



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Engaging Patients in Improving Ambulatory Care

*A Compendium of Tools from Maine, Oregon,
and Humboldt County, California*

March 2013

Engaging Patients in Improving Ambulatory Care

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Introduction

Patients are the heart of any primary care practice. Patients and practices share a mission to improve patient health—a mission in which both parties play indispensable roles. These days, practices are especially focused on improving the way they provide care, to respond to changing expectations for technology, quality, and payment. Patients can play an important role in those efforts, too, though few practices tap that potential.

A small but growing number of medical practices and other health care organizations are harnessing patient involvement as a powerful force for improving care. Patients have a unique perspective of practice function and care delivery. Involving patients in efforts to improve quality can help address challenges from practice inefficiencies to barriers to adherence. Practices that have embraced the approach of integrating patients into quality improvement efforts report undergoing a culture change—one that puts the patient at the center of care, and improves the experiences of patients and providers alike.

In this compendium of resources, you'll find a variety of tools that health care organizations in three communities have used in their efforts to engage patients. These tools can help you recruit, orient, and train patients; clarify roles and responsibilities; and put a structure in place to foster ongoing, productive relationships. Click on any item in the Table of Contents to skip directly to that resource.

We also encourage you to watch the accompanying [video](#), which offers lessons and tips for effectively engaging patients in improving care.

The three communities that provided these sample tools—[Humboldt County, California](#), [Maine](#), and [Oregon](#)—are part of the *Aligning Forces for Quality* (AF4Q) project. AF4Q is the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's signature effort to lift the overall quality of health care in 16 communities across the country. These three communities were among the first in AF4Q to implement this kind of patient engagement strategy on a broad scale, but others are following suit, and all are finding success and positive response, leading them to expand their efforts.

It is our hope that you will be able to leverage this pioneering work to chart a course toward patient-centered care in your own practice or community.

To learn more about *Aligning Forces for Quality*, visit www.forces4quality.org.

Aligning Forces for Quality would like to thank the following organizations for graciously sharing the materials in this compendium. The content included in this resource belongs to them, and them alone. For more information on an individual organization, click the organization's name to visit its website.

Maine

[Belgrade Regional Health Center's Patient Advisory Committee](#)

[Eastport Health Care, Inc.'s Community Circles](#)

[Four Seasons Family Practice's Patient & Family Advisory Group](#)

[Husson Internal Medicine's Patient Advisory Group](#)

[Maine Quality Counts' Maine Patient-Centered Medical Home Pilot](#)

[MaineGeneral Medical Center's Patient Family Advisory Council](#)

[Southern Maine Medical Center PrimeCare Internal Medicine's Patient Advisory Council](#)

Oregon

[Care Oregon, Inc.'s Member Advisory Council](#)

[Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation's Patients and Families as Leaders Program](#)

[Oregon Medical Group's Patient and Family Advisory Council](#)

[PeaceHealth Medical Group's Patient Advisory Council](#)

[Providence Medical Group's Patient and Family Advisory Council](#)

[St. Charles Family Care-Redmond's \(formerly Cascade Medical Clinic\) Patient and Family Advisory Board](#)

Humboldt County, California

[Aligning Forces Humboldt's Patient Partners Project](#)

[Humboldt-Del Norte Foundation for Medical Care's Primary Care Renewal Teams](#)