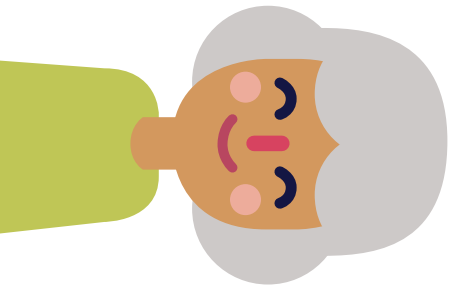


# "WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?"



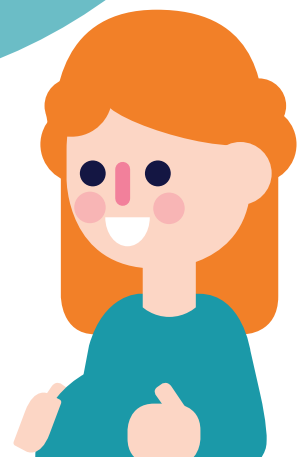
Evaluation  
Report  
*2018/19*



Patient  
Voices  
Network



**BC PATIENT SAFETY  
& QUALITY COUNCIL**  
Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.



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## Background

Asking “What matters to you?” is a simple and effective way for health care providers to meaningfully engage with patients that can have a big impact on the quality of care. To support them in this work, the BC Patient Safety & Quality Council launched a provincial program with a simple question aimed at ensuring care is aligned with what matters to patients and their families. When health care providers have a conversation about what really matters to the people they care for, it helps them build trust, develop empathy and understand their patients.

In partnership with health care organizations across the province, we have been encouraging health care providers to have “What matters to you?” conversations each and every day with the people they support and care for. Because patients are the true experts on their own needs and experiences, asking, listening and responding to what matters to patients is key to person- and family-centred care. When a health care provider starts a conversation by asking what really matters, they are taking an important step in ensuring that their daily practice goes beyond routine and is truly meeting the needs

of their patients. The resulting conversations engage patients in decision-making, build trust and ultimately lead to higher-quality care and actions that align with what patients want.

“What Matters to You?” started in Norway in 2014, with the aim of encouraging more meaningful conversations between patients, caregivers, families and their health care providers. The movement has now spread to over 15 countries, and we were the first organization to bring it to Canada and adapt it in BC’s health care system. [Based on the incredible success of the first year of “What Matters to You?”](#), which focused on a single day of action, we now support “What Matters to You?” as an ongoing program encouraging health care providers to embed the question “What matters to you?” into care conversations each and every day.

To understand the impact of “What Matters to You?” in BC, multiple data sources have been analyzed and reviewed, including resource orders and sign-ups for the campaign as well as stories and information shared via email, survey responses and participant interviews throughout the past year.

### Who is the BC Patient Safety & Quality Council?

We provide system-wide leadership to efforts designed to improve the quality of health care in British Columbia. Through collaborative partnerships with health authorities, patients and caregivers, and those working within the health care system, we promote and inform a provincially-coordinated, patient-centred approach to patient safety and quality. We also provide advice and make recommendations to the Minister of Health.

We also provide a bridge to the best knowledge in health care quality available across Canada and beyond. We seek out national and international partnerships that provide knowledge and insights of value to BC, adapt these new ideas to meet the needs of our health care system, and work with our partners to put them in place.

# Outreach

## Our Partners: Who, What, Where?

A total of 312 partners joined us in participating in and encouraging “What matters to you?” conversations throughout the province from April 2018 to April 2019. Partners are defined as those who shared their “What matters to you?” conversation stories with us via an online “[Share Your Story](#)” form, as well as anyone who ordered resources. They included champions in local communities and health care providers who identified with the importance of asking “What matters to you?” and spreading the program message.

These partners included:



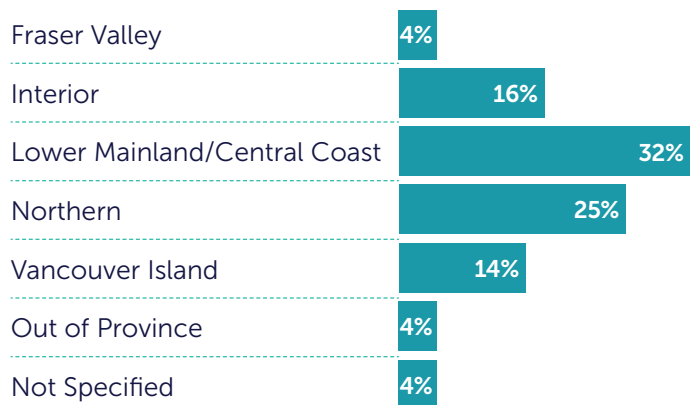
## How Did We Support Our Partners?

