

# Patient Experience Tips

Texas Children's Health Plan's Member Experience Tips are related to the Health Plan Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HP-CAHPS). TCHP wants to support providers in numerous ways, including sharing resources on patient experience. If you have any questions or additional tips you would like to share with the provider community, please contact TCHP's Provider Relations team.

## Patient Experience Tips

### ✓ #1: Make sure Patients Understand

Observe how you speak with patients and identify ways to be clearer or use simple language to explain complicated terms. Ask patients to repeat back complex instructions or ask if they have any questions to encourage communication and increase adherence.

### ✓ #2: Prioritize Respect

Make sure patients are always treated respectfully. This includes recognizing and respecting a patient's cultural background and beliefs. This may seem like common sense, but we could all use a reminder. Every patient deserves to be treated with the golden rule in mind.

### ✓ #3: Get to Know Your Patients

Providers, staff, and health systems must try to get to know their patients. Some ways of doing this would be to ask your patients about their home or family life. Share things about yourself. This helps patients feel comfortable sharing intimate details regarding their health.

### ✓ #4: Address Patients' Questions

Give patients your full attention and acknowledge their concerns. Welcome their list of questions. Answer their questions honestly. If a patient has a long list, negotiate which items to cover, consider their priorities, and clarify expectations. Provide them with other avenues of communication for the unanswered questions – member portal, email, phone.

### ✓ #5: A Smile Can Go a Long Way

Speaking in a caring and welcoming manner can help improve overall patient experience within your practice. Smile to brighten up your (and others') day.

### ✓ #6: Take a Seat and Eye Contact

Sit during your appointments with patients. One study depicted that patients estimate that they spend more time with providers when the physician sits down. Sitting is also especially important when delivering bad news. Face the patient and pause to make eye contact. It is difficult in the digital age of EHRs to make personal connections, however intentionally doing this will make the patient feel heard.

✓ **#7: Answering Phones Positively**

Answer phone calls with a positive tone and try to answer all your patients' questions. If you do not have the answer, let them know. Inform patients that you do not have the answer to their question right now, but you are working on a solution and will follow up

✓ **#8: Improve Waiting Room Experience**

Have the waiting area clean, comfortable and inviting with warm lighting, soothing music and art. Offer patient's amenities such as books, magazines, children's activity area, or charging stations. Check in on patients if they are waiting an extended period – they will not feel forgotten and are informed of any delays.

✓ **#9: Perform a Patient Experience Survey**

In regularly surveying your own patient panel, you will be able to learn first-hand about what your patients want along with areas of growth to improve patients' experience of care.

✓ **#10: Ask Patients about their Social Needs**

In a survey, 97% of respondents wanted their medical provider to ask about their social needs. Ask about access to food/balanced meals, transportation to receive medical care, or housing stability. If they need assistance in any area, consider referring to TCHP Case Management or [community resources](#) that can help.