OAS CAHPS
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the OAS CAHPS survey?
A: The Outpatient and Ambulatory Surgery Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (OAS CAHPS) survey tool measures patient experience with surgery performed at a hospital-based outpatient surgery department (HOPD) or a free-standing ambulatory surgery center (ASC). The survey also includes questions to understand patient-reported health outcomes.

Please note: the survey is currently being reviewed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and will receive its official CAHPS name in the near future. During the testing period it was referred to as Outpatient and Ambulatory Surgery Patient Experience of Care Survey (O/APECS).

Q: Which organizations should use the OAS CAHPS survey?
A: The survey was developed for use by Medicare certified hospital-based outpatient surgery departments and ambulatory surgery centers.

Q: What does the OAS CAHPS survey measure?
A: The finalized OAS CAHPS survey contains 37 questions about the following topics:
- Preparation for the surgery/procedure
- Check in and pre-operative process
- Cleanliness and privacy of the facility
- Surgery facility staff communication
- Discharge instructions
- Preparation for the recovery at home
- Patient reported complications
- Overall rating of surgery center
- Willingness to recommend

Q: When does official data collection begin for the OAS CAHPS survey?
A: Starting in 2016, CMS plans to launch voluntary monthly data collection using the OAS CAHPS tool. Press Ganey believes that in the future CMS will require facilities to conduct the survey as part of the Outpatient Quality Reporting Program or the Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting Program.

Figure 1: Press Ganey’s Anticipated OAS CAHPS Implementation Timeline
Q: What are the approved survey modes for OAS CAHPS?
A: Press Ganey expects CMS to approve three modes of administration: mail only, telephone only, and mail with a telephone follow-up.

Q: Does my organization need to use a vendor to complete the 2016 voluntary survey administration?
A: Yes. In 2015, the OAS CAHPS survey will be administered by an independent CMS-certified vendor. Vendor training and certification is anticipated to begin in late 2015. Press Ganey plans to become a CMS-certified vendor and offer the OAS CAHPS tool to clients who wish to voluntarily collect data in 2016.

Q: How many patients will be surveyed?
A: CMS has indicated that participating facilities must target a minimum of 300 completed surveys per year. Press Ganey recommends using census-based data collection which includes mail data collection for the official program and supplements with eSurvey.

Q: Which patients are eligible for the survey?
A: The OAS CAHPS survey will focus on adult patients who had specific surgeries performed in an outpatient setting. Patients who are admitted as Inpatients will be excluded.

Q: If OAS CAHPS is not yet required, why should we start measuring now?
A: Based on other CAHPS programs, Press Ganey knows that clients who start measuring early outperform those clients who start the survey during National Implementation. Press Ganey plans to offer an OAS CAHPS Early Adopter Program in Summer 2015 to allow organizations to gain experience with the OAS CAHPS questions prior to voluntary participation in 2016.