We provided resources, webinars and check-ins to learn how things were going and if partners needed any further support. We also produced educational videos this year that focused on building capability in the system around asking “What matters to you?” The [instructional videos](#) explored:

- Asking “What Matters to You?”
- Doing What Matters
- Listening to What Matters

The graph below illustrates where our partners are located. Though “What Matters to You?” is a provincial program, 4% of our partners were not located in British Columbia – likely because we committed to mentoring and supporting the spread of “What Matters to You?” to anyone wanting to bring it to their own communities.

The graph below illustrates partners’ locations:



According to our “Share Your Story” survey,

**89%** of our **49** partners

who completed the survey felt that our support and resources helped them feel comfortable in supporting and promoting the program.



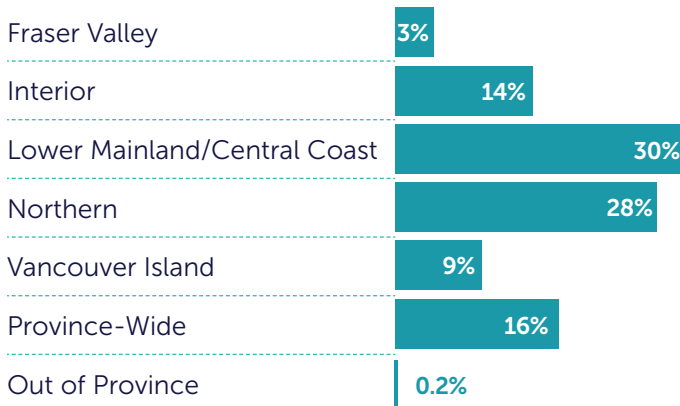
## Resources

Our resources played a huge part in helping to spread the “What Matters to You?” message across the province. According to stories shared by health care providers and ambassadors, resources helped people initiate conversations around person- and family-centred care and helped partners feel supported to promote the program at their local hospitals, health clinics and care homes. Resources were ordered online from our website, [BCPSQC.ca](http://BCPSQC.ca).

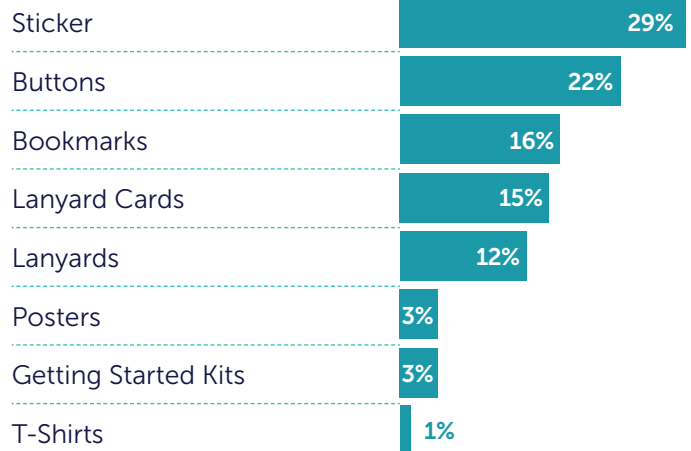
“What Matters to You?” resources included “Getting Started” kits, posters, buttons, lanyards, stickers, t-shirts and bookmarks. The most popular resources were the stickers and buttons, which came in two versions, one for health care providers and one for patients. This year we were able to work with the Provincial Health Services Authority’s Translation Services Team to design a “What Matters to You” poster that features the 11 most common languages spoken in BC!

**In total, 54,696 resources were ordered from April 2018 to April 2019!**

Total Resources by Area (n=54,696)



Total Resources by Type (n=54,696)



“Patients, residents, family, visitors, staff and physicians were quite curious and interested in hearing the story behind ‘What Matters to You?’ The branding of the campaign and the resources ordered inspired people to ask what was going on and the why behind it.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, December 2018*)



## How was “What Matters to You?” Communicated and Shared?

### Website Promotion

“What Matters to You?” was promoted through our website, newsletters and social media channels. In addition to online communication, we hosted webinars and in-person presentations so that people could hear stories and experiences of having “What Matters to You?” conversations directly from health care providers and patients.

