



Huddle Up

Improving the Grievance Process - Series #1

Grievance Definition

We often think a grievance issue needs to be something really big and that the little concerns presented by patients are not grievances. However, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) a grievance includes any concern that didn't meet the patient's expectations.

Patient experts often say it's the small stuff that really matters when it comes to how a patient feels about the care received. Addressing the little things also helps to prevent it from becoming a big thing later.

Taking all concerns seriously makes the patient feel like their concerns and feedback matter to the clinic and that you are interested in improving the care they receive. Addressing grievances as opportunities for improvement, and not as a burden, helps to build a culture of safety where all patients and staff feel safe sharing their concerns.

According to Medicare...

"A written or oral communication from a patient, and/or an individual representing a patient, alleging that an ESRD service received from a provider did not meet the grievant's expectations with respect to safety, civility, patient rights, and/or clinical standards of care."

By this definition, no issue (concern/complaint) is too small to be documented and addressed as a grievance.

A few examples of patient grievances:

- It's too cold/hot in here
- The bathroom is dirty
- Doesn't want a specific staff member to care for them
- Staff member is treating them differently from others
- Doesn't like schedule changes
- Put on late for treatment
- Pain with cannulation
- Not enough fluid removed or too much fluid removed
- Post-treatment bleeding
- Wrong dialyzer used
- Staff is being rude
- Patient privacy is not being respected
- Staff is being unprofessional
- Staff is sharing inappropriately on the treatment floor
- Another patient is being disruptive

For more information, contact:

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