

Encouraging Meaningful Engagement

Encouraging Meaningful Patient and Family Engagement in the Strategic Clinical Networks™ (SCNs)

Article written by the SCN Patient and Family Engagement Team

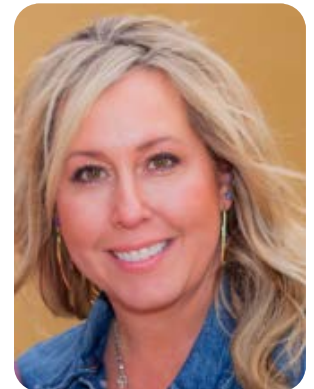
In February 2019, the [Engaging for Excellence: A Staff Liaison's Guide to Best Practice](#) resource was released. This resource, which is written from an advisor's point of view, was co-designed with SCN patient and family advisors and staff liaisons. The guide provides recommendations to staff liaisons regarding best practices to build and sustain meaningful engagement with advisors.

We asked three SCN staff liaisons to share how they encourage meaningful engagement with patient and family advisors in their SCNs. Here is what they had to say:

“Working in the Digestive Health SCN has opened my eyes as to how I can work with patients in many different ways and in all levels of health care.

To me, having meaningful patient and family advisor participation is about knowing each advisor and understanding where in the process they want to be involved. I enjoy getting to know who our advisors are by listening to them talk about their interests and passions. This helps guide what level of involvement is meaningful to them and what skills they want to offer.

We learned very early that most of our advisors want to be part of the initial stages of building quality healthcare as opposed to approving an end product.”



Jessica McLarty – Digestive Health SCN Manager and Staff Liaison





Catherine Joseph – Diabetes, Obesity, and Nutrition (DON) SCN Manager and Staff Liaison

“Meaningful engagement invites and encourages advisors to bring their lived experience to the table to help us understand the issues that really matter to patients. It involves recognizing that patients are the experts in being able to provide real-world evidence and, therefore, respecting them as such and including their perspective in every phase of our initiatives.

We can only fully understand what the unmet needs in our health care system are when we understand what it is like to be a patient within the system.”

“In the Surgery SCN I try to encourage meaningful engagement through meeting structure, attitude, and relationship building.

Meeting structure includes an informal monthly meeting with all the advisors to get to know one another better and share thoughts on issues of the day. All advisors can attend Core Committee meetings, and we involve advisors in our leadership team discussions. In addition, advisors both lead and participate on a number of Surgery SCN working groups.

More important than meetings is attitude and relationships: being genuine and open to the thoughts and opinions of advisors and creating real relationships. I strive to model this to encourage real engagement.”



Tim Baron – Surgery SCN Manager and Staff Liaison