



Huddle Up

Improving the Grievance Process - Series #3

Patients must be able to question procedures or staff performance (e.g., whether or not a staff member washed their hands prior to initiating the patient's treatment) without fear of reprisal.

However, patient experts have shared they are afraid to voice their concerns, fearing that staff will impose negative consequences, such as changing the patient's schedule, moving their chairs, hurting them when taking them on and off treatment, or causing errors with their machine. Here's a quick self-check for staff.

Grievance Retaliation

Under the Federal regulations all patients are afforded certain rights, including: "The right to be informed of his/her right to file internal grievances or external grievances or both without reprisal or denial of services."

"Reprisal" would include retaliation or revenge and could include perceived punishment, isolation, the intentional infliction of physical pain or emotional distress or involuntary discharge from the facility.

Fear of retaliation is the most common barrier that patients share as to why they do not file a grievance at the facility.

For more information, contact:

ESRD Network 16: 317-257-8265
press option 1
ESRD Network 17: 816-880-9990
press option 2
or visit esrd.qsource.org

You might be retaliating if you...

- Feel angry or hurt when a complaint is filed
- Take it personally
- Change your behavior or attitude
- Change the tone of your voice
- Make unkind comments or gestures
- Engage in unprofessional behavior
- Slow down your caregiver response
- Neglect certain duties
- Avoid eye contact
- Ignore the patient
- Make statements such as, "If you don't like it here you can leave."

What to do when patient's complain...

- Control your emotions
- Be objective
- Don't overreact
- Acknowledge anger or hurt feelings
- Notice your actions — they speak louder than words
- Give yourself time to regroup
- Explore the root cause of the complaint
- Respect the patient and yourself