Patient Engagement

What is Patient Engagement?

Patient engagement has been shown to impact health behaviors and improve health outcomes. Patient engagement takes many forms. When patients are engaged, they are proactive in their health and care. They successfully define and share their care goals, gather information to make informed choices, engage in shared decision making with providers, navigate the health and insurance systems and expand their advocacy to advise the wider system or community. Success in any (or all) of these activities requires skilled communication, confidence, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy skills. And all of these can be learned or improved through training and practice.

Evidence Shows PAF Case Management Improves Patient Engagement

While guiding patients to solutions for their most critical access and affordability issues, Case Management services also strengthen patients’ communication and advocacy skills, thus improving their overall engagement and activation. This work both increases patients’ confidence in communication with and navigation of the healthcare systems and decreases general distress.

Evidence shows that in addition to solving issues for which patients seek assistance, case managers also help improve patients’ skills and confidence in the following areas:

- Communication with Systems and Providers
- Health Literacy and eHealth Literacy
- Problem Solving for Social and Care Needs
- Self-Advocacy Efforts
- Navigation of Health and Insurance Systems

How do we do it?

Case Managers take the time necessary to help patients understand their own needs and the healthcare system—by listening patiently and carefully, asking questions and diving deep into their unique issues and concerns that impact access and affordability. Patient Advocate Foundation Case Management processes allow case managers to:

- Discuss the patient’s situation, in depth, to identify goals, barriers, and solutions
- Educate patients on relevant content areas and the process requirements for a desired goal
- Identify resources and provide support to facilitate connection to these resources
- Walk patients through a task (many case managers employ the “See One, Do One, Teach One” strategy)
- Model communication skills and coach callers on effective approaches to talk to providers and insurers
- Identify barriers that may emerge or are currently standing in the way of their goals
- Provide coaching to empower patients to be their own advocate and engage in their health and care

Our Case Managers provide patient-centered support that has been shown to build patient engagement. But we are also sensitive to the fact that when living with very complex and serious illnesses, not all patients have the motivation or ability to fully engage. When the patient needs us to do so, we empower family members and caregivers. We consult, model, and build very personal collaborations within the patient’s care team, to increase their capacity and potential to improve not only patient outcomes, but also community health.

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