

Video Transcript: What advice to you have for patients/families about partnering with providers?

Created by the National Center for Medical Home Implementation, a cooperative agreement between the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration.

Blue background with title: What advice do you have for patients and their families to help them feel empowered to ask questions and partner with providers in their care?

Eileen Forlenza, BS National Consultant- Patient-and Family-Centered Care is interviewed.

EILEEN FORLENZA: One of the most important pieces of knowledge that I ever received from my mentors in my life, was just to simply say you know you have the answers, they just need to be brought out and cultivated.

So my advice to parents who are really learning how to be a very solid member of their medical home team is to be prepared and to do the research of whatever the question is you're looking for, but also know you have this team of providers around you and that to be an empowered parent is really about being a committed parent, and I know very few parents who are not dedicated and committed. It's really not a big leap to find parents who will just simply go to the ends of the Earth for their children.

The challenge is the healthcare industry has never looked at their model of business as customer service oriented—just hasn't been that way and so now we are asking for the customers to step in and to give suggestions on quality improvement and product delivery and the way we do business. So what families can do is know they have the right and permission, and are encouraged to ask questions and to give comments around innovation.

So one way that I think parents can really step it up in that way is to just know their pediatrician is looking for that—they want that feedback and to go in as a partner instead of as somebody as who only is a consumer of service is really important because again what parents really need to understand is the difference between healthcare and health. And that while you are in that healthcare situation that's a really important time to have a meaningful dialogue but then stepping away from that is where you child's health will be measured.

So for parents to be empowered for me and a lot of the parents I worked with I worked with my providers whether it was child care provider, the school, the special education, and my health care provider and asked them to share with me anything they could that would help me be a better ambassador for my daughter and just to take on that role was an honor and still is today. But it was really about wanting to be the most informed partner that I could be because I see myself as a member of her medical home team.

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Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43UHyVuBfbI>

