

TIP SHEET



Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers

Tip Sheet 3: Training for partnerships with consumers

This tip sheet offers strategies that can be used to work towards meeting Actions 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard 2. These Actions relate to providing training about engaging in partnerships with consumers in your organisation, and the involvement of consumers in training the clinical workforce.

The engagement of consumers in partnerships is most successful when the principles of partnerships and patient-centred care are embedded within the organisation's culture.

Providing training for clinical leaders, senior managers and the workforce is a key component of building and sustaining a culture based on partnerships. Training raises awareness across the organisation. It also develops workforce knowledge and skills to facilitate partnerships with consumers.

There is no single way of providing training about partnerships with consumers or involving consumers in training. Your approach should be tailored to best meet the needs of your organisation, consumers and workforce.

Getting started

The first step is to identify whether the training that is currently provided within your organisation includes information about partnerships with consumers, and to identify opportunities where this type of information can be included within existing training programs.

A self-assessment tool is a useful way to examine how your organisation currently partners with consumers, including helping identify how training about partnerships is delivered in your organisation.

Standard 2 actions on training

Criterion 2.6

Implementing training for clinical leaders, senior management and the workforce on the value of and ways to facilitate consumer engagement and how to create and sustain partnerships

Action 2.6.1: Clinical leaders, senior managers and the workforce access training on patient-centred care and the engagement of individuals in their care

Action 2.6.2: Consumers and/or carers are involved in training the clinical workforce

The Commission has developed a partnership self-assessment tool, based on the work of the Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care. This tool can be found at: <http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/patient-and-consumer-centred-care/>

You may also wish to consider:

- Is the concept of partnering with consumers addressed in the organisation's training and development policy?
- Is there a committee or group that oversees training and development and sets training and development priorities for the organisation? How can partnership approaches to care be brought into this process?
- Do the organisation's orientation and education programs for healthcare providers and other health workers include information about partnerships with consumers?
- Are consumers involved in the development of training modules, training materials or the delivery of training for healthcare providers and other healthcare workers?

Action 2.6.1: Developing and implementing training about partnerships with consumers

Developing partnerships with consumers and delivering patient-centred care is a way of ensuring that care that is respectful of, and responsive to, the preferences, needs and values of patients and consumers.

It means treating consumers with dignity and respect, sharing information with consumers, encouraging and supporting participation and fostering collaboration to the extent that consumers choose.

For clinicians, this means making sure there are partnerships at the bedside and in consultations. It means ensuring that communication is effective and interactive, that health literacy is addressed, that preferences are known and choices are worked through collaboratively with consumers.

For managers, executives, and other non-clinical staff, this means making sure there are partnerships between consumers and the organisation to improve systems and processes. It means working with consumers to improve information, processes and policies so that consumers get what they need from the organisation.

The type of training you provide should reflect the type of partnerships your audience will be involved in. Following are some examples of how you could include information about partnerships into training.



Orientation and induction training

Including information about partnerships with consumers in orientation and induction training is a useful starting point. It provides newcomers to your organisation with an overview of how your organisation values and engages in partnerships with consumers.

You could include broad information describing what different partnerships can look like and your organisation's approach to partnering with consumers. General information that is appropriate for all levels of the organisation is suitable to incorporate into this type of training.

Patient-centred care training

You may choose to develop and implement patient-centred care training programs or sessions for your organisation. This could include sessions targeted at the whole organisation, or sessions tailored for specific groups within your organisation such as specific clinicians, wards or non-clinical staff.

The NSW Clinical Excellence Commission has developed a web page that gives examples of how to locally conduct training for a range of staff. This resource can be found at: <http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/programs/partnering-with-patients/education-and-training>. It includes program structures with supporting presentation slides and training materials.

External patient-centred care training

You could organise for your workforce to attend external consumer centred care programs. For example, the Health Issues Centre in Victoria offers nationally accredited consumer engagement training. Details for this course can be found at: <http://www.hic.infolchange.net.au/participate/learning.shtml>.

In addition, the Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centered Care has developed a training package on patient-centred care. This can be found at: <http://www.aipfcc.org.au/>.

Your accreditation agency may also provide training in this area.

Communication training

Communication is critical to engaging in partnerships with consumers. Communication training can provide the workforce with the strategies and tools to develop better partnerships with consumers at the individual level by addressing barriers to health literacy, supporting better information exchange and improving shared decision-making.

