



PACT Patient Focus Group Guide: For Patients with a Recent Visit or Other Encounter to the Primary Care Clinic

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PACT Patient Focus Group Guide:

For Patients with a Recent Visit or Other Encounter to the Primary Care Clinic

Introduction

Hello and welcome. Thank you for taking the time to come here and talk about your experiences with and opinions about our medical facility and the care you receive here. We need your input because we are making some changes to improve the way we deliver care to Veterans. These changes are part of what we call the Patient Aligned Care Teams. I'll be covering several main topic items and I'll be moving the discussion from one question to the next. I hope you'll also talk with one another; sometimes in these groups, some people talk a lot and some people don't say much. But it is important for us to hear from each of you because you have different experiences. So if you aren't saying much, I may ask for your opinion. There are no wrong answers. People have different and experiences and points of view, and we want to hear them all. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it is different from what others have said.

We're interested in knowing what you think of your experience with the primary care clinic here at the VA.

I. Describe your last visit. What went well? What didn't go well?

- Have you noticed any changes in your experience at the primary care clinic over the past year? If so, what? What has improved? What are the changes you don't like?

II. Access to care

- Do you feel that you have a primary doctor? Do you feel that primary doctor has a certain team of nurses or care managers they work with, and what they do for you? Why or why not?
- When you want to call with a question about your health, what is your experience like?
- What is your experience like when you need an appointment with your primary doctor? How about other doctors at the VA?

III. Care Coordination

- Do you receive some of your care from doctors/providers outside the VA? How well does this work? What are the problems with it? What do you like about it?
- Think of your experiences when you visited a VA doctor other than your VA primary care doctor (e.g., VA specialist).
 - Did you feel that the doctor you visited had the information about you they needed to provide good care? Why or why not?
 - What was your experience like after the visit?
 - Did you feel that your primary care doctor had enough information about your experience after your visit with this other doctor? Why or why not?
- Think of your experiences after a hospitalization or discharge from the emergency department.
 - What was your experience like after the visit?
 - Did you feel that your primary care doctor had enough information about your experience after your visit with this other doctor? Why or why not?
- If you were discharged from the hospital or the emergency department, describe how prepared you were for discharge / care at home? (prompts: How were you prepared/who helped prepare you? Did you understand any changes made in your regimen? Did you have any trouble getting the home services that were recommended?)

- Do you receive some of your care from doctors/providers outside the VA?
How well does this work? What are the problems with it? What do you like about it?
- What was your experience like dealing with financial issues or bills related to the visit/hospitalization?

IV. Caregiver involvement in care

- How are your family members or friends involved in helping you manage your health conditions?
- When family or friends try to help, how does it make you feel?
- Do any of your family members or friends communicate with your VA primary care team (e.g., doctor, nurse), either in person, by fax, or over the phone? If so, describe what that experience is like.
- Would you be interested in having your primary care team refer you to VA programs that help family/friends better support you in caring for your chronic condition? Why or why not? How do you think you would benefit from this?

V. Technology Use

- Please describe your experience, if any, with using newer 'enhanced' communication technology to communicate with your VA health team? What do you like about it? What would you improve?
- If you don't use these services, why not?
- How would you feel about a friend or family member helping you to use these technologies to communicate with the VA?
- What types of health issues or health situations would you be more likely to use technology to communicate with your health team about? What types of technology would you use?

VI. What concerns about your health do you have that the VA could address better than we're doing now?

- What does your VA health team do to help you manage your medical conditions and improve your physical health? How can your VA health team help you better manage your medical conditions and improve your physical health?

VII. Navigator System

- There is a nurse on your primary care team who is helping patients with chronic conditions find out about VA programs that are available to help with managing their conditions. This nurse talks with patients to understand what their needs and preferences are, and then refers them to programs they may want to enroll in.
- Do you have any experience with the navigator?
 - If yes, please describe your experience. What did you like about it? What didn't you like?
 - If no, do you think the navigator would be beneficial to you? Why or why not?
- What do you think is important for the nurse navigator to know about you so the nurse can refer you to programs that will help you reach your health goals?

VIII. Health Programs

Programs are available to help you better manage your chronic condition(s). Does anyone have any experience with these programs?

- If yes, please describe your experience.
 - What did you like about them? What didn't you like?
- If no, do any of them seem like they would be helpful to you? Why or why not?

IX. Wrap-up

- Is there anything else you'd like to say about your care at the VA? Any questions?