Engaging the Challenging Patient

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Objectives . . .

- Discuss how the concepts of patient- and family-centered care can provide a framework for caring for patients and families that are challenging.

- Describe ways ambulatory practices can create opportunities for patients and families to be partners in transformation and proactively support all patients and families, even the most challenging.
Patient- and Family-Centered Core Concepts

- People are treated with respect and dignity.
- Health care providers communicate and share complete and unbiased information with patients and families in ways that are affirming and useful.
- Patients and families are encouraged and supported in participating in care and decision-making at the level they choose.
- Collaboration among patients, families, and providers occurs in policy and program development and professional education, as well as in the delivery of care.
Patient- and family-centered care is working "with" patients and families, rather than just doing "to" or "for" them.
Social Isolation — A Risk Factor for Health

- **Ask the patient to identify a care partner as part of routine care.**

  “Social relationships, or the relative lack thereof, constitute a major risk factor for health—rivaling the effect of well established health risk factors such as cigarette smoking, blood pressure, blood lipids, obesity and physical activity.” (House, Landis, and Umberson; *Science* 1988)

Research is clear that isolating patients at their most vulnerable times from the people who know them best places them at risk for medical error, emotional harm, inconsistencies in care, and costly unnecessary care (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2003; Clark, 2003).
Most exam rooms have three chairs. . . a chair for the patient, a chair for the physician.

“Is the third chair a just in case chair, or is it a I’d like you there chair?” Does the third chair have an intention and a purpose for someone important to the patient?

Bill Schwab, MD
The Third Chair

Studies indicate that family members are present in approximately 20% to 60% of health care encounters with adult patients 40 years or older.

Family presence facilitates patient-physician communication, engagement in self-management, and provides support for the patient.


Patient and Family Advisors as Improvement Partners

Dr. Bernacki’s Team has quarterly QI meetings…

A FIRST STEP: Invite three patient and family members from the practice as advisors to join these meetings.

Prepare them to participate on a QI team. Try it for 2-3 meetings and debrief together to see if everyone finds it valuable.

www.ipfcc.org/bestpractices/ambulatory-care/index.html
Team Up for Health Humboldt Open Door Clinic

Redesigning the clinic’s bulletin boards.

Helping to improve community resource referrals.

Reviewing the telephone system.

Developing a patient/friendly business card for clinic patients.

Promoting provider engagement.

Patient Advisory Board
An Ambulatory Patient- and Family-Centered Pathway
Opportunities to Partner with Patients and Families

Telephone Communication & Website

Registration & Check-in Process Interactions

Waiting Room Experience

Interactions in the Rooming Process

Interactions with Clinician and Others on the Team

Check-out Process

Follow-up Phone Call & Support

What is needed to ensure respectful, PFCC approaches occur at each step in the pathway? Patient and family advisors can help address these issues.
A free on-line learning community dedicated to partnerships with patients and families to improve and transform care across all settings.

http://pfcc.connect.ipfccc.org/home
American College of Physicians

Practice Advisor

www.practiceadvisor.org/Modules
In Conclusion . . .

“Our patients and their families are an abundant source of wisdom as we navigate the stormy seas of healthcare delivery.

To go it alone without their partnership is foolish and unwise. With patients as equal partners in this journey, our work together is more fulfilling, more meaningful, and more likely to help them reach their health goals.”

Joseph Bianco, MD, FAAFP, Director of Primary Care for Essentia, Ely, MN
Questions and Comments

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