

# Measuring patient experiences with diabetes care in the Netherlands: *the validity of a new survey instrument*

## Authors

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## Background

The introduction of market mechanisms in Dutch healthcare engages insurance companies in competition.

Patient experience surveys are increasingly applied to generate performance information guiding consumers and insurers to choose and contract high performers, as well as holding them accountable.

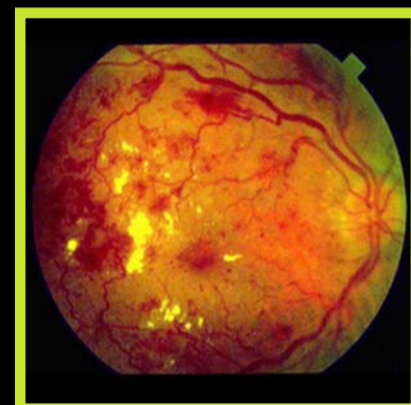
Thus, there is an increased need for standardised patient experience measurement tools for specific types of care. Here, we report on the reliability and validity of a new instrument developed to measure patient experiences with diabetes care.

## Methods

We combined and adapted existing CAHPS and QUOTE-Diabetes instruments into one self-administered questionnaire (118 items) to assess: *a*) patients' experiences with diabetes care provided by their general practitioner (GP), internist, nurse, or dietician and *b*) their diabetes specific health outcomes.

Survey population: diabetes patients of one insurer (Agis), enrolled in the sickness fund and aged 50 or above.

Sample: 983 patients who claimed reimbursement for diabetes medication in the 12 months prior to November 2003 were sent a questionnaire



## Results

510 diabetes patients completed the questionnaire (57.5%). Non-response bias was unlikely. Filling out the questionnaire did not seem a problem for the majority of respondents. Psychometric properties of the questionnaire compared well with the two underlying pre-existing questionnaires. 'Diabetes specific communication' was a consistent and 4-item factor in the new instrument, independent of the type of care provider. Internal consistency reliability was good (Cronbach's alpha ranged 0.84 to 0.89). 'Provider-patient interaction' was a consistent 5-item factor for care by GP's, internists and nurses (Cronbach's alpha 0.89 to 0.92), but not dieticians. Respondents reported case management and outcome measures similar to those in other studies.

## Conclusion

The newly constructed **-CAHPS<sup>®</sup> and QUOTE-Diabetes based-questionnaire** is reliable and valid and is well received by respondents.

It offers a strong basis for further development of patient experiences survey for Diabetes Care in the Dutch healthcare context.

