

5 Steps to Value in Healthcare Checklist

This checklist is intended to guide employees as they make personal healthcare decisions. Managers can use this tool to start a one-on-one conversation with an individual employee, or it can be shared with the entire organization as the company standard for finding value in healthcare.

1.) Be “Real” About What You Want

Getting real about what you want is the best way to gain alignment in the health system.

Why are you seeing that specialist, or having that surgery, or you name it? This question helps you and your provider get aligned and focus on the real goal, not your symptoms.

You are saying, “Hey, health system - this is what I really need from you, in order to get back to my work and my life.” **Getting that idea clear in your head is super important before you step into the health system.** Having clarity saves you thousands of dollars, confusion and exhaustion.

2.) Get a Clear Diagnosis

Without a starting place, you can’t judge your care or management plan. One sure way to be frustrated and waste time and money is to have a care plan or management plan without a diagnosis. That’s called treating symptoms. **When you are treating symptoms, you are not on the path to healing or value; you are on a path to frustration.**

This is living with uncertainty. **Uncertainty causes stress and drives us all crazy.** Without knowing where you are when we start a journey, you’re easily confused about where to go next. **So remember, be clear about your “current location” and get a clear diagnosis.**

3.) Make Sure Your Expectations Are Set

Did you catch that? I didn’t tell you to set your own expectations, but to **make sure your doctor sets the expectation.** This is where a provider communicates a treatment plan, expected range of symptoms, and the possible complications related to the condition.

How can you check if the expectations have been set? Imagine you are on your way home from the doctor’s office, and as you walk in the door you encounter a friend or family member. Can you answer their questions: **“What did the doctor say? What’s the next step?”** **You need to be able to summarize the diagnosis and the plan in less than 30 seconds. If you can’t, ask your doctor to fill in the gaps.**

4.) Advocate for Yourself

The number one driver for bad experiences, increased cost, medical errors and wasted time is too many providers. **It’s not enough to simply know the roles of the people touching your care. You must also speak up for yourself, fight for what you need, and communicate well with each of those providers.**

5.) Schedule Follow-ups with Triggers

Plan for the unexpected by scheduling a check-in with your provider no more than three months out. This timeframe varies based on the diagnosis. The more complex and newer the diagnosis, the sooner you should schedule the follow-up. It’s time to do something different!