



June 22 Community Advisory Council Summary

By Grace Martin, Founder of Lexington Writing Firm

On June 22, the Minnesota Alliance for Patient Safety (MAPS) hosted a statewide forum for patient/resident and family advisors serving in health systems. Believing that patient, resident, and family input is critical to safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, MAPS launched this innovative Council for virtually sharing concerns, perspectives, and insights.

Catherine Hinz (Executive Director), Lisa Juliar (Engagement Specialist/Patient Partner), and Megan Daman (Project Manager) led the meeting, which focused on discussing the initial draft of the deliverable about “care partners” during COVID-19, which will be available to healthcare leaders in Minnesota.

Care partner story: Shonna G. shared her experiences in caring for her 18-year-old daughter, Jade, during the pandemic. Jade was diagnosed with a rare and incurable blood disorder—when she was 20 months old. Now, She is a first-year pre-med student at the University of Minnesota. “We consider her a professional patient,” said Shonna, “and I’m her care partner. I’m part of the care team, help improve and expedite care, and transition care back home.”

Since Jade turned 18, Shonna has noticed that she’s now in a “grey area.” At times she is considered a pediatric patient and other times treated as an adult, adding confusion to her already complex care needs. During COVID-19, Jade has delayed important treatment out of fear that she will need to be alone while hospitalized. “Isolation at any age can be detrimental,” explained Shonna. “I hope more attention is paid to this 18 to 26-year-old age group. I’m confident that we can be compassionate and safe at the same time.”

Discussion of care partner deliverable to Minnesota healthcare leaders: Council members reviewed the initial draft document developed by the MAPS team. The Council is pleased with the current document, especially its brevity and actionable approach. MAPS and the Council are working together to finalize the document as quickly as possible.

Council members discussed expanding upon several topics, including:

- Developing more conversation prompts and questions for healthcare leaders to discuss internally
- PPE requirements and other infection prevention requirements for care partners
- Communicating the care partner’s role to the public so that loved ones understand how to prepare for this role
- Explain connection between the care partner role and the CARES Act

Key takeaways for health systems: MAPS and all Council members are working together to finalize the document for healthcare leaders in Minnesota. Understanding that healthcare is rapidly changing and evolving to meet the needs of patients/residents and ensure safety during COVID-19, participants are working to deliver this actionable resource soon.

For more information about the MAPS Community Advisory Council weekly conversations and the forthcoming deliverable, email info@mnpatientsafety.org.