Assessing Consumer Engagement in Health Care

Altarum Consumer Engagement (ACE) Measure™

Why Engagement Matters
Nationwide, patients are being encouraged to take a greater role in their own health care. Care delivery systems and research agendas are emphasizing patient-centeredness; professional medical associations are calling for shared decision-making among patients and providers to reduce low-value care; and websites are collecting and posting patient ratings. Mounting research is demonstrating the link among engaged patients, better outcomes, and lower costs. In addition, the introduction of health exchanges is highlighting the active role of consumers in selecting health coverage or shopping for services.

Whether patient-centered, consumer-directed, or self-managed, health care is increasingly including the individual in all aspects of choosing and managing care.

Measuring Health Engagement
As consumers become more recognized by health care providers as partners, if not leaders, in their own care, organizations that offer and provide health care services need to understand consumer behavior better. Levels of health engagement vary greatly; knowledge and insight about a population or individual’s health engagement level is critical for effectively designing new programs.

Payers, providers, and other organizations need a reliable, affordable measure that assesses engagement comprehensively and quickly. Researchers at Altarum Institute’s Center for Consumer Choice in Health Care have spent the last two years researching this topic, with support from Safeway Inc. By surveying thousands of consumers, we have identified four underlying facets of engagement that combine to describe how people think about their health and predict some important health outcomes.

The Altarum Consumer Engagement (ACE) Measure™
The ACE Measure is a 21-item survey that assesses four domains of health engagement: commitment, ownership, informed choice, and navigation. The measure covers areas not included in other surveys, and it is a good predictor of current health status, lifestyle health behaviors, medication adherence, and how likely it is that people will use tools to support their decisions. The ACE Measure has been statistically validated in multiple studies, including with a large employer population and a national Web panel.

Uses of the ACE Measure include:

▲ Developing Strategy. The measure provides insight into a population’s health engagement level so you can design an effective consumer engagement strategy and spend limited resources wisely.

▲ Benchmarking and Monitoring Engagement. The measure provides a simple metric to assess the impact of interventions designed to increase engagement and monitor changes over time.

▲ Improving the Impact and Adoption of Health Programs. The measure identifies sub-segments of the population to target health interventions and allows specific communication strategies based on engagement level.

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Getting Started with the ACE Measure

We’ve made it easy to use the ACE Measure. You can find everything you need at www.altarum.org/ACEMeasure. Here’s all you need to do:

Determine your needs.

Altarum provides a number of related services to support customers, including:

- **Survey Hosting** – Altarum can host the online survey for you.
- **Analytic Reports** – Altarum’s analytic reports provide insights on consumer health engagement in your population.
- **Benchmarks** – Normative data from the ACE Measure database illustrate how your population compares with others.
- **Consulting** – Altarum experts can provide focused consulting and research, leveraging our expertise to assess or refine your health programs.

Sign a license agreement.

Altarum Institute provides the ACE Measure free of charge to organizations that sign a license agreement and agree to share de-identified survey results with Altarum in our standard format. Once your signed agreement is approved, you can use the survey instrument to administer and score on your own.

We welcome interest from health plans, employers, providers, public agencies, and health vendors who want to use this measure in new populations or assess its association with different outcomes. Interested parties can contact Wendy Lynch or Kristen Perosino at ace.measure@altarum.org

Altarum Institute Center for Consumer Choice in Health Care

The Center for Consumer Choice in Health Care is making it possible for every health care decision to be informed by individual preferences on benefits, risks, and price. The Center bridges the payer, provider, research, and policy communities to measure, monitor, and investigate dynamic changes in consumer involvement in their own health care. Learn more at www.altarum.org/ccchc.