

Patient Module: Understanding and Participating In QAPI



Introduction

Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement (QAPI) meetings are a chance for you to help make the quality of care and quality of life better for people on dialysis — including you. QAPI meetings can also let your family and caregivers engage with staff to make things better.

QAPI lets you bring your ideas right to the staff. You can work with staff as they plan, deliver, and evaluate your dialysis care. This helps them improve care for you and for anyone treated at the facility. Sharing your concerns and needs through QAPI can also improve the experience of care for you and your peers.

This module tells how you can be involved in QAPI. You will learn what QAPI is, how it works, and how you can take part in meetings.

What is QAPI?

- QAPI is all about quality in your dialysis facility! Quality Assurance (QA) and Performance Improvement (PI) are two ways to manage the quality of health care you get.
 - ◇ **QA** is a way to meet standards put in place by Medicare. These standards are there to make sure you get quality health care.
 - ◇ **PI** is what is done to improve outcomes of your care. An outcome or result could be adequate dialysis or a kidney transplant.



How does QAPI work?

Your healthcare team works with each other and with you and your family to find ways to make care better and to solve problems. Here's how it starts. Staff, patients, and family members:

- Form a committee.
- Meet monthly, either virtually or in person.
- Review important topics. These could be access to care, diet, fluids, and preventing infections. They could also be patient concerns like getting to and from dialysis.
- Develop and put in place plans and activities to solve problems and improve care at your dialysis facility.

What is the patient and family role in QAPI?

You and your family talk about your concerns. You also share your ideas to get patients more involved at the facility. These questions may help you get ready for the meeting:

- What do you think is being done well in the dialysis facility?
- What do you think could be better?
- Why do you think patients miss or shorten treatments?
- What is the best way for staff to communicate with patients about their treatments?



What are examples of concerns for a QAPI meeting?

- Scheduling flexibility
- Transportation availability
- Treatment timeliness
- Infection prevention
- Diet and fluid management
- Home dialysis and transplant education
- Peer mentoring and support groups

How can I go to a QAPI meeting?

Here is how you can attend a QAPI meeting:

- A staff member can invite you to the meeting.
- You can ask your social worker or nurse if you can join the QAPI meeting.
- A fellow patient who has already been to a QAPI meeting can recommend you.

The handout *Because Your Voice Matters!* has information about what happens during and after a QAPI meeting. You can find this handout at <https://esrdncc.org/en/patients/>.

What can I do to support QAPI at my facility?

You can support QAPI at your facility by:

1. Suggesting sharing QAPI goals at an in-person or virtual lobby day.
2. Telling staff you would like to attend a QAPI meeting again in the near future.
3. Sharing your experience with other patients at your facility.

How do I know my voice was heard?

- You see your idea in action at the center.
- You hear your idea being shared at a lobby day.
- Patients thank you for participating and making a difference at the facility.

What are the next steps?

- Talk with your care team about attending a QAPI meeting.
- Use this guide to get prepared for the meeting.
- Ask the staff about how you can help keep other patients informed about QAPI activities.