



STEP 6.4: Review guidelines and tips for reporting to consumers (parents of young children)

➔ What is the purpose of this step?

The purpose of this step is to provide you with a reporting template that can be used to share the PHDS findings with consumers, which for the PHDS are parents of young children. We also highlight tips and issues to consider, based on past CAHMI experiences.

In this step you will:

- Review the CAHMI template for reporting the findings to consumers.
- Review tips and issues to consider in reporting the findings to consumers.



Guidelines and Issues to Consider

- Review the CAHMI template for reporting the findings to consumers.

There are two main reasons that quality-of-care information is shared with consumers:

- 1) To help them choose a health care provider or system.
- 2) To provide information about the current level of care provided in their system, what they should be receiving, and how they can ask questions and raise important issues so that recommended care is provided.

Appendix 15 provides a report template about providing information to parents. The parent handout is based on focus groups and cognitive interviews CAHMI conducted with parents about how the PHDS findings could be reported in ways that would help them understand the current level of care their child receives and motivate them to be partners in the improvement process. A detailed summary of the qualitative findings can be found on the CAHMI Web site in the report "[Summary of Interviews & Focus Groups with Parents of Young Children: Reporting the Promoting Healthy Development Survey \(PHDS\) Findings to Parents.](#)"

Important characteristics about this template and how to disseminate it include the following:

- The template should be formatted as a brochure or pamphlet. Parents who participated in the one-to-one interviews and focus groups indicated a strong preference that they receive this pamphlet before OR during their child's well-child visit from their child's health care providers and/or other office staff.
- It is important that parents understand why this information is being given to them and how the health care providers in their office plan to use the information to improve the health care they provide. Office staff who give the brochure to the parent can explain how the survey findings are being used. This important information can also be noted in a cover letter that accompanies the brochure if it is mailed.

- Review tips and issues to consider in reporting the findings to consumers.

Below are some general tips and issues to consider in reporting the findings to consumers:

If you are using the report to inform consumer choice:

- *Provide comparative information.*

If the report is intended to provide consumers with information to make more informed health care decisions, such as deciding between pediatric offices, then a data display that facilitates comparison is useful. Also, certain consumers may need assistance in interpreting the information to inform their decision.

- *Layer information to account for all types of consumers and make the results easier to interpret.*

Since everyone has different health information needs and experiences with the health care system there is no

Additional Tips for Creating Consumer Reports

- Conserve white space. White space makes the document appear more manageable to consumers at first glance. Too little white space can be overwhelming.
- Be concise. While background and context are important, presenting the information in a clear, succinct way is critical.
- Use bullets and lists when possible. Lists are easier to read and process than paragraphs. Moreover, bullets and lists result in more white space.

"average" consumer. Consequently, creating a report for one subgroup of this audience will likely make the report less effective for another subgroup. Also, different groups of people put more or less value on different aspects of quality care. Thus, layering information is probably your best strategy for creating a report that different consumers will find useful. This allows those who are not interested in a lot of detail to quickly glean the necessary information from the report. Parents can also pick and choose aspects of care from among the quality measures that most resonate with them.

- ***Provide some background information on quality measurement to help consumers understand the information presented.***

The general public may have little or no knowledge of health care and how quality is measured. Also, parents may be skeptical of the source of the information. Therefore, significant background information will be necessary to help them understand the information and why it is important to them. Background information includes descriptions and definitions that explain:

- Why measuring health care quality is important.
 - Which aspect of health care quality you are addressing in the report (e.g., health plan, providers, etc.).
 - Why consumer assessments are important to understanding health care quality.
 - The source of the PHDS information and/or who sponsored the survey.
 - What PHDS results can tell you and how to use that information.
- ***Consult with your audience to see if the information is easily understood.***

Qualitative testing of your report is critical to ensure the audience understands the information and uses it in the ways you intended. Even if you ask just one or two people who represent each of your stakeholders to review and provide feedback about your report, it will be invaluable in ensuring that the findings are readable and the key messages are conveyed.

If you are using the report to inform and educate the parent to be a partner in improving care:

- ***Research findings about the content that should be included.***

Parents reported that they wanted the following information in their report:

- 1) General information about the PHDS, how many parents completed the survey, and how their child's health care providers are going to use the information to improve care.
- 2) Item-level findings coupled with specific tips or actions that parents can take to improve care.
- 3) General statements about what health care parents should expect at their child's well-visits.
- 4) An emphasis on the parent's role as a partner in their child's health care.
- 5) Additional resources listed that provide parents with information about the survey, the topics assessed in the PHDS, and how he/she can work with their child's health care providers.

- ***Avoid comparative information, but do include a "gold standard."***

Since parents are not making a choice about their child's health care, comparative information is generally not useful and can interfere with the message you are trying to convey. Instead, present details on the care that parents should expect from their child's health care providers and demonstrate how close those providers are to the goal.

- ***Avoid complex tables and charts.***

The majority of parents are not versed in reading and interpreting data tables and charts, so they should generally be avoided. However, a simple bar chart showing how close the doctor is to a certain standard or goal can be very effective.

- ***Present both positive and negative information.***

Parents want to see a balance of what their child's doctor is doing right and the areas where he or she could improve. Focusing only on the negative may make

the parent feel overwhelmed or helpless. Using a mixture of positive and negative indicators when presenting the results helps parents feel good about the care their child is receiving and also helps the parent to set goals in certain areas.

- ***Highlight which aspects of care can be improved.***

Present results in terms of what action can be taken. Is there a list of questions or checklist the parent can bring to the next visit?

Additional Tips for Reporting PHDS Data to Parents

- ***Collaborate with groups that are respected by the audience.***

To add perceived credibility to your report, mention any collaborative efforts with respected organizations or groups.

- ***Provide additional information and/or resources.***

Provide information about related resources such as Web sites, books, and telephone numbers parents can use to answer questions about the reports and/or aspects of care presented.

- ***Be aware of issues surrounding the confidentiality of results.***

Only report on practices or providers that have a sufficient number of respondents, so that the risk of breaching confidentiality is minimized.

- ***Display the findings in a multimedia format.***

When possible, enable parents to view the findings in multiple formats, such as on a Web site as well on paper.