



How do you lead great meetings with your team and guide conversations about the purpose of the work together? Here are some ways you can set the stage for a good experience for health care and patient partners.

1. Connection before content

- At the start of each meeting, get to know each other as human beings, not just as health care or patient partners. This establishes trust and deepens the quality of the input provided. If using icebreakers, make sure they're sensitive to different people's circumstances.
- Create a commitment or [Teamwork Agreement](#) on how you would like to work together as a group and have respectful conversations.

2. Clarify roles and expectations: Provide the purpose, roles and responsibilities of individual members. Revisit as needed.

3. Lead by example: Accept tensions or differing opinions. Be empathetic in your responses and find ways to value everyone's input. This helps set a supportive environment for honest discussions. When differing opinions happen:

- Remind everyone of the commitments made for working together.
- Seek out the opinion of other groups on how they've resolved differences of opinion.
- Delay a decision and consider it at a future meeting while you explore the options further.

4. Take a team approach: Working with patient and health care partners means learning how to work together in new ways. Discuss that it'll be important for the group to check in occasionally.

5. Be prepared & keep it simple: Avoid using jargon, acronyms or technical language. Make sure to explain any new terms in the materials. You can also provide pre-reading and any other materials ahead of time.

6. Share the floor: Ask for patient partners' opinions during discussions to encourage participation and validate their role. Make an extra effort if blending virtual and in-person meetings.

7. Make time for personal stories: The power of a personal story is endless. Finding a balance between oversharing and staying true to the purposes of your work can be tricky. Try to:

- Acknowledge the power and importance of the story
- Find a connection between the experience and the value of the contribution
- Assist in moving forward by clarifying the purpose of the work together

8. Move forward: Patient partners may share challenging experiences. To avoid becoming stuck in the power of a negative experience, be empathetic and respectful. Is there anything positive for the group to learn from the situation? Are there ideas to improve the experience? Trauma and resiliency informed training for your team can be helpful.

9. Follow up and acknowledgement: Follow up with action items or anything that didn't get addressed during the meeting.

Questions? The [Health Quality BC team](#) is happy to support you!