



## Patient Module Part 2: *Overcoming Barriers with Attending QAPI Meetings*

### What is QAPI?

QAPI is all about quality in your dialysis facility! Quality Assessment (QA) and Performance Improvement (PI) are two ways to manage the quality of health care you get.

- **QA** is a way to meet standards put in place by Medicare. These standards are there to make sure you get quality health care. For example, Dialysis facilities are responsible for infection prevention standards.
- **PI** is what is done to improve outcomes of your care. An outcome or result could be adequate dialysis or a kidney transplant. For example, if a dialysis facility doesn't meet infection standards, the facility will work on a PI project to reduce infections.



### How Does QAPI Make a Difference for Me?

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

Yet, both patient and staff barriers exist that prevent patients and families from attending QAPI meetings. Two common barriers that prevent patients and families from attending QAPI meetings are transportation and patients knowing what to bring up at the meeting. In this module, we will provide tips for overcoming these barriers and suggested topics for discussion at the meeting.

### Why Are Patients Invited to QAPI?

The patient role in QAPI is to make sure the patient voice is shared with the facility care team. When patients and family members engage with dialysis staff members, it keeps the lines of communication open.

The benefits of patients attending a QAPI meeting are:

- Provides an opportunity for discussion about facility processes
- Ensures patient education and communication
- Guarantees the patient voice is heard.

### Transportation to the Meeting

You may rely on transportation to dialysis treatments and therefore, may not be able to find a ride for an additional trip to the clinic to attend QAPI meetings.

Here are a few tips to help ensure your participation:

- Ask the social worker to help with additional transportation
- Request a family member or friend to bring you to the meeting
- Reach out to your church or other community programs that offer transportation

If you are not able to attend in person, ask the dialysis staff if there are other options. You may be able to attend virtually. This could be:

- Calling into the meeting using a telephone number
- Using Zoom or another virtual tool for the meeting



### Tips for Having Patient Specific Topics to Present at QAPI

You may not feel comfortable asking medical questions or safety questions related to dialysis. Here are some tips that might help you prepare for the meeting:

- Request educational materials about dialysis care from the facility staff. Ask if the materials are available in multiple languages, or formats other than printed, like videos.
- Use the internet to explore websites like the [National Kidney Foundation](#), [American Association of Kidney Patients](#), [American Kidney Fund](#), [ESRD NCC](#), your [ESRD Network](#), and others to learn about safety in the dialysis facility.
- Connect with another dialysis patient that may have attended a QAPI meeting. They can share their experience and offer ideas for you to bring up at your QAPI meeting.
- Invite a family member to attend the QAPI meeting with you. They may be able to assist with translation or to lend support when sharing your ideas.
- Use the QAPI meeting to share information about what you see at the facility and recommendations about how to improve some areas of care or service.

The best way to make QAPI a positive experience for staff and patients is to share your QAPI meeting experience with other patients. Do your best to follow up on meeting notes and ideas from the facility staff.

<sup>1</sup>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 July 15, 2022.

<sup>2</sup>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