

Appendix 11: Sample Foundational Agreement

After a practice has an agreed upon set of core values, you should operationalize those values into agreed upon behaviors referred to as foundational agreements. Foundational agreements function as the practice's shared vision, holding providers, staff, and leaders accountable to each other as well as the values and mission statement. They keep the entire team working toward a united purpose.

Develop a foundational agreement for each value using the following format:

In alignment with our shared value of _____ we agree to _____

Below are example foundational agreements that came from a team based on in-depth discussion and real-life issues within the practice. Cathy J. Berry and Associates, a physician owned practice that employs midwives located in Syracuse, New York, received a grant from the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York to increase access to midwifery care for underserved women. During a full-day retreat with physicians, midwives, nurse-practitioners and support staff, the team reviewed their practice Vision, Mission and Values statement and developed practice foundational agreements.

Cathy J. Berry and Associates Foundational Agreements

- In alignment with our shared value of **respect**, we agree to not gossip and go directly to the persons involved in the conflict.
- In alignment with our shared value of **respect**, we agree to not use our cellphones. Limit cellphone use to break-time and only in appropriate places (breakroom, outside, etc.)
- In alignment with our shared value of **respect**, we agree to avoid making judgements about our patients.
- In alignment with our shared value of **teamwork**, we agree to show up on time to work, meetings, work to break down the silos in the practice.
- In alignment with our shared value of **teamwork**, we agree to communicate patient needs or celebrations in a timely fashion.
- In alignment with our shared value of **teamwork**, we agree to communicate with each other as co-equal colleagues.
- In alignment with our shared value of **commitment**, we agree to define a common language regarding patient care. (Consider a template for triage, SBAR...)
- In alignment with our shared value of **commitment**, we agree to attempt to maintain patient continuity, especially if the primary provider is in the office.