

Theme 5

Patient experience

Patients' experiences of their interactions with the healthcare system.

Mechanisms that support regular patient engagement

We encourage our patients and their families to give us feedback and provide them with a number of channels to do so, including an online survey on our website, a central customer service centre, direct contact with the hospital, regional or corporate offices and a post discharge email survey.

Other engagement channels include:

- Appointmented, a telephone-based appointment service.
- Navigators for cancer patients.
- Corporate websites, social media platforms, pre-admission facilities, SMS messages post discharge, patient focus groups and listening forums.

We use the HCAHPS²⁷ patient experience survey to measure a patient's perspective on key aspects of their care, for example, how often they felt they were treated with courtesy and respect. It is not a measure of the patient's satisfaction with their care. HCAHPS measures and embodies a culture of 'always' in that it is necessary to always deliver consistently high quality person-centred care²⁸.

Understanding a patient's perspective is important as patients with a positive experience often have better clinical outcomes. Our patient engagement channels provide rich information on our patient experience performance, and we use these insights to:

- Build strong partnerships with our patients and their families.
- Recognise and learn from facilities that excel.
- Identify what works well and where improvement is required.

Netcare and Akeso Clinics outcomes

In the Netcare Hospital division, nursing scores improved in 2019 with a 7% improvement in patients feeling that our nurses always treat them with courtesy and respect compared to 2017. Pleasingly, the largest improvement is from the question about listening to patient needs, showing a 9% improvement from 2017. Our doctors have always scored at or above 80% across all questions regarding their interaction with patients.

Akeso Clinics' nurses and doctors are consistently rated high for each question.

Patient experience (higher score is better)	2019	2018	2017
Netcare Hospital division (% patients reporting always)			
Nurses always treat you with courtesy and respect	78.0%	71.2%	71.3%
Nurses always listen carefully to you	69.2%	61.5%	61.0%
Nurses always explain things in a way you could understand	68.1%	60.6%	60.3%
Doctors always treat you with courtesy and respect	90.3%	86.2%	86.5%
Doctors always listen carefully to you	86.3%	81.7%	82.0%
Doctors always explain things in a way you could understand	84.3%	79.6%	79.9%
Akeso Clinics (% patients reporting always)			
Nurses always treat you with courtesy and respect	84.4%	84.7%	84.8%
Nurses always listen carefully to you	81.5%	82.0%	80.9%
Nurses always explain things in a way you could understand	83.5%	83.7%	83.1%
Doctors always treat you with courtesy and respect	94.3%	94.3%	94.3%
Doctors always listen carefully to you	93.2%	93.1%	93.1%
Doctors always explain things in a way you could understand	92.6%	92.4%	92.4%

Measure definition: percentage of patients who rated their experience as 'always' in response to the questions: 'how often did your nurses/doctors treat you with courtesy and respect, listen carefully to you and explain things in a way you could understand?'

To measure a culture of 'always', we use rigorous statistical methods to predict the 99.9% upper bound in achievable performance – an 'ideal score'. This has been used to set individualised hospital targets over two to five years.

27. Website: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/HospitalQuality/Inits/HospitalHCAHPS>.

28. Source: Studer, Q. et al. (2010). *The HCAHPS Handbook: Hardwire Your Hospital for Pay-for-Performance Success*. Gulf Breeze, FL: Fire Starter Publications.