

## **NQP Taking the Pulse of Community Perceptions and Needs**

Community engagement is vital to the success of NQP's DSRIP efforts, especially as it relates to understanding barriers to care, managing chronic illnesses and understanding how people within the community receive information and education.

One way in which NQP is engaging with its community is through regularly scheduled community forums.

"These forums are ongoing and provide us with the opportunity to communicate with the community and listen to their concerns about the medical and social factors related to improving their health," says Nancy Copperman, MS, RD, CDN, Assistant Vice President, Public Health and Community Partnerships, Northwell Health Solutions.

According to Copperman, the forums—which are taking place throughout Nassau, Queens and the Rockaways—have proven very helpful to NQP.

"The audiences and feedback can really vary," she says. "For example, at a forum we held recently at St. John's Episcopal Hospital, our interactions with local stakeholders from the Rockaways revealed the need to focus on educating community members about NQP DSRIP initiatives that are occurring so that they can improve their health by taking advantage of our efforts. One way NQP plans to increase awareness is through educating the community in partnership with local community organizations and government."

Another community forum, held in Roosevelt with participants in the Patient Activation Measurement (PAM) Program (see DSRIP project 2.d.i.), brought to light a host of concerns within that community, ranging from insurance and medication costs to food insecurity and the people's experience at local emergency departments.

"With this forum, participants suggested that we partner with local faith-based organizations and school PTAs to spread the word about the availability of services in the region, as well as alternatives to going to the emergency department for non-emergency care," Copperman explains. "When you consider how different all of this feedback is, it goes to show how important it is to reach out to the diverse communities that form the NQP service area."