



Engaging Residents in Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI)

Qsource encourages facilities to engage residents beyond just resident care, to include their voices in quality improvement and governance activities. Bringing a resident perspective to the process can help the facility to better understand issues residents may be experiencing, and in developing resident-centered interventions.

Facilities often say they are concerned that having a resident and/or representative in a QAPI meeting will violate confidentiality. To preserve confidentiality, plan the agenda for the meeting so the resident and/or representative is at the beginning of the meeting. Then, confidential topics can be discussed after the resident and/or representative has left the meeting.

Benefits of Resident Engagement in QAPI and/or Governance

Benefits of engaging residents and/or representatives in quality improvement activities include:

- Diverse perspectives and ideas can result in solutions that appeal to a wider population. Having that resident and/or representative involved can give you another perspective to incorporate into your interventions.
- Residents are in a position that allows for the repetitive observation of most initiatives and can report back on what they are seeing. They are watching and listening to what is happening around them and they can share what they are observing.
- Inclusion in the team can dramatically open up a resident perspective and demonstrate the facility's commitment to solving the problem. The resident can go back and share with other residents that the facility is committed to making improvements and they see first-hand the "bigger" picture of what the facility does to not just improve their care but care for all.

Steps to Engaging a Resident and/or Representative in QAPI

The process of engaging your residents and/or representatives into the QAPI meetings can be broken down into several parts: selecting and inviting, meeting, and sharing after the meeting.

Resident and/or Representative Selection

Resident and/or representative selection should be considered with some thought and method behind it. Look for a person who:

- Can see beyond their personal experiences
- Shows concern for more than one issue
- Has a positive outlook on life
- Listens well
- Shows respect for perspective of others
- Interacts with different people
- Speaks comfortably in a group with candor

Resident and/or Representative Invitation

There are several key components to successfully inviting a resident and/or representative to participate:

- Make it personal—invite the resident and/or representative in-person away from other residents.
- Explain the purpose of the meeting.
- Share reasons why the resident and/or representative is being invited.
- Review their role during and after the meeting.
- Accommodate the resident's and/or representative's schedule to attend the meeting.
- If the resident and/or representative agrees, educate them on the topic(s) covered and answer any questions they have.

Before the Meeting

- Remove any Personal Health Information from reports.
- Provide the resident and/or representative with any policy and procedures that may be relevant to the discussion.
- Determine with the team what areas you would like resident and/or representative input on or if the resident and/or representative will participate in the entire meeting.
- Interdisciplinary team members should all prepare specific, directed questions for the resident and/or representative.
- Ask the resident and/or representative how long they would like to stay during the meeting.
- Set an agenda by:
 - Including introductions as part of the agenda.
 - Planning for the first 20-30 minutes to discuss the topics that are a priority for resident and/or representative input.
 - Providing the resident and/or representative with a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting.

During the Meeting

- Introduce all members attending by name and role.
- Ask the resident and/or representative to introduce him/herself.
- Observe confidentiality requirements.

- Keep to the agenda, observing time limits set, to ensure resident and/or representative feedback is included.
- Use plain language and explain any acronyms when reviewing reports and data.
- Ask the resident and/or representative the prepared questions and about their experience with the topic. For example: “We have just reviewed the data we have on facility acquired infections...”
 - Have you ever had an infection during your stay?
 - What steps do you take personally to help you stay infection free?
 - How do you think we could help residents with this?
 - How do you think staff could improve their practices?

After the Meeting

Facility staff:

- Include resident’s and/or representative’s attendance and participation in QAPI meeting minutes.
- Follow up with the resident and/or representative directly on any hot-topic issues prior to the next meeting.
- Check in with team about what can be done to improve the process for the next meeting.

Resident and or Representative:

- Update residents and/or representatives on the topics discussed.
- Ask for any feedback needed to share at the next meeting.

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