

While cost distress is a reality experienced by one in three patients, few undergo discussions with their providers regarding these concerns.¹ Many patients are uncertain about how to address this topic, and some fear that their care would be negatively impacted by discussion of cost.² Despite this, patients do want to talk to their

2. Select how and when your patients will be asked these questions. Each option has benefits and risks. Pick the one that makes the most sense for your practice.

a. Patients can answer written questions either prior to the visit (mailed survey) or as they are waiting for their visits (e.g., on the intake form or a separate form). One benefit of this approach is that the patient can complete the questionnaire in private. A risk is that the answers might not get handed off to the health professional.

b. Patients can be asked the questions during some

search and refined through focus groups with patients and health care professionals. You can use one, some, or all of these questions to identify patients experiencing cost distress related to their health care.

Recommended process:

1. Select 1 to 4 of the following questions to ask all of your patients.

Are you worried about your current financial situation because of your health care needs?

Have you skipped appointments, tests, or medications because you could not pay for them?

Are you worried about how your medical bills will be paid?

Would you like to discuss the cost of your health care with your provider at today's visit?