

PATIENT AS ADVISOR/COACH FOR PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT

The method is called patient-provider teamship. It builds on these facts:

- almost all physicians who have been in practice a while know of patients who have very high skills in areas such as technology, dealing with others, dealing with challenging health or social conditions, teaching, etc.
- “aging boomers” are entering retirement or partial retirement. Many have both interest and time to offer help to the community or other patients.
- when a physician is asked to create a time-limited, physician-patient teamship to implement the very brief Ideal Medical Home curriculum it changes faster.
- once this teamship has a patient-provider interaction technology in place the technology uncovers new areas in which other patients can be involved.
- the overworked office staff and physicians make progress because the patient part of the teamship can keep the process moving.

In short, a positive feedback cycle is created into which patient experiences and skills can enhance and/or supplement skills of the office without requiring more staff time.

Notes from the first cohort of patient advisor/coaches from British Columbia:

- 1) Advisor/coach able to assess how well the HYH survey questions reflect practice population concerns
- 2) Ability to customize the questionnaire could be leveraged to ensure questions are relevant to practice population and for the community
- 3) Patient advisor/coach could assist with design of open-ended questions
- 4) Patient advisor/coach felt the work along side the practice helped them to understand practice challenges
- 5) Advisor/coach felt the work along side their physician helped them to build a stronger and improved relationship with their physician and MOA
- 6) Advisor/coach able to consider some of the challenges to patients in completing HYH and suggest ways to reach out to patients to assist in attracting them to complete HYH (email, letters, bulletin board notices, calls...)
- 7) Advisor/coach could assist with data review - some able to navigate excel and work with graphs etc