**“What Matters to You?” webpages were viewed 29,729 times, and videos were viewed 4,909 times.**

### Promotion Through Webinars

We held five webinars that helped launch, promote and celebrate “What Matters to You?”

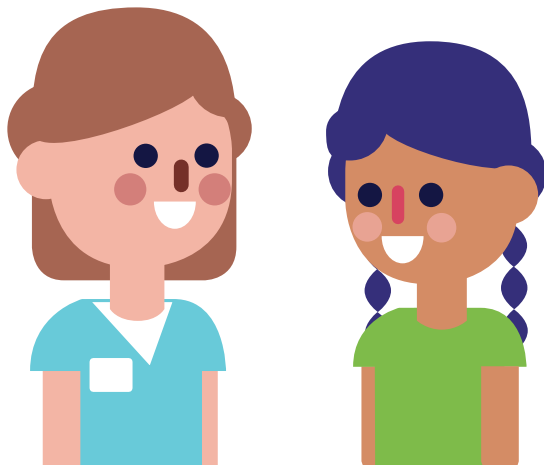
April 11, 2018	Virtual Launch
May 9, 2018	Conversations that Matter
August 16, 2018	Ambassador Leader Webinar
September 26, 2018	The How-To of Embedding WMTY
April 23, 2019	“What Matters to You?” Day Preparation

### Sharing Through Presentations

Partners also independently organized presentations and booths at their local community fairs, work sites and gathering spaces to promote the purpose and meaning behind asking “What matters to you?”



“What Matters to You?” ambassadors set up a booth to ask and share about what matters.



## How Did Partners Participate?

Many health care professionals embedded “What Matters to You?” in their workplaces by finding ways to prompt and remind health care providers to ask this important question. Some kept bookmarks in patients’ files so that, when on-call nurses opened the files, they would be reminded to ask “What matters to you today?” This was key for many patients, as they were then able to tell nurses about the simple things that mattered most to them. For example, a patient shared that “noise levels, roommates’ behaviour, and clear communications between staff and patients” were things that were important to them (evaluation survey, December 2018).

Health care providers also used the question as a first step to ensuring care was person- and family-centred. They made it a priority to involve families in the care of their loved ones by asking them what matters in order to understand more about their families’ approaches and desires, and to build relationships. An example given by a health care provider illustrated this:

People also got involved by sharing “What Matters to You?” resources with health care providers and presenting at health care sites on why asking about what matters is important.

- “We purchased ‘What Matters to You?’ t-shirts for our education team earlier this year. The intent was to spread the message and spark conversation about how patients and families impact and influence the work that we do. The clinical nurse educators were also encouraged to wear their t-shirts at work and engage in discussions with staff, patients and families.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, November 2018*)

- “We make it a priority to understand the family’s approach to caring for their loved one and we do this by asking ‘What matters to you?’ For example, there was a family member who wanted to ensure their dad had an opportunity to vote even though he was in the hospital. We understood that it is the patient’s right to vote and we made it a point to think outside the box on how to make this happen.” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, December 2018*)

- “We have a core team of ambassadors – eight of us to be exact. We did several presentations at varied health care sites and made sure to bring ‘What Matters to You?’ resources. We spoke about why it was important to ask patients what they needed and what mattered. We also worked to reverse the messaging a little bit and asked health care providers what mattered to them. We wanted to ensure that health care providers not only knew what it felt like to be asked the question but promote a healthy and supportive workplace, in order to be able to put their patients first.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, November 2018*)



# What Were The Impacts of Asking “What Matters To You?”

## “What Matters to You?” is Making an Impact on Patient Care!

To measure the impact that “What Matters to You?” had on influencing person- and family-centred care, health care providers were asked to share whether asking the question:

1. Impacted their relationships with patients;
2. Helped them provide better care; and
3. Was easy to incorporate into their practice.

Impact stories were gathered from partners through our electronic “Share Your Story” form, email and direct conversations.

