Tips for Including Patients in QAPI and Governing Body Meetings

A key focus of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) National Quality Strategy (NQS) is to ensure everyone (i.e., individuals, families) is engaged as a partner in their health care. Adding patient participation to QAPI and Governing Body Meetings is one way to increase patient engagement.

As part of your QIA review in QAPI meetings, encourage patient representatives to add their perspective on QIA focused discussions. Let patients share their experiences. Below are some ideas for getting started:

Select Patients

- Identify individuals who have demonstrated interest in partnering with you in their care or the care of a family member.
- Consider those who have offered constructive ideas for change and have a special ability to help staff and physicians better understand the patient perspective.
- Seek individuals who can:
  - Share insights about their experiences in ways that others can learn from them.
  - Listen well.
  - Respect the perspectives of others.
  - Speak comfortably in a group with candor.
  - Show a positive outlook on life and a sense of humor.
  - Work in partnership with others.

Invite Patients

- Share the purpose of the meetings, and why they are being invited.
- Review their role in the meetings.
- Provide information on topics that will be covered in meetings and answer any questions they might have.
- Consider their availability when scheduling meetings.

Plan Meetings

- Prior to the meeting: Remove any patient identifying information on reports.
- At the meeting: Introduce all members by name and role.
- Avoid jargon and acronyms: Use patient-friendly language when reviewing reports and data.
- Agenda: Allot time early in the agenda to discuss the QIA topic; get their insight and feedback.
- Solicit their input: Direct questions to the patient, such as:
  - What would be the best way to _____?
  - Based on this report, what do you think are important next steps for improving overall patient care, experience or outcomes?
  - What are some challenges or barriers to _____ from your perspective?
- Documentation: Include who attends and participates in committee meeting minutes.
- Follow up: Keep the patient participants informed of any progress on topics that were discussed.