

## Tips to Improve Patient Engagement at the Facility Level

The following tips can assist your staff to establish the genuine engagement with patients that is essential in the provision of high-quality healthcare and to achieve improved healthcare outcomes.

- **Develop patient-centered policies and procedures related to patient, family, and caregiver participation in the development of individualized plans of care and plan of care meetings.**
  - Are current facility policies and procedures patient-centered or more focused on the needs of staff and physicians?
  - Are plan of care meetings scheduled when patients and/or caregivers can participate?
- **Actively promote patient involvement in his/her own care.**
  - Encourage each patient to set at least one personal goal for his/her plan of care.
    - Setting personal goals is important to achieving quality of life and good clinical outcomes.
  - Create a plan for the Interdisciplinary Team to actively support patients' efforts to achieve their goals.
- **Encourage patients to speak up about their care experience.**
  - Build trusting relationships between staff and patients through open communication and collaboration.
  - Understand patients' concerns about retaliation for speaking up.
    - Contact Network 17 for a staff training on understanding retaliation from the patient perspective.
  - Express gratitude to any patient who provides feedback, whether positive or negative.
  - Place a suggestion box in the lobby.
    - Check it regularly.
    - Respond/acknowledge suggestions promptly.
    - Post facility responses to patient concerns in the lobby.
  - Review both the internal and external grievance processes with each patient during the annual care plan process.
  - Review the National Forum of End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Networks *Dialysis Patient Grievance Toolkit*.
- **Establish patient councils, patient and family support groups, and/or new patient adjustment groups and encourage patients to attend.**
  - Utilize resources available on the HSAG Patient Engagement webpage [here](#).

- **Identify and support peer mentors.**
  - Mentoring opportunities include but are not limited to:
    - Employed patients sharing their experiences with peers about how they manage work and dialysis.
    - New patient welcome and orientation from the patient perspective.
    - Supporting other patients in reaching their personal goals.
    - Supporting staff education about vaccination, vascular access, treatment modalities, and other topics by addressing them from the patient perspective.
  
- **Identify and mobilize patient leaders to:**
  - Partner with staff to create bulletin boards in the lobby.
  - Partner with staff to decorate the facility during holidays and/or plan other social activities.
  - Participate in new staff training by providing the patient perspective about:
    - Dialysis.
    - The importance of patient/staff relationships, communication, and collaboration.
  - Create a facility Patient Advisory Council (PAC).
  - Apply to Network 17 for membership on the Network PAC.
  
- **Incorporate patient, family, and caregiver participation in the Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement (QAPI) Program and governing body of the facility.**
  - Discuss patient/family engagement opportunities, activities, and barriers to engagement during governing body and QAPI meetings.
  - Include time during governing body and/or QAPI meetings for patient reporting on patient engagement activities in the facility.
    - Patient(s) would not attend the entire governing body or QAPI meeting.
  - Post In-Center Hemodialysis Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (ICH-CAHPS) survey results.
    - Enlist patients to assist staff in developing quality improvement efforts.
  - Involve patients in facility-specific or corporate quality improvement activities (QIAs).
    - Include them on task forces and/or teams working on patient safety and customer service.
  - Involve patients in Network/facility QIAs.
    - Include time during the monthly QAPI meeting for patient reporting of patient/staff collaboration on QIAs.