

FOR PATIENT CENTERED PRIMARY CARE...

Partner With Your Patients

What initially started as a Comprehensive Primary Care (CPC) requirement eventually became something that has been transformative on a fundamental level. For **Gabriel Park Family Medicine Clinic**, an urban academic practice, the installation of the Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) challenged their idea of what it meant to engage patients beyond the traditional model of passive engagement.

What was the issue?

“VIBE” was an initiative facilitated by the larger Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU)’s patient experience group to determine three words to define the practice, what each practice aspires to be for patients, and the standards that each practice holds themselves to. The purpose of this initiative is to collectively define the culture of care in the practice.

How did they engage their patients?

During a quarterly PFAC meeting, the Gabriel Park Family Medicine staff members mentioned the VIBE initiative in passing and the patients expressed interest in taking part. Upon realizing that this was an area where patients had a lot of expertise and perspective, PFAC members were integrated early on in the process.

It began with every member of the practice (staff, physicians, and PFAC members) picking 6 out of 75 positive and negative adjectives to describe the patient experience at the practice.

Results were collated, first overall, then broken down into groups by theme, leading to robust discussions with the entire group to assess the actual words they picked versus what they aspired to be.

PRACTICE PROFILE

Name: Gabriel Park Family Medicine

Practice type: Urban, residency training program/academic health system

PCMH recognition: Certified Level 4 PCMH facility

Location: Portland, OR

Primary Care Provider

Staffing: 13 physicians, 4 Pas, 1 NP, 12 Residents

Patient visits/year: 35,000-40,000

Patient demographics: 70% commercial, 20% Medicare, and 10% Medicaid

Level of patient engagement: Organizational design

Notable highlight: Patients help define clinic culture and “branding”

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What was the result?

Ultimately, the three words that were selected by the collective group to describe practice culture were Compassionate, Professional, and Trustworthy. These three words are included in their orientation packet for all new faculty and residents that are on boarded onto the clinic, helping to maintain the collaborative precedent that has resulted from this newfound partnership with patients.

Rather than coming up with the three words and then bringing them to patient advisors for feedback, they decided to involve patients in the process of defining their ideal clinic culture from the beginning.

This experience resulted not only in a shift in defining practice values, but also how to approach patient engagement. By opening up to the opportunity of engaging patients at the front end instead of waiting until after and then asking for their feedback is not only more efficient, but also increases the likelihood of implementation as well.

Tseng's point of proactively engaging patients upstream rather than retroactively seems simple, but is a difficult shift for many practices to make especially since there is often the preconceived idea of how patients should be engaged as advisors.

"We box ourselves in by having an idea of how

patients 'should' be engaged," says Ann Tseng, Medical Director. "When we think outside the box, improvements come to us."

"There's great power when we open ourselves up to their direct feedback," Tseng adds.

What advice do they have for others?

"Be mindful of refreshing PFAC membership periodically," reveals Tseng. "If patient members are on a number of years, they start drinking the Kool-Aid a little bit...and start speaking 'our speak'."

By ensuring that new members are represented in the PFAC, Tseng and her team are actively reaching out to ensure that new opinions and perspectives are being heard.

How can I learn more?

Learn more about their clinic here:
<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/health/services/family-medicine/clinic/gabriel-park/>

Thanks for the case study to...

Ann Tseng, M.D., Medical Director of Gabriel Park Family Medicine



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