UNDERSTANDING CARE EXPERIENCES

Improving the patient experience is central to improving quality in primary care. Patients want care that is accessible and centred on their needs, but the pandemic has posed new challenges in delivering care.

PATIENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

In June 2020, the University of Toronto’s 14 family medicine teaching clinics launched a common patient experience survey to understand patient perspectives during COVID-19. 7532 patients and caregivers took part in the first wave of the survey which was sent electronically between June and September 2020. 65% of those who responded were women, 71% were born in Canada and 9% had difficulty making ends meet.

KEY FINDINGS

- **87%** felt involved in their care decisions and treatment plan
- **82%** were able to get an appointment within a reasonable time
- **87%** would recommend their clinic to another friend or family member
- **83%** received care by phone and would like to continue connecting virtually with their providers
- **91%** are comfortable with the level of privacy and security of phone, video or email care

However, patients with different backgrounds reported different experiences. For example, those who had difficulty making ends meet, were born outside of Canada, or reported poor/fair health were less comfortable with the privacy and security of phone, video and email care.

The survey is sent to patients every quarter and clinic teams meet regularly to discuss the results. We are working to include more diverse perspectives to better understand the care needs of all patients. For example, the survey is now being sent in English, French, and Mandarin.

The information gathered from the survey is shaping how family doctors provide care, now and in the future. We are working to improve care by:

- Ensuring timely care for those who need it
- Ensuring the way we deliver care meets everyone’s needs
- Exploring best practices for adopting email and video in our clinics

For more information, or to take part in the survey, please contact dfcm.quality@utoronto.ca.