

COMPETENCY ORIENTATION GUIDE

Competency: Engage all stakeholders on efforts related to new value-based competencies implementation

Competency: The Committee on Stakeholder Engagement

JULY 2020

BACKGROUND

The Accountable Care Learning Collaborative (ACLC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to accelerating the transition to value-based care. To this end, the ACLC has identified care delivery competencies required for providers to succeed in risk-bearing payment models. ACLC-developed Competency Orientation Guides (COG), provide an overview of each competency, including key components, to support provider implementation. Each COG represents the distilled insights from the deliberations of a dedicated committee comprised primarily of leaders from provider organizations, as well as industry partners, and ACLC staff. The Committee on Stakeholder Engagement (Committee), which convened between October and December of 2019, supported the development of this COG.

COMPETENCY IMPORTANCE & CONTEXT

The meaningful involvement of individuals representing various health care outcomes is fundamental to clarifying and achieving the aims of a high-value healthcare system. Without such involvement, the definition of value—as measured by outcomes achieved per dollar spent—is an insufficient guide for framing the 'job to be done' in health care. Despite the highly variable circumstances faced by every health care delivery institution, the Committee agreed adopting a core set of principles for engaging and collaborating with institutional partners, patients, and external stakeholders (e.g., local organizations, civic institutions) can mindfully shape the trust and shared agenda needed for sustainable high-value outcomes.

IMPORTANT TERMS

To support the discussion, the Committee defined the term stakeholder as any individual with a compelling reason to engage in value-based care delivery. This can include patients, their families, care providers, other care staff and leadership, and community partners. For the purpose of this paper, we have selected the following meaning: "Engagement is an ongoing and intentional activity intended to build an inclusive program that ensures each person or organizational entity that is impacted by the program has the opportunity to either be informed of the program or participate in the design and management of the program."

COMMON ELEMENTS

1: Healthcare leaders collaborate with stakeholders to set the direction and build the will for change across the community by formally incorporating value-based aims in their communications with all stakeholders.

Committee Insights:

- Prior to proposing a new course with stakeholders, it is critical to engage stakeholders in active-listening, or "humble inquiry."
- The messaging accompanying the vision and strategic objectives must communicate a compelling reason why the future as a value-based healthcare system is attractive to all stakeholders.
- Effective leaders challenge the status quo by simultaneously insisting the current system cannot remain as-is and by offering clear ideas about superior alternatives.
- Leaders must strive to articulate the differences between the new and current way of working
- By collaborating with stakeholders to assess the implications of a new way of working, the shared agenda for change is more likely to be assimilated.

Core Challenges and Response Options:

- **Challenge:** Not all stakeholders will engage enthusiastically.
- **Response Options:** (1) Only select visible leaders who are invested in achieving the change objectives. (2) It is critical to establish the Committee insights (above) as a standard way of working; a mindset, not a one-time option. (3) The messaging should be tailored to the stakeholder, ensuring their specific role in contributing to the change pathway is clear and how their contribution is advancing the totality of the value-focused objectives. (4) Do not tell the entire "why" using a financial narrative. Use patient and community stories with visually appealing graphics.

2: The healthcare leadership team is well-versed on the core tenets of value-based care and held accountable for exemplifying and proliferating knowledge of them.

Committee Insights:

- Culture is a leading determinant of success. Prior to starting a change initiative, it is critical for the leadership team to determine if the mission is compatible with organizational norms, values, and ways of working.

- Training across all stakeholders should include change leadership principles, with a particular focus on how to lead people through change relevant to their local context.
- In change discussions, leadership must acknowledge conflicting incentives and operational objectives that persist between fee-for-service and value-based payment models.

Core Challenges and Response Options:

- **Challenge:** Holding leaders accountable for embodying the core tenets of value-based care.
- **Response:** (1) From the board level cascading down (across all stakeholders), repeatedly emphasize that change will not occur by simply modifying organizational or partnership structures. (2) Be aware that change initiatives often fall short of their goals due to the failure to change assumptions, thinking, and culture. (3) Provide a training plan that helps leaders understand the details of the work tasks and challenges of the people they are leading so they can effectively work with staff to remove the barriers to successful change.

3: The senior leadership team co-produces data-informed and appropriately sequenced change plans with stakeholders that account for stakeholder dynamics and allow for iterative learning and measurable tracking of progress.

Committee Insights:

- The leadership team within all stakeholders should agree to collaborate with their workforce to ensure all staff understand how the new stakeholders' partnerships relate to their organization's performance goals.
- Organizational leaders must work collaboratively with staff to assess the system's gap(s) between the current and desired state and develop a relevant change plan that visibly shows how stakeholders will build the skills and new way of working needed to achieve the desired goals.
- The senior leadership team should identify and work with organizational "opinion leaders" (influencers) to shape workforce engagement and collaborate with the workforce to create and implement improvement strategies.
- Each stakeholder leadership team must provide the guidance and "safety" (space for failure) their local teams need to identify and test local and cross-organizational change ideas.

Core Challenges and Response Options:

- **Challenge:** Avoiding a tendency to focus solely on the "what" of value-based care initiatives while forgetting to include just as much focus on the "so what."
- **Response Options:** (1) The stakeholder leadership teams must collaborate with the workforce to regularly share key lessons learned across teams and promote the key behaviors that exemplify value-focused care principles. (2) Collaborate with the teams within stakeholder organizations to clearly understand the aims and challenges of the desired changes. (3) Meet with staff regularly to ensure everyone can connect the new performance goals to the current and future strategic goals and how they are contributing to the organization's success.

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION:

- The ACLC whitepaper, [Skills and Mindsets of Leadership Teams in Successful ACOs](#)
- The ACLC [Value-based Readiness Assessment](#)
- [Health Stewardship: The Responsible Path to a Healthier Nation](#), The Aspen Institute
- [Core Attributes of Stewardship: Foundation of Sound Health System](#), *International Journal of Health Policy and Management*

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