHOOL, PROBE TO FIND OUT IF S/HE HAS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND CODE 2 OR 3, AS APPROPRIATE.

Q25 Are you of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin or descent? Please listen to all five response choices before you answer. Would you say...

<1> No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino,  
<2> Yes, Puerto Rican,  
<3> Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano,  
<4> Yes, Cuban, or  
<5> Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?

<M> MISSING/DK

[FOR TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING, QUESTION 26 IS BROKEN INTO PARTS A-E.]  
READ ALL RACE CATEGORIES PAUSING AT EACH RACE CATEGORY TO ALLOW  
PATIENT TO REPLY TO EACH RACE CATEGORY.

IF THE PATIENT REPLIES, “WHY ARE YOU ASKING MY RACE?”:

We ask about your race for demographic purposes. We want to be sure that the people we survey accurately represent the racial diversity in this country.

IF THE PATIENT REPLIES, “I ALREADY TOLD YOU MY RACE”:

I understand, however the survey requires me to ask about all races so results can include people who are multiracial. If the race does not apply to you please answer no. Thanks for your patience.

Q26            When I read the following list, please tell me if the category describes your race. I am required to read all five categories. You may choose one or more.

Q26A          Are you White?  
<1>    YES/WHITE  
<0>    NO/NOT WHITE  
  
<M>    MISSING/DK

Q26B          Are you Black or African-American?  
<1>    YES/BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN  
<0>    NO/NOT BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN  
  
<M>    MISSING/DK

Q26C          Are you Asian?  
<1>    YES/ASIAN  
<0>    NO/NOT ASIAN  
  
<M>    MISSING/DK

Q26D          Are you Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander?  
<1>    YES/NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER  
<0>    NO/NOT NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER  
  
<M>    MISSING/DK

Q26E          Are you American Indian or Alaska Native?  
  
<1>    YES/AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE  
<0>    NO/NOT AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE  
  
<M>    MISSING/DK

Q27           What language do you mainly speak at home? Please listen to all six response choices before you answer. Would you say that you mainly speak...

- <1>   English,                   [GO TO END]
- <2>   Spanish,                   [GO TO END]
- <3>   Chinese,                    [GO TO END]
- <4>   Russian,                    [GO TO END]
- <5>   Vietnamese, or            [GO TO END]
- <6>   Some other language? [GO TO Q27A]
- <M>   MISSING/DK               [GO TO END]

Q27A           What other language do you mainly speak at home?

[NOTE: PLEASE DOCUMENT LANGUAGE AND MAINTAIN IN YOUR INTERNAL RECORDS.]

END:           Those are all the questions I have. Thank you for your time. Have a good (day/evening).