Examples of communication training topics which can support partnerships with consumers could include:

- providing understandable and accessible health information
- using plain language to communicate information
- using decision aids
- using shared decision-making processes.

The NSQHS Standards emphasise communicating and sharing information with consumers in a way that is understandable and meaningful. Standards 3 – 4 and 6 – 10 all include actions related to communicating with consumers. Implementing communication training can contribute to meeting multiple actions in the NSQHS Standards. It is a way of delivering training to support partnerships with consumers (Actions 2.6.1) and providing the workforce with some tools and strategies that can be used when delivering information to consumers (Actions 3.19.1, 4.13.1, 4.15.1, 6.5.1, 7.10.1, 8.9.1, 9.7.1, 10.9.1).

Embedding patient-centred principles into existing training topics

Embedding the principles of patient-centred care into existing training will help to foster a culture of partnerships with consumers.

Training materials and resources can be modified or adapted to embed the principles of patient-centred care. Modifications could include changing training materials to include information about patient-centred approaches to care (presentation slides, hand-outs), inviting speakers to talk about partnering with consumers or including specific strategies for partnering with consumers, for example a specific decision aid.

You could incorporate patient-centred principles into the training about these topics to work towards meeting multiple actions in the NSQHS Standards.

Following are some examples of training topics which could be used that are linked to other actions in the NSQHS Standards.

Examples of some training topics

- Incident management and investigation processes (Action 1.14)
- Complaints management processes (Action 1.15)
- Open disclosure processes (Action 1.16)
- Involving consumers in decisions about their care and informed consent (Action 1.18)
- Providing information to consumers (Actions 3.19, 4.13.1, 4.15.1, 7.10.1, 8.9.1, 9.7.1, 10.9.1)
- Patient, family and carer initiated escalation of care processes (Action 9.9).



Action 2.6.2: Involving consumers and carers in training the clinical workforce

Consumers can provide a valuable contribution to training for the clinical workforce. Training influences the practice of the clinical workforce. Incorporating consumer perspectives into training has the potential to alter clinical practice and to promote patient-centred approaches to care.

There are a variety of ways to involve consumers in training design and delivery. It is important to provide adequate support, training and guidance to consumers to enable them to effectively participate and expectations should be clearly agreed from the beginning and revisited throughout.

Invite consumers and carers to speak at your training

Inviting consumers to be part of the delivery of training or to tell their story can be a powerful way to share consumer perspectives and to influence attitudes towards consumers.

Where it is not possible to have a consumer attend in person, you could consider alternatives such as a pre-recorded video, a case example or other patient story resource.

Using trained patients or simulated patients as teachers

In some settings, engaging trained patients or actors to simulate patients in a consultation scenario has been shown to improve communication and change attitudes towards consumers. This strategy could be used to involve consumers in providing training to the workforce. It is important to put a structured process in place to adequately train and support consumers to carry out this role in your organisation.

Ask consumers to review training materials

If there is a committee in your organisation that oversees the training and development, you could consider inviting a consumer to join this committee and provide input into training and development priorities and the development of training materials.

If this does not exist in your organisation, you could involve consumers in reviewing training materials to better incorporate consumer perspectives. Consumer feedback could offer guidance on communication and suggestions for how to improve processes to make them more consumer-focussed. You could implement this approach gradually as training content is reviewed.

If your organisation is currently developing e-learning modules or other self-directed learning tools, you could ask a consumer to share their story as part of this training. Alternatively, you could ask consumers to develop or contribute to training materials.

If your training and development is externally directed or delivered, you could consider sourcing training packages and materials that include training on partnerships with consumers.



Further Information

Where to find more information about involving consumers in training

Safety and Quality Improvement Guide
Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers: http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Standard2_Oct_2012_WEB.pdf

Australian Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care - Training links: <http://www.aipfcc.org.au/whatwedo.html>

Health Issues Centre - Training links: <http://www.healthissuescentre.org.au/documents/items/2013/12/1029428-upload-00001.pdf>

NSW Clinical Excellence Commission - Education and training in Patient Based Care web page: <http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/programs/partnering-with-patients/education-and-training>

Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health web site:
Fact sheets <http://ceh.org.au/>

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