

### Cost Conversation Guide

While evidence suggests that both patients and physicians perceive cost discussions to be prudent in optimal patient-centered care,<sup>6-8</sup> studies have indicated that these discussions are not occurring in most patient visits.<sup>3</sup>

Health care providers are interested in discussing costs with patients, but often do not feel comfortable initiating this discussion. Below are some conversation strategies





The strategy above provides some guidance for initiating a cost conversation with your patients. Studies have shown that most of these conversations are actually quite

short. However, the payoffs in terms of both cost savings and the building of trust can be quite large.

**Here are some additional conversation tips.**

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask all your patients about potential cost distress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to guess who has cost concerns based on visual or other cues</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reassure your patient that the discussion will not negatively impact their medical treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fail to implement a follow-up plan with your patient regarding the discussion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normalize the issue of cost distress for patients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a management option without including the patient in the decision</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ally with your patient and your health care team to address cost distress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle the problem of cost distress on your own (without the assistance of local clinic and/or pharmaceutical resources and other members of your health care team)</li> </ul>

**Conclusion**

Addressing cost distress is an important facet of patient-centered care, and providers should discuss financial concerns with their patients. Using the strategies above will help you and your team have productive and non-threatening cost discussions that your patients will very much appreciate.

**References**

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