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BC PATIENT SAFETY & QUALITY COUNCIL

# Closing the Loop Top Ten Tips for Health Care Partners

Closing the loop is an essential part of successful patient engagement. Patient partners share personal experiences and contribute time, energy and knowledge to health care improvement efforts. At the end of their involvement, it is crucial that health care partners share back how patient partner participation influenced and contributed to the initiative.

- 1. Start early. Make a Closing the Loop plan together.** At the start of an engagement, decide with patient partners what will be a feasible and meaningful way to share the impacts of their involvement, and the final outcome of the initiative.
- 2. Don't save it all for the end.** Share updates throughout the engagement, so that patient partners are aware of how their participation is adding value and influencing the initiative.
- 3. Reflect and take notes as you go.** After meetings or conversations, jot down ideas, concerns or questions that patient partners have brought forward. A running list of patient partner contributions will make it easier to Close the Loop at the end of the engagement.
- 4. At the end of the engagement, Close the Loop by communicating 3 things:**
  - **Appreciation:** Acknowledge the end of the engagement and thank patient partners for their participation.
  - **Engagement Outcome/Impact:** Share how the contributions and participation of patient partners influenced the initiative.
  - **Initiative Outcome/Impact:** Share if the initiative met its aim, its outcome, impacts or progress made to date.

The Patient Voices Network [Closing the Loop template](#) might be a helpful communication tool to document and share these elements.

**5. Make it a conversation.** It doesn't have to be an email. Closing the Loop can also be achieved through a meeting or phone call with patient partners to share and discuss outcomes, impacts, lessons learned and celebrate your work together. The BC Patient Safety & Quality Council [team](#) is happy to help facilitate Closing the Loop meetings – just ask!

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**6. Don't delay! Try to Close the Loop within 90 days of an engagement ending,** or as quickly as you can so that patient partners aren't left wondering what happened. If your initiative's outcome or impact won't be available for many months or years to come, you can still close the loop promptly by sharing back what you heard and learned from patient partners and how that will influence the work going forward.

**7. Create calendar reminders** for yourself to circle back and share longer term initiative outcomes or impact data, if applicable.

**8. Demonstrate gratitude.** Find ways to show appreciation for patient partners' time, energy and knowledge. The [Patient Partner Appreciation and Recognition Guide](#) might give you ideas!

**9. Be specific.** Provide concrete and personal examples when sharing how patient partners influenced the initiative. Use our [Closing the Loop Engagement Notes](#) template to help keep track of the details.

**10. Share a tangible outcome of the work.** Send copies of final reports, materials or policies that were developed through the initiative. Invite patient partners for a tour of a new space or to attend a launch event, etc.

**Bonus Tip!** Spread your learning and journey more broadly. Write an article or blog about your initiative for your organization, highlighting the impact of the patient partners' involvement. Submit a [partnerships impact story](#) to be featured in the Patient Voices Network website and publications. Look for opportunities to present and showcase your engagement work at conferences and events, like [Quality Forum](#).

**Would you like more information or support with some of these suggestions?  
The [BC Patient Safety & Quality Council team](#) is happy to help!**

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