

Patient Insight Tool

This tool is designed to evaluate patients' experiences in receiving cardiovascular care. Please adapt as necessary.

*What do rural **patients** with heart conditions experience through the process of accessing, receiving care and maintaining health?*

Demographic Questions

- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- What is your highest level of education?
- What is your race/ethnicity?
- What is your relationship with the patient? How long have you known the patient?
- Do you have your own medical condition(s) that also require care?
- Would you say your family/household: struggles to get by, barely get by, lives comfortably, or lives very comfortably?

Diagnosis/Onset

- Tell me about how you first learned there was a problem with your heart health
 - What symptoms did you experience? How did you know something was wrong?
 - How long did they wait; what finally prompted you to seek medical care?
- How easy or challenging was it for you to connect with the healthcare professionals you need?
 - Wait times, travel distance, cost + insurance, time off work
- How satisfied are you with the healthcare you received during the diagnosis process?
 - Anything you wish could have been different in how you were cared for during this time?
- Did anyone support you during this process—taking you to appointments or helping you understand the doctor's instructions?
- Was there any other type of support or assistance you think would have helped?
- What do you think caused the issue with your heart?
 - Can you explain more about [topic]
- What was your official diagnosis? [if not stated previously]

Initial Treatment (after stabilization)

- What was the initial treatment approach? After getting a formal diagnosis, what did the doctor(s) instruct you to do?
 - Did you understand *why* those actions were recommended?

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- If meds: What are each of the medications you're taking meant to help—what purpose do they serve?
 - If lifestyle: (Ex: If they say cut salt, do they understand the relationship between salt + heart health? Do they know *how* exercise helps?)
- How easy or difficult was it to incorporate those changes that were initially recommended by your doctor?
 - Is there anything that helped, or made it more difficult for you to make those changes?

Self-Management

- And has your condition or the approach to treating your condition changed in the time between that initial event/diagnosis and now?
 - New diagnoses, new meds, lifestyle changes
- Do you feel like your heart's health has improved, worsened, or stayed about the same?
- What do you do currently to monitor your heart health—keeping an eye on whether things are getting better or worse?
 - Blood pressure and/or weight monitoring; how often, and what do they do with info (report to doc?)
- And are you doing anything currently to care for or improve your heart health?
 - Is there anything that makes it challenging to do that consistently (reference whatever they mentioned: limit salt, exercise, quit smoking)
 - Is there anything that might help you take better care of your heart?
- Do you take the medications that your doctor has prescribed?
 - Is there anything that sometimes makes it hard to take as prescribed? What helps you take it on time?
 - Is there anything that helps you remember? What is your *system* for taking your medication?
- Do you know the names of your medications?
 - (If yes) Can you tell me what condition each one is for, and what it's supposed to do?
- Taken together—*reference positive behaviors such as meds, monitoring + lifestyle changes*—how well do you feel you're managing your heart condition today?
 - Do you expect your condition to improve, to get worse, or to stay the same as time goes on?

Medical Team Management

- What doctors do you work with to help care for your heart? (Primary care physician, cardiologist?)

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- For each:
 - How often do you have appts with this doc?
 - Does that feel like enough, not enough, too much?
 - How easy or difficult is it to get an appt with this doc—do you typically have to schedule a way out?
 - How easy or difficult is it to get to appointments with a doctor—how long is the drive? Who takes you?
 - Have you ever utilized telehealth and what has that looked like?
 - Have you ever needed to get in touch with this doctor in between appts?
 - What method of communication did you use, why do/did you use that?
- At this point, how well do you feel this team of doctors is managing your heart condition?
 - Is there anything about the medical care you receive that you wish were different?
 - Do you think your care would be different if you lived in a bigger city?

Exploring Telehealth Usability + Feasibility

Our research team is exploring the use of a smartphone app designed to facilitate the management of heart conditions between patients and their doctors. We want to know whether this app would be easy to use and whether the functions would be useful for patients and their care team.

- Do you currently have a smartphone? Do you have reliable cell service at home and/or at work?
- Do you do anything with your phone aside from making calls—like checking email or paying bills?
- One feature of the app is that it would allow a patient like you to take their blood pressure at home and have the reading sent to their doctor's office. Is that something you imagine that you could manage, with thorough instructions?
 - And more importantly, would that be a *useful* tool for you to have access to?
- Do you think that your doctor having access to your blood pressure, weight, and behaviors such taking your prescriptions would improve the quality of the care you receive?
- Are there other aspects of your heart health management you think could be made easier by using a smartphone app—such as receiving medication reminders or sending other types of information electronically to your doc?
- Besides an app, are there other ways that you would like to receive information about your condition? Videos, handouts, etc.?

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