



## PLANETREE CERTIFICATION: AN OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR STAYING THE COURSE IN PERSON-CENTERED CARE DURING TURBULENT TIMES

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### Q&A

*Greetings! Thanks again for participating in this recent webinar. As promised, here we have compiled answers to questions posed during the session that we were unable to answer live.*

- **Do you find the difference between culture background reflects on the recognition level?** No, based on our experience of evaluating performance against the Certification criteria in organizations around the world, we have not found disparities in recognition levels based on region or culture. Indeed, as an international certification program, the requirements were intentionally designed to be flexible enough to accommodate cultural nuances and differences in national policies, rules and regulations.
- **I've noticed a fear that adapting patient experience practices or placing more emphasis on empathetic connections will be seen by staff as "extra work" because they're taking on higher patient loads. I recently saw a study that showed how acts of compassion can help prevent burnout and actually be a source of fuel. I'd love to flip the switch on the fear mentioned above. Do you have suggestions or resources on this topic?** Great question! You are right. Research supports that connecting with patients on a human level fuels, rather than depletes, caregivers in their work, and is associated with a lower risk of burnout and compassion fatigue. The research also says that it does NOT take a lot more time. Several studies show that expressing empathy and compassion significantly reduces anxiety and actually takes less than a minute.
- **Have the Certification criteria changed since the pandemic?** No, the Person-Centered Care Certification drivers and criteria have not changed. However, teams around the world are adapting the ways they are meeting the broadly defined goals of the criteria. And we very much welcome that innovation, resourcefulness, and adaptiveness!

- **Is the Certification framework only for hospitals?** Not at all. Many types of healthcare settings, including long-term care communities, integrated healthcare systems, behavioral health hospitals, pediatric hospitals, home care, physician practices and more, have used the Certification framework to structure their person-centered care efforts. And many of these sites have achieved Certification. The Planetree methodology is truly a model that works well across the continuum of care.
- **Has anyone changed their post-discharge surveys to add COVID specific questions to help inform about fears, questions, opportunities for improvement?** We aren't aware of a specific example to share of an adapted survey. However, what a great opportunity to use your existing process or structure of post-discharge surveys or calls to get some real time feedback from patients about their recent hospital experience and specifically the factors that made them feel safe and protected (or not). We would expect their responses will be invaluable for better understanding their fears and concerns, and to elicit ideas for how to better meet their needs.
- **Will we have to delay our Certification site visit because of the pandemic?** No. Our team is experienced with facilitating virtual Certification assessments that can occur if an on-site visit is not possible. We have been conducting these virtual assessments for several months, and the process has proven to be very effective for remotely evaluating the lived experience and organizational culture. Sites that have had a virtual Certification assessment have expressed their confidence in and satisfaction with the process:

*"We were extremely satisfied with the virtual assessment. What impressed us most was the rigor and accuracy. COVID-19 was not a reason to delay our progress toward person-centered care."* (Saudi Arabia)

*"The Planetree Certification team was extremely helpful and timely in answering questions, providing support and allowing virtual practice with our technology to ensure a seamless virtual site visit. I was surprised at how efficient the virtual site visit was conducted and the timeliness of the interviewers with so many consecutive sessions."* (United States)

*"Thank you! Staff and consumers really enjoyed the conversations with [the Planetree virtual evaluation team] and also continuing to learn from each other as well."*  
(Australia)

*"The virtual certification process allowed us to continue to strive for the highest standards in excellence, even during a devastating pandemic. [The team] provided support to keep our patients, families and community safe, engaged, heard and loved during the hardest times we have ever faced in healthcare."* (United States)

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## Idea Sharing

*In addition to posing questions, many participants shared the ways their organizations are upholding the values of person-centered care during these challenging times. Here is what was shared via the chat:*

- The team at **Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Humanitarian City Hospital** in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia credits daily virtual leadership meetings (conducted via Microsoft Teams) and daily meetings of the CEO with the COVID 19 team as key to their ability to manage COVID-19, as measured by mortality and recovery rates. They have also developed a detailed COVID Risk assessment report, engaging all stakeholders in the effort. Mandatory daily COVID-19 meetings led by the CEO and COVID 19 lead physician are attended by all departmental directors. This structure enabled the team to identify and sort out all needs immediately.
- At **Moffitt Cancer Center** in Florida, a Virtual Program enables caregivers with connect with patients virtually so they can be involved in appointments, discharge from inpatient, etc.). These virtual approaches have also enabled constant feedback from the Patient and Family Advisory Council, which includes staff, patients and caregivers giving valuable input. COVID-19 social distance practices are in place, with visible information across our centers.
- **Saudi German Hospitals Group** are holding Grand Staff Meetings with all staff in the Network (targeted more than 5,000). The Chairman of the Board, Group President and other leaders are all present for these meetings. In addition, leaders are reaching out to staff at their workplaces. Caring is further expressed through video-recorded messages and appreciations for colleagues who test positive for COVID-19.

*Started by a patient in 1978, Planetree International is a not-for-profit organization that partners with healthcare organizations across the globe to create cultures of person-centered care. The Planetree approach emphasizes the quality of human interactions and caring communication, the importance of connecting personnel to the deeper purpose of their work, and practical strategies for engaging patients, families and communities as partners in care. As a person-centered care advocacy organization, Planetree International promotes respect, inclusion and compassion toward all who interact with healthcare systems. Our core philosophy of kindness, caring and respect seeks to humanize healthcare around the world.*

Planetree International | +1-203-732-1365 | [www.planetree.org](http://www.planetree.org) | [www.languageofcaring.org](http://www.languageofcaring.org)

