

# FOR PATIENT CENTERED PRIMARY CARE...

## Partner With Your Patients

Dr. Marc Price has been working at **Family Medicine of Malta**, a thriving solo private practice in upstate New York, for over 10 years. The key to his success? His patients, specifically the relationships that he and his staff have built with those patients.

Price believes that the culture of continuous patient engagement he helped foster at this practice has been instrumental in shaping, as well as sustaining, it.

### What was the issue?

Patient engagement, often in the form of patient surveys, is a recommendation oft suggested to obtain PCMH level 3 certification. Rather than checking off a box, Dr. Price wanted to find a way to meaningfully engage patients within the practice in their care.

### How did they engage their patients?

Aside from the individual-level patient engagement that occurs within visits, this practice utilizes three strategies to engage with their patients.

- 1. Patient surveys**—To avoid cherry picking patients who are more likely to respond positively, Price has all patients on a single day complete the survey regardless of who the patient is and whether he is running behind in clinic or not. He believes that this helps to remove any implicit bias with any patient feedback he has received.
- 2. Comment box**—Though patients are able to leave anonymous comments, Price makes an effort to personally address every comment that is received, often by phone. Whether the comment results in change or not, Price ensures that every comment is acknowledged and respected.
- 3. Phone calls to former patients**—Perhaps the most informative strategy, Price and his team call every patient who discontinues care from his clinic and seeks to understand why they left. Though negative feedback and criticism can be difficult to hear, Price and team find that engaging dissatisfied patients is most transformational for improving the experience for the rest of his patient population.

### PRACTICE PROFILE

**Name:** Family Medicine of Malta

**Practice type:** Independent private practice

**PCMH recognition:** PCMH level 3

**Location:** Malta, New York

**Primary Care Provider**

**Staffing:** 3 physicians, 1 PA

**Patient visits/year:** 2700-3000 patients

**Level of patient engagement:** Organizational design

**Notable highlight:** Systematic patient feedback



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## What was the result?

Family Medicine of Malta is a small practice, allowing for changes to occur rapidly. This practice is constantly being tweaked and refined as a result of the ongoing patient feedback and involvement.

Instead of standardized patient experience surveys, Dr. Price relies on narrative and qualitative data to guide this change. The growth of the practice, as well as Price's financial success, provide evidence that continuous quality improvement and constant engagement with all patients is working, and that even solo private practices can incorporate systematic ways of inviting patient feedback.

## What advice do they have for others?

"Patient engagement can be biased because only those engaged to begin with are going to be involved," Dr. Price advises. "Every patient is different and needs different outcomes."

This is a method Dr. Price and his team have utilized to invite a more diverse range of voices who may not otherwise participate in a survey or an advisory council. His proactive approach allows voices from all corners of the practice to be heard.

## How can I learn more?

<http://www.familymedicineofmalta.com/>

## Thanks for the case study to...

Marc Price, D.O., Owner, Family Medicine of Malta



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