

Help Patients Understand Their Role in Quality Assessment & Performance Improvement (QAPI)



Research shows that when patients are engaged in their healthcare, it can lead to measurable improvements in safety and quality.¹ Patient and family engagement includes bringing patient and family perspectives directly into the planning, delivery, and evaluation of healthcare, thereby improving the quality and safety of the care provided.²

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) encourages dialysis facilities to include patients in QAPI meetings to ensure the patient voice is included in how care is delivered. The meetings give dialysis staff an opportunity to talk to patients about their concerns and other patient issues.

Use this checklist to help patients understand the purpose of QAPI meetings. It also provides recommendations for getting patients to participate in QAPI meetings. Check off each box once you have completed the step.

Step 1. Patient Selection—Select a person who:

- Can see beyond his/her personal experiences.
- Shows concern for more than one issue.
- Has a positive outlook on life.
- Listens well.
- Shows respect for others' perspectives.
- Can interact with different people.
- Speaks openly in a group setting.



Step 2. Make it Personal—Consider these process tips:

- Pull the selected patient aside or sit chairside when you invite the patient.
- Use patient-friendly language.
- Explain the purpose of QAPI.
- Share the reasons why you invited the patient.
— *For example, "I've noticed you ... share your ideas, get along well with patients and staff, and have an interest in your care and the facility."*
- Give the patient an invitation to the meeting with the date, time, and location.
- Give the patient the "[Because Your Voice Matters!](#)" handout.



Step 3. Prepare for the Meeting—It is important to attend to each item:

Staff

- Talk to the clinic's medical director about the importance of including a patient in QAPI meetings.
- Ask staff members to prepare directed questions.
- Tell all team members a patient will be in attendance.
- Remind staff not to reveal other patients' personal health information.
- Review staff roles during the meeting.
- Use visuals when available.
- Provide topic-specific information to help patients prepare for the discussion. For example, standards and goals.
- Encourage the patient to write down his/her ideas, questions, concerns, and feedback.
- Remind the patient about the meeting as the date nears.

□ Step 3. Prepare for the Meeting—It is important to attend to each item:

Patient	Scheduling
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accommodate the patient’s schedule to attend the meeting.• Tell the patient that he/she can attend in person or virtually.• Plan for the patient to attend for the first 15–20 minutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm patient attendance<ul style="list-style-type: none">— If the patient says “yes,” educate the patient on the topic(s) that will be covered during the meeting and ask if he/she has any questions.

□ Step 4. During the Meeting—Be sure to:

- Introduce the staff members in attendance and their roles.
- Introduce the patient and explain why having a patient present for QAPI is important.
- Not share any patient information, including names or specific cases.
- Use plain language—Don’t use acronyms, even those that may seem to be commonly understood.



□ Step 5. Follow-up—To support the best experience for all:

- Debrief with the staff to identify what worked well and how the process could be improved.
- Discuss with the patient what worked well and what could be improved.
- Follow up with the patient directly on topics that he/she provided feedback or suggested for improvements.
- Ask the patient to share his/her QAPI meeting experience with others.

Please visit the End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) National Coordinating Center (NCC) website for additional resources to help your patients understand the purpose of QAPI meetings and why their participation is important.

- [Because Your Voice Matters!](#)
- [Because Your Voice Matters! Patient Video](#)

For more information, visit www.esrdncc.org/professionals.

1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Guide to patient and family engagement in hospital quality and safety. Available at <https://www.ahrq.gov/patient-safety/patients-families/engagingfamilies/guide.html>. Accessed on March 16, 2021.

2. Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). Advancing the Practice of Patient- and Family-Centered Care How to Get Started. Bethesda, Maryland: Institute for Family-Centered Care; 2008. Available at <http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Publications/AdvancingthePracticePFCHowtoGetStarted.aspx>. Accessed on March 16, 2021.



This resource was adapted with permission from the Qsource ESRD Network 12 webinar, Engaging Patients in Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement and Governance Teams.

This material was prepared the End Stage Renal Disease National Coordinating Center (ESRD NCC) contractor, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy nor imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. FL-ESRD NCC-7N5TA2-04122021-01