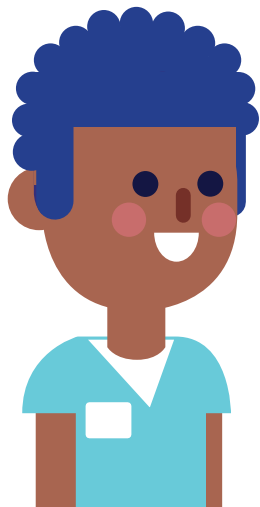
## Has asking “What matters to you?” impacted the relationships you have with patients, families and/or caregivers?

Asking the question had a huge impact! A total of 88% of the 49 health care providers who completed the “Share Your Story” survey shared that asking “What matters to you?” had a positive impact on their relationships with patients and their families.

It was exciting to hear from health care providers that asking patients about what matters often sparked self-reflection and reflexive dialogue with colleagues on what high-quality person- and family-centred care should look like and what would matter to them if they were a patient themselves.

“Absolutely I think it impacted relationships! Recently we received some ‘What Matters to You?’ t-shirts and the lucky recipients have been wearing these t-shirts to work on the same day of the week which has created some great dialogue within the care team. One of our t-shirt-wearing team leaders reported that when she tried to do shift reports, many of her care aides asked what was up with the shirt. The result was a great conversation with our frontline team members where they reflected on what matters to them personally and what they think would matter to them as a resident and family member.” *(Health care provider, evaluation survey, December 2018)*

“At the very least it has started a conversation within our teams. I believe that it has caused some of our team members to reflect and change the way they provide care.” *(Health care provider, evaluation survey, December 2018)*



“Yes, it reminds me to slow down and reflect on how I can provide the holistic person- and family-centred care I continually strive for.” *(Health care provider, evaluation survey, November 2018)*





**Health care providers also felt that asking “What matters to you?” activated patients and families by helping them to be partners in their own care and empowering them to take control over their own health.**

• “Yes, it has impacted our relationships in many ways! It is now a part of our everyday check-in routines with our patients. We feel that it really gives the patients and their families a voice. It shows that we are partners in their care. Patients and families both feel that they are in control when they are asked the questions that concern their health and well-being. That is important to us.” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, November 2018*)

• “Prior to participating in the ‘What Matters to You?’ program, we would typically sit down with a patient starting radiation treatment to chat about what to expect, side effects, etc. This is a short patient education session. Now, whenever I sit down to begin, I ask the patient first what matters most to them in their care and if they have any questions or concerns. I’m starting the education session with the things that matter to them!” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, October 2018*)

• “Aligning patients, families and staff around asking ‘What matters to you?’ helps create an environment where best practice care is provided. Although the emergency department can be challenging and busy at times, we know we have control over the relationships we make with people – especially our patients. Creating these relationships is empowering, inspirational and validates the reason why we participate in this impactful program. ‘What Matters to You?’ improves communication, fosters shared decision-making and ensures care is aligned with what matters to patients and families in the emergency department at Vancouver General Hospital.” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, November 2018*)

For some health care providers, realizing how easy it was to ask what matters and seeing the benefits was a true eye-opener.

• “It’s an easy question to ask and it helps to provide person- and family-centred care. People like to be asked what is important to them and as health care providers we somehow forget to ask this basic question. It is an easy basic question that leads to so much more than I was expecting!” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, November 2018*)

• “It feels like a connection is made and that they can hear that I care.” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, December 2018*)

• “I was surprised at how quickly I felt like my work had more meaning just by asking this simple question! It allows you to create relationships with your patients and provide them with tailored, quality care.” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, December 2018*)

Asking “What matters to you?” helped providers slow down and appreciate the importance of relationships between health care providers and patients. Often this is what is missing for patients. The question has had an impact by providing an opportunity for providers to truly listen to their patients.

• “It feels great to see people’s faces when you take the time to really talk to them.” (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, December 2018*)



## Do you think asking “What matters to you?” helped you provide better care?

Health care providers largely agreed that asking “What matters to you?” impacted the care they provided. 76% of health care providers felt that asking patients what mattered to them helped them be more receptive to patients’ needs and allowed them to treat the whole person versus just their symptoms.

