

Patient-Centered Communication

Developing communication systems and skills that meet patients where they are, culturally, linguistically, cognitively, and socially.

Key Changes

- **Prioritize** patient experience by regularly involving patients in the design and improvement of care processes.
- **Develop** communication strategies such as agenda setting and teach back that become standard work in the primary care setting.
- **Ensure** core patient communication skills are mastered by all team members.
- **Educate** all care team members on available patient-engagement tools.
- **Identify** the language and health literacy needs of patients and families.
- **Respond** to the varied needs of a diverse and multicultural patient population.
- **Huddle** daily with team members to plan patient care and debrief success and improvement.

Examples (Organizational Culture)

- Consider forming a patient advisory committee. See resources for assessing the practice and developing the patient voice at The Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care (www.ipfcc.org)
- Ask patients to participate in ongoing QI work.
- Solicit patient ideas through surveys or focus groups.
- Regularly gather feedback from patients on the experience of their care.
- Record patient testimonials on what works and doesn't work for them and share these at staff meetings.
- All staff are trained and achieve core competencies in active listening skills, health literacy and cultural competency.
- Routinely include patient evaluation when planning measures for PDSAs.
- Share patient comments from satisfaction surveys with all staff in the organization.
- Employ patient centered observation forms (PCOFs) for teaching, optimizing and evaluating staff communication skills. See training at www.pcof.us.
- Train staff in communication skills that enhance organization, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Train and practice skills related to reflective listening and soliciting the patient voice.
- Practice sharing constructive feedback to other teammates and solicit feedback in return.

Examples (During Visit)

- Try using a scribe to document notes in the EHR during the patient visits to improve clinician eye contact and communication with patients and family.
- Actively establish rapport and relationship with patients before, during and after care activities.
- Partner with the patients to develop a shared agenda for the visit.
- Explore the patients' and family's perspective on health, health care, and illness.
- Use "Teach Back" communication skills to ensure patient comprehension and investment in the care plan and to improve staff communication skills.

Search ImprovingPrimaryCare.org for more resources

Primary Care Team Guide Assessment-Related Question

Patient-Centered Interactions

	Components	Level D	Level C	Level B	Level A
20	Involving patients in decision-making and care...	is not a priority.	is accomplished by provision of patient education materials or referrals to classes.	is supported and documented by practice teams.	is systematically supported by practice teams trained in decision-making techniques.
		1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/>

How Primary Care Teams Achieve the Quadruple Aim

