

# Coaching

Giving staff knowledge on teach-back and its effectiveness is important. However, to change from a long-standing patient education habit of asking yes/no questions like “Do you have any questions?” to one of using teach-back to confirm understanding via the patient’s own words, takes coaching.

Changing providers’ behavior and building new habits also take time. Coaching can help staff be successful by enhancing their skills in moving away from long-standing habits and integrating new habits.

Here are tips to help you coach staff to the new habit of always using teach-back.

## Coaching Tips

### **Build motivation.**

- Encourage use of the new habit by focusing on patient-centered/ideal care.

### **Honor the current work through observation.**

- Establish relationships through observing those seeking to build the new habit (teach-back).

### **Understand that change is hard and uncomfortable.**

- Use active and reflective listening.
- Use open-ended **what** and **how** questions to determine individual barriers.
  - ◆ “What worries you about using teach-back?”
  - ◆ “How did using teach-back with your patient make you feel?”
  - ◆ “Tell me more about...”

# Coaching continued

## **Resistance to change is natural. Resistance comes from fear of change.**

- Confront the problem, not the person.
- Resistance is a signal to change the response and approach.

## **Promote new skill development.**

- Promote each individual's belief in their ability to change.
- Focus on previous successes.
- Focus on skill development.
  - ◆ Set goals: "I will use teach-back with every patient today."
  - ◆ Develop a change plan. Habit change happens with conscious planning.
  - ◆ Mentally rehearse:
    - "What is the most important thing I want to be sure the patient understands?"
    - "How would I ask this question?"
  - ◆ Embed cues to use teach-back in already-established habits.
    - "After each interaction, I will ask an open-ended question to elicit understanding."

## **Build confidence to integrate the new habit into work patterns.**

- Rate your confidence in using teach-back on a scale of 1 to 5... "What might help you increase your confidence from a 3 to a 4?"

# Coaching continued

## **Build reliability.**

- Even when people have goals they often need reminders and support to be successful.
  - ◆ Create standard work: content, sequence, timing, and outcome.
  - ◆ Build in job aides and reminders.
  - ◆ Take advantage of pre-existing work and habits.
  - ◆ Make the desired action the default rather than the exception.
  - ◆ Create redundancy.
  - ◆ Group related tasks.

## **Manage relapses.**

- Make a plan for follow-up coaching to reinforce the new habit.
- Share questions and problems. Develop program improvements.
- Recognize, reward, and celebrate!