

Primary Care Patient Experience Survey Resource List

Background reading

Introduction

Purpose of this document

This guide gives resources to primary care providers who are seeking information about improving patient experience.

How the resource lists are organized

Resources are organized by the topic domains in the HQCA Primary Care Patient Experience Survey. For easy access to the resources, keep the file open rather than printing it in hard copy because many of the website URLs are hyperlinked and cross-referenced to other resources within the document.

How the resource lists were developed

The resources were compiled via a literature and environmental scan and suggested by primary care providers and experts in Alberta and internationally.

What do we mean by background reading?

The background reading offered in this guide includes links to papers and literature that explain the evidence and value of improving primary care patient experience in the areas measured in the survey.



Note: This resource list was updated on March 10, 2025.

“
**When your patient experience is excellent, then
the provider experience is excellent.**”

– Family physician



Background reading

These resources provide links to articles that help explain why investing time and resources to improve access, team-based care, care coordination, communication, and care priorities and treatment plans will support patient experience in your clinic.

Access

The paper that follows relates to HQCA Primary Care Patient Experience Survey questions about timely access to a primary care provider for routine and urgent care.

[Association between continuity and access in primary care: a retrospective cohort study](#)

Cook L, Golonka RP, Cook CM, Walker RL, Faris P, Spenceley S, Lewanczuk R, Wedel R, Love R, Andres C, Byers SD, Collins T, Oddie S. Association between continuity and access in primary care: a retrospective cohort study.

CMAJ Open. 2020 Nov 10;8(4):E722-E730.

[doi: 10.9778/cmajo.20200014](https://doi.org/10.9778/cmajo.20200014)

This open-access paper uses Alberta evidence to describe the relationship between access to a primary care physician and continuity of care.

Team-based care

The article that follows provides more in-depth information about operationalizing team-based care. It relates to survey questions about patient experiences with their healthcare team.

[Why Canada's health system needs \(a lot more\) team-based care.](#)

Canadian Medical Association

A short CMA article that explains the rationale for team-based care, including benefits for patients, providers and the healthcare systems. Includes links to other resources (e.g., a podcast about the wellness benefits of team-based care) and advocacy actions.

Care coordination

The literature review below relates to survey questions about coordination of patient care.

[Health Networks and Integrated Health Care. Literature Review](#)

Sajid, A. et al. (2020). Saskatchewan Health Authority

A 42-page review of integrated primary healthcare with a six-page summary at the beginning. Describes various successful models of care integration including PCNs in Alberta, but also the Nuka System in Alaska and others. Identifies concrete facilitators and barriers to integrated care, along with promising practices.

Communication

The paper below relates to survey questions about communication between patients and care providers, including, how providers respect and listen to patients, explain things in an understandable manner, and how the provider involves patients in decision-making about care.

[The power of relationships: what is relationship-based care and why is it important?](#)

Royal College of General Practitioners (2021)

A 16-page paper that explains the benefits of relationship-based care in the primary care context. Includes discussion of how relationship-based care is changing and ways to reinvigorate it. Includes case study examples.

“Having people receive person-centred care is the goal, and that you want to measure and improve patient experience as a means of providing more person-centred care.”

– Expert, Patient Experiences



Care priorities and treatment plans

The article that follows relate to survey questions about setting care priorities and developing treatment plans with patients including working with patients to discuss their health goals and priorities; creating, reviewing and adapting a treatment plan; and discussing difficulties and needed supports for managing health concerns.

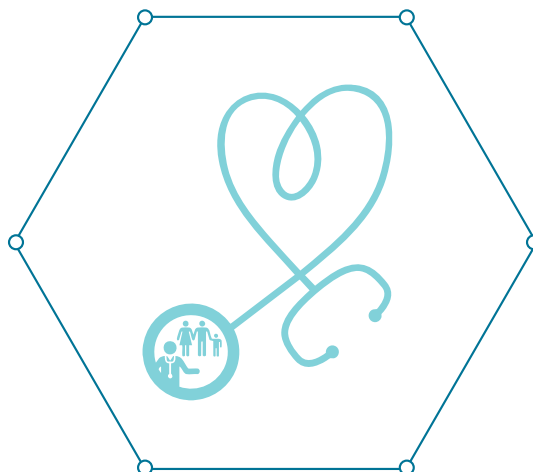
Shared decision making as a method of care

Montori, V., Ruissen, M., Hargraves, I., Brito, J. & Kunneman, M. (2023). Shared decision making as a method of care. *BMJ Evidence-Based Medicine*, 28(4), 213-217.

A short, practical article that describes shared decision making as a method of care; that is, not something extra, but something that providers do every day with patients to arrive at the best plan of care. The article describes, and presents practical strategies for, four steps of shared decision making [SDM]: foster a conversation; purposefully select and adapt the SDM process; support SDM; evaluate and learn SDM. This method is described as seeking to make as few demands as possible of patients and of providers, while arriving at solutions.

Additional resources

We have additional resources to help you improve patient experience. Visit [HQCA.ca](https://www.hqca.ca) to see our resource lists for Quick Wins and Deeper Dives, as well as this Background Reading guide.



About the Health Quality Council of Alberta

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*.