

# Collaborative Relationships Build A Strong Foundation

Successful engagement requires a commitment to developing and supporting a strong partnership between *all* stakeholders. **Mutual respect, trust, honesty, equity, dialogue and negotiation are essential elements for successful collaboration.** Relationships look different depending on the level of engagement (see *IAP2 Spectrum*) and method of engagement (see the *Voice of Patients & Families* wheel). Patient & family advisors participating in engagement activities that take place face-to-face and over the long term will require more support.

## What Does a Collaborative Relationship Look Like?

- Mutual respect for skills & knowledge
- Honest, timely & clear communication
- Understanding & empathy
- Mutually agreed upon goals
- Shared planning & decision making
- Open two-way sharing of information
- Accessibility & responsiveness
- Joint evaluation of progress & successes
- Absence of labeling and blaming

## Focus on Collaboration

Patient engagement is an opportunity to create a *third space* where the focus is on the '**we**' and not on *patients, the system* or *providers*. Through engagement the expertise and experience of ***all*** stakeholders can be heard and acted on!

## Respecting Expertise

Making engagement a priority supports patient & family advisors by acknowledging the importance of their stories and perspectives while also recognizing that they are the "**experts on their own experience**" not the health care professionals or administrators.

Contact us for support and guidance on how to best use this information

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