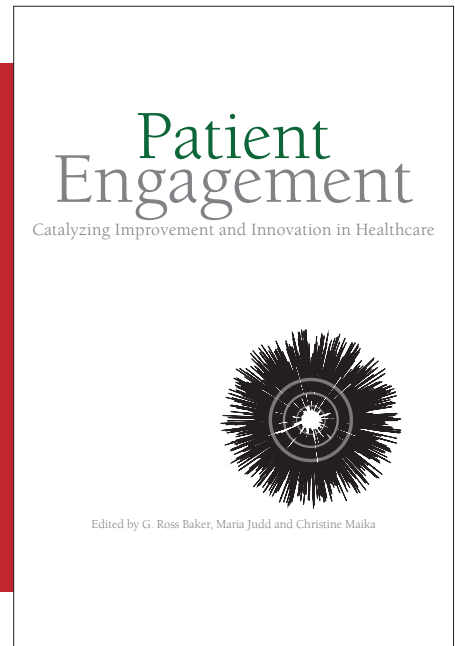


Encouraging Active, Meaningful Collaboration between Patients and Staff to Produce Better Care

A Review of *Patient Engagement: Catalyzing Improvement and Innovation in Healthcare*

Reviewed by Angela Coulter, Senior Research Scientist, Nuffield Department of Population Health, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK



It is widely acknowledged that patients have an important role to play in their own healthcare and in quality improvement more broadly, but examples of successful patient engagement are hard to find. This book aims to fill that gap. The editors have assembled case studies from Canada, the US and the UK, to show how patient engagement can be done and to illustrate its beneficial effects. Ten case studies are presented (five from Canada, three from the US and two from the UK) and three useful overview chapters – two written by patients – identify common threads and describe how “engagement-capable environments” can be created.

Between them, these organisations are aiming to encourage active, ongoing and meaningful collaboration between patients and staff to produce better care. In addition to improvements in patients’ experience, empowerment and activation, this type of engagement can lead to better health outcomes. Examples of what has been achieved include reduced rates of medication errors and hospital-acquired infections (McGill University Health Centre, Montreal), safer care and reduced lengths of stay (Augusta University Health System, Georgia) and reductions in mortality from respiratory problems (Whittington Health Respiratory Service, London).

The case studies illustrate the importance of effective leadership, the need to train and support staff to work in partnership

Patient Engagement: Catalyzing Improvement and Innovation in Healthcare

Edited by G. Ross Baker, Maria Judd and Christine Maika

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with patients and the value of preparing patients and family carers to play unfamiliar roles in these organisations. There are examples of imaginative innovations in care that arose out of these productive partnerships, but much of the value lies in getting the basics right by looking at services through patients’ eyes. In some organisations and health systems, this has amounted to a cultural transformation, changing the way staff view their roles and greatly increasing their job satisfaction.

Each of the case studies is different, with a variety of ambitions and scope, and encompasses different combinations of activities. It is clear that there is no single route to effective engagement and no quick fixes, but there is much to learn from studying these accounts. Each of the chapter authors is strongly committed to patient engagement, and between them, they have amassed a wealth of experience on how it can be achieved. All those with aspirations to transform health systems should mine this book for helpful ideas and inspiration. They will be well rewarded.

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