

# Patient Experience Survey Stories



## AT A GLANCE



**Physician**  
Dr. Robert Hauptman



**Location**  
St. Albert



**Team**  
Two part-time medical office assistants



**Panel Size**  
750

## Dr. Robert Hauptman

Dr. Robert Hauptman has been practising medicine in Alberta for more than 35 years. For the past five years, he's been a family physician in St. Albert. He serves approximately 750 patients, including a significant senior population. His small office is supported by two part-time medical office assistants.

### THE GOAL

As a long-time physician in Alberta, Dr. Hauptman believes it's critical to routinely ask patients in his panel about their experiences with his clinic in a formalized manner to ensure they receive what they need and feel respected and heard.

"Unlike other professions where you get a yearly performance review from your boss, we don't get that as physicians," he says. "That's why I like to survey my patients. It's my performance review, and it means a lot to me."

### THE SOLUTION

Dr. Hauptman selected the [Primary Care Patient Experience Survey from the Health Quality Council of Alberta](#). The HQCA's survey has been rigorously tested by more than 10,000 patients and leveraged by hundreds of clinics since 2018.

"The HQCA's process was super smooth," says Dr. Hauptman. "The HQCA used the emails from our EMR to invite patients to participate and took care of all of the other important details in administering the survey."

Dr. Hauptman was pleasantly surprised with how many of his patients took time to respond, especially because he has a large senior population.

### THE VALUE

Dr. Hauptman says there were a few key takeaways from the results of his HQCA survey.

First, he had an assumption that his patients appreciated him and his team through informal comments they share, but he didn't anticipate how favourably his patients would collectively rate his care. Nearly 75 per cent of respondents gave him a 10 out of 10. Typically, approximately one-third of respondents to the HQCA's Primary Care Patient Experience Survey would give a 10 out of 10 provider rating.

For Dr. Hauptman, this confirms for him that his deliberate strategy to cap his patient population at 750 is working as he intended at this stage of his career.

"The biggest challenges I've had over the years is watching my panel size get too big. I'm learning that if you can keep a panel size under 1,000, you can serve your patients more effectively."

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“As doctors, we don’t get performance reviews and without them, it’s easy to think we’re doing a better job than we are. **Patient feedback is my way of knowing I’m on the right track.** When patients have a good relationship with me, they are **more likely to follow through on our plan.** This is a non-threatening snapshot of how my patients feel about me, it easily fulfills a **CPSA\*** requirement, and it should be the standard.”

– Dr. Robert Hauptman



While the access domain is often rated the lowest for patients taking the HQCA’s Primary Care Patient Experience survey, most of the respondents at Dr. Hauptman’s clinic said he has always been available when they wanted. Dr. Hauptman keeps four emergency slots available daily for urgent needs. He can think of only two times in five years when a patient wasn’t able to see him when needed.

Even Dr. Hauptman’s lowest rated section in the survey – questions about care priorities – had scores that were nearly 10 to 20 percentage points higher than his peers.

He credits a focus on preventative health checks. “Good preventative healthcare is important. I try to encourage my patients to be intentional about their health and offer them individual checklists on areas they can improve their health.”

Dr. Hauptman knows there are trade-offs that come with having a panel cap of 750 – and that not every family physician in Alberta is able to offer this level of service. “What I gain in patient and personal satisfaction, I lose in

income,” he acknowledges. “But my team and I are happier, and it appears our patients are as well.”

Dr. Hauptman says he will conduct another HQCA Primary Care Patient Experience Survey again in the future to ensure he is staying on track and meeting his goals.

He encourages other family physicians across Alberta to consider it as well.

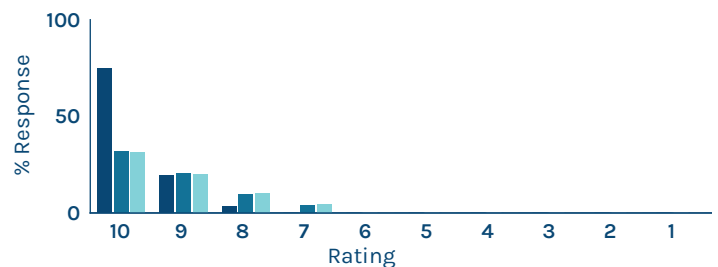
## ABOUT HQCA

The Health Quality Council of Alberta is a provincial agency that brings together patients, families, and our partners from across healthcare and academia to inspire improvement in patient safety, person-centred care, and health service quality. We assess and study the healthcare system, identify effective practices, and engage with Albertans to gather information about their experiences. Our responsibilities are outlined in the *Health Quality Council of Alberta Act*.

## PROVIDER RATING

Overall, using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst care provider possible and 10 is the best care provider possible, what number would you use to rate your care provider?

- Dr. Robert Hauptman
- Edmonton zone
- Alberta



\*CPSA refers to the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta, which requires physicians to complete a practice-driven improvement opportunity with objective data once every five years.