One health care provider reported, “It was a reminder to not focus on the task, but rather to get down to what the resident needs at that time. Sometimes it’s just that they are lonely and want a hot cup of tea or are concerned about their lost keys.” (*Evaluation survey, November 2018*). Asking “What matters to you?” helped health care providers “understand the patients’ priorities and values” and in turn reflect on these when working together to create a care plan (*Health care provider, evaluation survey, November 2018*).

Health care providers shared that by asking “What matters to you?” they were better able to learn about gaps and challenges that patients and families faced. Suggested solutions were shared with leadership and staff who then implemented these changes in their day-to-day work. Changes were made to individual programs based on “What Matters to You?” feedback, including:

- Adding information posters to patient areas in specific health sites and redesigning leaflets to reflect patients’ suggestions; and
- Enabling nurses and frontline staff to allocate time to answer patients’ questions on medication orders.



BC Emergency Medicine Network set up a booth asking patients “What matters to you?”, and asking health care providers how they ask their patients what matters to them.



“What Matters to You?” ambassadors shared the message by creating a game for patients.

## Was asking “What matters to you?” easy to incorporate into your practice?

**Yes, it was! 70% of health care providers felt that it was a simple yet effective question to incorporate into their practice.**

- “Definitely yes. To us, it’s easy and common sense. We value our
- patients and try to incorporate the message in our daily work.”
- *(Evaluation survey, November 2018)*

**Health care providers found collaborative approaches to incorporate the “What Matters to You?” message to ensure it became a part of routine daily practice with patients.**

- “In the emergency department we reached out to our staff in our
- daily huddles, word of mouth, posters, stickers and Facebook
- page. We also did two weeks of advertising in our weekly
- educational tidbits newsletter. The first week focused on improving
- our ability to listen and the second week we focused on asking the
- question. These simple techniques engaged all staff and prepared
- them with the tools for a deeper understanding of what their
- patient is experiencing.” *(Health care provider, evaluation survey,*
- *November 2018)*

- “I asked my staff to incorporate these conversations into their
- programs throughout the week. They all took this request and
- found unique and innovative ways to adapt it and make it happen.”
- *(Health care provider, evaluation survey, November 2018)*

- “It was simply a matter of checking in with my client to evoke from
- her what is most important in her life and how can we help her
- achieve her goals. Grounded in our therapeutic relationship we
- had long established, I created a quiet space for us to talk and we
- simply moved on to a higher level of conversation about life and
- health goals which she was very open to.” *(Health care provider,*
- *evaluation survey, November 2018)*



## Being Asked “What Matters to You?” is Improving Patients’ Experiences!

### Did you like being asked “What matters to you?”

Patients, families and caregivers were also asked how it felt to answer “What matters to you?” and what impact it had on their care. Similarly to our health care providers, these impact stories were gathered through our electronic “Share Your Story” form, email and direct conversations.

100% of patients, family members and caregivers who shared their stories through the “Share Your Story” survey said that it was very important to be asked “What matters to you?” because it made them feel valued by their health care providers. Patients reported that having the opportunity to express what they needed most also made them feel reassured and safe. This level of care went beyond relationship-building for patients and allowed patients and families to feel that their preferences truly mattered. One patient shared that it helped them feel like more than “just another number” (Evaluation survey, December 2018).

Being asked “What matters to you?” helped patients feel that they were people beyond their diagnoses and led to more personalized care experiences.

• “My doctor takes the time to educate me on my heart health and talk about stress and other factors that influence my health. He takes his time with me and I appreciate that. Though he has not directly asked ‘What matters to you?’ he asks the question in other ways that incorporate person- and family-centred care in his practice and I appreciate that.” (*Patient, evaluation survey, December 2018*)

• “It gives me the opportunity to share with my health care provider what matters to me – my health, health care, making every day a gift and telling them my medical history. It opens up amazing doors and lets people know that someone cares and that their voice can and will be heard.” (*Patient, evaluation survey, December 2018*)

• “Rather than reducing someone to their health condition, ‘What Matters to You?’ opens up the discussion to make room for that person’s hopes, dreams, goals and desires.” (*Patient, evaluation survey, November 2018*)



## Do you feel that being asked “What matters to you?” improved your care?

67% of patients who filled out the “Share Your Story” survey reported that being asked “What matters to you?” improved their care. Patients shared that it fostered partnership, built a sense of support and facilitated open communication with their health care providers.

