

## Dialysis Patient-Provider Conflict Toolkit Tips

As found in the DPC Toolkit

### Possible Scenarios

**1) “You never listen to me, you just act like we’re all the same. It’s not one size fits all!”**

Possible response: “I’m sorry you think I’m not listening to you. I do want to hear what you are saying. Please try to be specific about your concerns so I can try to help you. Some aspects of your treatment will have to be addressed by the physician, but I’ll do what I can to make you more comfortable.”

**2) “Who taught you to do this job? Cause I don’t think you got it man. You don’t know what you’re doing?”**

“Please tell me what you think I am doing improperly. I’ll explain the procedure to you and why I’m doing what I’m doing. If you’d like me to call the DON or charge nurse to us to join us I’d be happy to call her.”

**3) “I’ve been watching you and you didn’t wash your hands like you’re supposed to.”**

“Thanks for reminding me. It gets pretty busy in here and I may have forgotten to wash my hands. Your safety is my concern.”

**4) “You guys just go off and leave us alone.” Or “You’re so busy visiting about your weekend, boyfriend, vacation... that you can’t bother to come over here and answer the alarms.”**

“I am sorry that occurred. I will tell my center director (or nurse manager) that you have observed times when staff was not responsive. I know she/he will want to make sure that this is not re-occurring”

**5) “Why can’t they find somewhere else to talk about their weekend?”**

“You’re right. This is personal stuff. I will let the DON know you have observed this. She/he will probably want to know more about the situation.”

**6) “Why can’t you people talk to each other? I already told \_\_\_\_\_ about this.”**

“I’m sorry you have to repeat it to me. I’ll make sure your concern get reported to the proper person.”

**7) “Why can’t you answer my question? Or aren’t you supposed to know this stuff?”**

“I don’t want to give the wrong information if I’m not sure how to answer your questions. We have several specialists on our staff. That’s why I ask the nurse,

dietitian, social worker to speak with you. Then we can both learn the correct information.”

**8) “That dietitian (social worker) is never around when I need to talk to her.”**

“I’m sorry she’s not here today, we share her with other clinics. Can you tell me what it’s about? Is it an urgent matter? Maybe someone else can help you today, and I’ll make sure she knows you want to see her.”

### **Six Steps to Resolving Conflict**

**1) Share your feelings.**

- Your goal is to focus on describing how you feel about the situation or the other person’s behavior.
- Use “I” statements.
- You cannot work toward a resolution if you don’t understand how the other person feels.

**2) Define the problem.**

- Determine if the situation is a disagreement, a misunderstanding, or a conflict of interests.
- Both of you may see a different problem, so the conflict cannot be resolved until real problem is brought to the surface.
- Describe the conflict as a mutual problem.
- Ask the person to state the problem from his or her point of view.
- Restate what you heard. “If I understand you correctly, this is how you see the situation...”
- State the problem from your perspective.

**3) Explore options. Look for possible solutions to the problems of both parties.**

- Brainstorm solutions; think of ideas together.
- Consult with each other. Don’t dictate.
- Sit beside each other to create a feeling of partnership.
- Start with easy issues, then move on to more difficult ones.
- Tell the other person what outcome you want and ask what they want.
- Offer to negotiate differences.

**4) Select and negotiate one option to work on.**

- Both people must agree that the chosen solution is worthwhile.
- Plan how the solutions will be implemented.
- Even if you don't come to an agreement, agree to work toward a resolution that benefits everyone, and schedule a follow-up meeting.

**5) Take Action**

- The conflict cannot be resolved unless you put the plan into action.
- Make a commitment to work on it.
- If you run into trouble, don't stop working on your plan until you get back together to review progress.

**6) Get feedback**

- Thank the person for stating his or her concerns.
- Make sure the plan is working and both parties are still comfortable.
- Schedule time to get back together to discuss the specific problem and how things are working.

✓ **A positive response to a challenging situation has three parts:**

1. Acknowledge the comment, question, or complaint
2. Respond to the individual in a calm empathetic manner.
3. Seek assistance from the resources available to you: unit administrator, nurse manager, charge nurse, social worker, and dietitian.

**DECREASING DIALYSIS PATIENT-PROVIDER CONFLICT (DPC)**  
**“Tips for Defusing Anger”**

1. **Breathe Deeply.** Get your heart rate and breathing to a steady rate. Doing this in front of an angry person can also “model” this technique for them.
2. **Remove Yourself** from the situation if possible, and deal with it when you or they are feeling calmer or “centered”. Let the other person know that you definitely want to talk, but at another time.
3. **Reframe the Situation;** consider another possibility for the conflict or outcome. Help others understand their anger by providing “plausible alternative reasons” for the situation.
4. **Ignore Personal Attacks.** In the long run, it will gain you more respect

5. **Exercise Regularly.** Exercise allows your body to build up energy reserves and stimulates the release of endorphins, the body's natural calming hormones. Think of this as a preventative technique.
6. **Violence is Unacceptable.** If you are concerned that a situation is about to become violent, you should make every effort to distance yourself and your patients from the violent individual. Do not put yourself in a situation where you are in an isolated area with a potentially violent person. It is important that your facility be prepared to deal with any potentially violent situation. Take the time to become familiar with your local law enforcement agencies and seek out their advice for how to cope with a violent situation.