Plan-of-Care Meetings: As Important as Treatments

When state surveyors are onsite at facilities, they ensure facility plans-of-care are reviewed and individualized. Surveyors ask the following questions to determine compliance (V Tags 456, 541):

- How does staff encourage patients to participate in care planning?
- Does your facility consider each patient’s needs, wishes and goals in care planning?
- Does your facility help each patient address barriers to meeting goals (targets)?
- Does your facility discuss changes in prescriptions with each patient before making them?

Required Components for Review – ESRD Conditions for Coverage

- Vascular access
- Dose of dialysis
- Nutritional status
- Mineral metabolism
- Anemia
- Rehabilitation status
- Psychosocial status
- Modality – home dialysis
- Modality – transplant
- Patient concerns

Best Practices to Maximize Patient Participation in Care Planning

- Ask the nephrologist to ensure patients participate with their IDT in plan-of-care meetings
- Present the meeting to the patient as an appointment
- Schedule the meeting at a convenient time for the patient (e.g., before or after the patient’s dialysis shift)
- Give the patient reminders (e.g., schedule card, reminder about the last treatment before the meeting)
- Encourage questions – the patient can write down questions in preparation for the meeting
- Inform patients they can invite family members or other care partners
- Ensure the meetings are conducted in the patient’s desired language
- Inform patients they can request a plan-of-care meeting at any time
- Provide the patient a copy of the completed care plan after the meeting
- Allow patients to meet privately – chairside meetings do not create the same environment as a private IDT meeting

Why is this Important?

Patients that actively participate in their plan-of-care meetings feel more engaged and empowered. Participation also improves understanding of their condition and how to better manage their symptoms, which can improve patient adherence and outcomes. Patients take a more active role in their health care when they feel supported. This leads to higher patient and staff satisfaction, better care and improved quality of life. An added benefit includes cost control.

Don’t forget to track the percentage of patient participation in your QAPI program. Care plan meetings are a win-win for both patients and staff!