- “I think it does improve care because it removes barriers and opens communication. When a patient feels supported, they are more likely to talk openly and discuss matters that may be sensitive, thereby giving the most information. The more information the professional has, the better the care.” (*Patient, evaluation survey, November 2018*)



“What Matters to You?” resources were shared within long-term care centres. This “What Matters to You?” tree was used to encourage patients and families to share what is important to them in terms of their care.

## Sharing The “What Matters To You?” Message

94% of ambassadors who completed the “Share Your Story” survey felt that sharing the “What Matters to You?” message was well received by both patients and health care providers.

Ambassadors shared the message by promoting and sharing resources in their communities, in their workplaces and with patients.

Ambassadors reported stakeholders’ responses were positive and general reactions were of gratitude and enthusiasm that person- and family-centred care was prioritized. “What Matters to You?” also served as an avenue to educate patients about being partners in their own care.

While ambassadors shared that the response to their work was largely positive, at times health care providers expressed some hesitation about potentially not being able to deliver on patients’ requests.

“We recently did a presentation to about 35 health care providers and had ‘What Matters to You?’ posters, buttons, stickers and lanyards placed through the room and at a table. I was able to mention the ‘What Matters to You?’ program, as well as [the importance of] family, inclusion and partnership with those with the lived experience.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, November 2018*)

“I was an ambassador who led a ‘What Matters to You?’ event at the Bulkley Valley District Hospital, where there was a positive reception from all who participated. Many shared their stories and were glad to do so. Patients like me feel more confident in our health care system if we are afforded opportunities to weigh in on our care.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, December 2018*)

“We purchased t-shirts for our education team earlier this year. The intent was to spread the message and spark conversation about how patients and families impact and influence the work that we do. The clinical nurse educators were also encouraged to wear their t-shirts at work and engage in discussions with staff, patients and families as they emerged. We did not identify one particular day to wear our shirts but in the office, casual Fridays was often the day of choice.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, November 2018*)

“I am a quality improvement consultant in a ‘What Matters to You?’ ambassador role. I have been going to team morning huddles and talking directly to frontline staff promoting the concepts that embody ‘What Matters to You?’ I have also been sharing the ‘What Matters to You?’ message with managers and physicians. The response has been positive. At times, however, there is a little apprehension. Nothing that has impacted intention to move forward, but staff have expressed concern over the potential to being able to deliver on patients’ feedback and requests.” (*“What Matters to You?” ambassador, evaluation survey, November 2018*)



## Moving Forward

With 88% of health care providers expressing that asking “What matters to you?” had an impact on their relationships with patients and their families, and 100% of patients feeling that it was very important to be asked “What matters to you?” because it helped them to feel valued by their providers, it is safe to say that “What Matters to You?” had great impact with health care providers, patients and families!

Patients reported that having the opportunity to express what they needed most made them feel reassured and safe, and that their preferences truly mattered. One patient shared that it helped them feel like more than “just another number” (*Evaluation survey, November 2018*).

However, there are always ways that we can learn and improve on how we are supporting the system to deliver person- and family-centred care by asking “What matters to you?” Health care providers reported that time constraints can sometimes make it challenging to create space for asking about what matters. In a fast-paced environment, where multiple patients’ needs are required to be met, it can be difficult to slow down and just listen.

“It felt strangely quieting. I needed to ensure I stayed quiet and gave her the opportunity to share without interrupting. This is tough for nurses – we love to fix things quickly and efficiently!” said one health care provider (*Evaluation survey, December 2018*).

Moving forward, this can perhaps be included in “What Matters to You?” messaging. We could share that it only takes a minute to ask patients “What matters to you?”, reinforce that asking can be included in routine check-ins with patients and note that it is not difficult to incorporate the question into conversations.

Patients recommended that perhaps “What matters to you?” can be asked in alternative ways. For instance, in order to receive more health care provider buy-in, the question can be framed differently, such as “What are some things that are important to you right now?” or “What can I do to best support you in your care today?” As expressed by a patient, “No matter how it’s asked, the purpose of the question is to establish a relationship, build trust, and understand the patient as a person in the context of their life.”

In many ways, relationship-building is at the heart of “What Matters to You?” Building new relationships and deepening existing ones at the individual and organization levels are key to spreading and embedding “What Matters to You?” so it is sustained over time and becomes routine practice.







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