

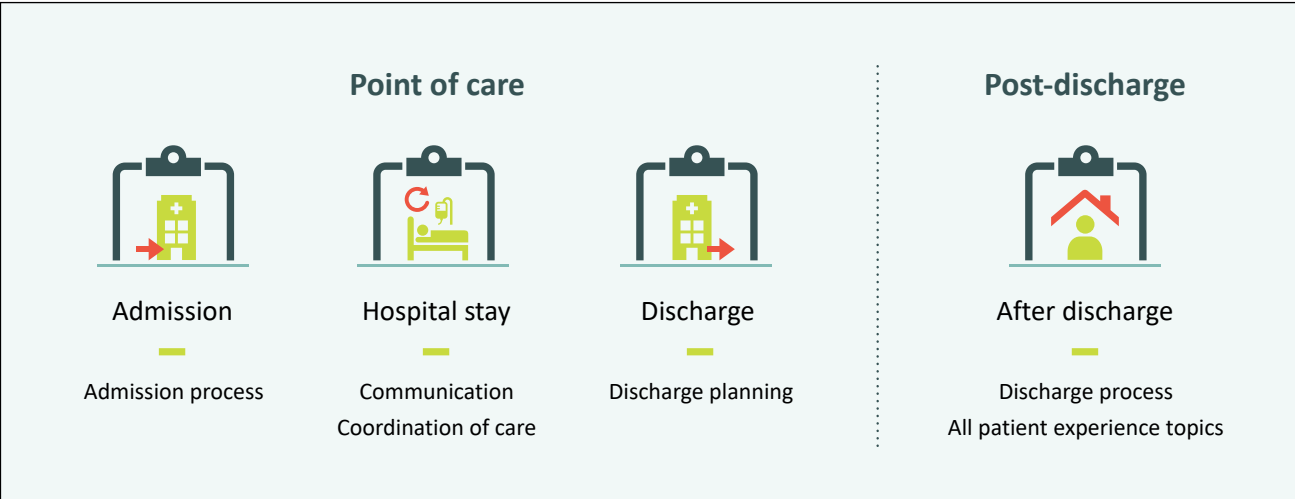


# What Are the Differences Between Point-of-Care and Post-Discharge Surveys?

Surveys are one of the best tools to get patients' feedback about their experience with a health care system.

When you're designing a survey, it's important to think about the timing of your data collection. You can administer a survey during the patient's hospital stay (i.e., in real time, such as at the patient bedside) or after the patient's discharge (i.e., within a few days of their hospital stay). The Canadian Patient Experiences Survey — Inpatient Care (CPES-IC) from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) is an example of a post-discharge survey.

**Figure** Timing of data collection and potential survey topics



Both point-of-care and post-discharge surveys have their strengths — they complement each other. The decision of which one to use to collect patient experience data depends on the purpose of the survey and on the type of information you want to collect.



### Point-of-care surveys

- Provide rapid results
- Are shorter and targeted
- Identify issues as they occur and potentially identify immediate opportunities for improvement
- Provide feedback on new quality improvement initiatives



### Post-discharge surveys

- Give patients time to reflect on their entire experience, including the discharge process
- Allow patients who may not feel comfortable sharing their thoughts at the point of care to do so at home
- Gather in-depth responses to open-ended questions
- Inform quality improvement initiatives
- Generate standardized and reliable measures that can be used to monitor trends over time
- Aggregate data from multiple hospitals for comparisons, benchmarking and public accountability

In short, use point-of-care surveys when you need immediate feedback on specific key topics, and opt for post-discharge surveys when looking to understand the full breadth of the patient experience.

When used together, these surveys can provide a comprehensive understanding of how patients experience care in hospitals. This information is vital for identifying opportunities for improvement, addressing patients' concerns and enhancing patient-centred care.

To learn more, visit our [Patient Experience web page](#).

## Appendix: Text alternative for image

### Figure: Timing of data collection and potential survey topics

Survey data can be collected at 4 points in the patient journey: admission, hospital stay, discharge and after discharge. A survey administered during any of the first 3 points is referred to as a point-of-care survey, and a survey administered after discharge is called a post-discharge survey. Potential survey topics are as follows: a survey administered at the time of admission might focus on the admission process; a survey administered during the hospital stay might focus on communication and coordination of care; a survey administered at the time of discharge might focus on discharge planning; a survey administered after discharge might focus on the entire patient experience, including the discharge process.



© 2023 Canadian Institute for Health Information



How to cite this document:

Canadian Institute for Health Information. *What Are the Differences Between Point-of-Care and Post-Discharge Surveys?*. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2023.