

# PATIENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Actively engaging patients, families and community partners helps clinical teams improve care during pregnancy, delivery admission, and the postpartum period for both mothers and newborns.

## ROLE OF PATIENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO SERVE ON QI TEAMS

1. Recruit patient, family and community partners through referrals from physicians, midwives, doulas, newborn and NICU care teams, postpartum support groups, and Respectful Care Breakfasts / patient- and parent-centered community gatherings.
2. Provide all partners with a clear, accessible description of their role, expectations, and the value of their lived experience in improving care.
3. Identify a contact person on the QI team who regularly checks in with your partner and offers support. Building relationships builds trust.
4. Ensure partners are onboarded. This includes identifying appropriate ways to reimburse their time (e.g. direct payment, gift bags, meals, parking passes, childcare, or other forms of recognition).
5. Co-create tools and resources with patient, parent and community partners to support their engagement in quality improvement activities.



## ENGAGE CLINICAL STAFF WITH PATIENT/FAMILY EXPERIENCES AND FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE CARE

1. Host Respectful Care Breakfasts by inviting clinical staff, patients, and parents or caregivers who have given birth or cared for a newborn in the past year to gather for breakfast and a discussion of best practices for respectful OB/newborn care.
2. Create an environment that encourages honest dialogue and feedback. This can look like a panel discussion or small table huddles.
3. Use PREM survey results to provide feedback to staff.
4. Incorporate patient stories into staff education and discussion. Tools can include *Hear Her Campaign* videos, screening *Laboring with Hope*, and inviting patients to share their experiences during staff meetings or Grand Rounds.



## ENGAGE COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO IMPROVE LINKAGE OF PATIENTS TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

*Can you build partnerships with local community organizations?*

- Improve referral systems for linkage of patients to community resources.
- Improve understanding, strengths, and capacity of partner organizations.
- Improve linkage of patients to community doulas, home visiting programs and other community resources

*Can you make your unit more doula friendly?*

- Hold doula trainings for staff and doula/staff meet and greets to build enhanced understanding and collaboration.
- Increase knowledge regarding doula care and role from the doula perspective.
- Reduce systemic barriers that may impact doula access.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PATIENT, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO ENGAGE IN QI ACTIVITIES

1. Help plan regular Respectful Care Breakfasts (2-4 times per year).
2. Collaborate on strategies to promote Respectful Care for birthing people, infants, and families in *all* settings.
3. Help improve linkage to community-based resources such as linkage to doulas, home visiting programs, transportation, and childcare.
4. Help improve PREM Survey completion and work on improving patient experience.
5. Provide feedback on patient education materials (e.g. breastfeeding, infant care) and the postpartum / NICU discharge process.
6. Collaborate on improving process flows for OB, postpartum and newborn patients, especially related to screening for social determinants of health, perinatal mental health, and additional needs.

### ILPQC continues to support patient/community engagement:

- 45+ hospitals have held Respectful Care Breakfasts or gatherings for providers and nurses to hear from patients who have delivered about what matters to optimize Respectful Care.
- 50+ hospitals have engaged patient/family partners to support QI work.
- ILPQC has developed a patient partner network to support community building.
- 10 ILPQC Regional Community Engagement Meetings held to bring hospital teams and community partners together to discuss Birth Equity strategies.

**ILPQC offers quarterly webinars and weekly office hours to hospital liaisons and their patient/family partners. For more information, contact us at [info@ilpqc.org](mailto:info@ilpqc.org).**

