

IMPROVING PATIENT ENGAGEMENT IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

Why is patient engagement important in behavioral healthcare?

- **Engaging the patient and caregiver** is important to improve health outcomes and support individual treatment plans.
- **Individuals’ desire to be engaged in decisions** regarding their healthcare.
- **Those engaged as active decision-makers** in their healthcare tend to be healthier, and experience improved outcomes.
- **Engagement increases health literacy**, adherence to treatment, functional status, and faster recovery.
- **Reduces the risk for re-hospitalization**, medical errors, and suffering health consequences from poor communication among providers.

What can you do to help increase patient engagement?

One way to do this is to follow the RESPECT Model.

1 Rapport

- Understand how respect is shown through verbal and nonverbal communication within given cultural groups.
- Attempt to connect on a social level.
- Validate the patient and family’s point of view.
- Suspend judgment and avoid making assumptions.

2 Empathy

- Express verbally and nonverbally, the significance of each patient’s concerns so that he or she feels understood.
- Focus on patient goals.
- Seek out and understand the patient’s rationale for behaviors and illness.
- Acknowledge the patient’s feelings.



The RESPECT Model stands for:

R – Rapport

E – Empathy

S – Support

P – Partnership

E – Explanations

C – Cultural Competence

T – Trust

(continued)

3 Support

- Recognize how class, race, ethnicity, gender, education, socioeconomic status, sexual and gender orientation, immigrant status, community, family, gender roles, and so forth affect care.
- Address social determinants and drivers of health.
- Involve family/care givers or patients' identified support.
- Reassure your patient that you are and will be available to help.

4 Partnership

- Acknowledge the power differential between patients and providers.
- Let your patient know you will work together to find solutions and resolve challenges.

5 Explanations

- Devote time in treatment to understanding how patients perceive their presenting concerns. How similar or different is your perspective?
- Check with your patient often during the conversation to assess understanding.
- Use verbal clarification techniques.

6 Cultural Competence

- Respect your patient and their cultural beliefs.
- Practice cross-cultural awareness and inter-cultural communication; be being open to unfamiliar attitudes and behaviors.
- Learn inter-cultural communication skills and ways to respond to cultural differences.
- Know your limitations in addressing behavioral health concerns cross culturally, with the ability to shift focus and seek guidance when your approach is not working.

7 Trust

- Commit to behaviors that enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- Recognize that trust is not inherent but must be earned by medical and behavioral health clinicians.
- Recognize that self-disclosure may be difficult for some patients; consciously work and take time to establish trust.



Thank you for your partnership.

Please contact your Provider Relations Representative if you have questions or need assistance.

Sources:

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