5 Things to Consider as You Build Your Medical Team

1. Your relationship with the members of your child’s medical team should be built on trust. You know your child best. You will work more effectively with clinicians if you feel that your perspective is valued & your concerns are heard.

2. Some personalities & communication styles may fit better with yours than others. Explain how you prefer to receive information, how much information you want to receive, & when & how you prefer to communicate (by phone, by email, or in person). If there is a second parent or caregiver who prefers to receive information differently, share that information with the team as well.

3. Observe how the clinicians respond to your questions & concerns. Do they listen & engage as you would like? Are you given the time & level of detail that you need to feel confident in your child’s care? If you prefer recommendations to suggestions, look for clinicians who are more outspoken. If you prefer discussion, seek clinicians who listen & offer their ideas & perspectives.

4. Notice how the clinicians interact with your child. Are they respectful & considerate of your child as the individual they are? Do they express interest in getting to know your child & family? Are they comfortable with the ways your child communicates?

5. Not every member of your child’s medical team will have all your “ideal” qualities. Know what is most important to you & be patient if you don’t find everything you want in your team members. As with many relationships in our lives, these relationships may change & grow over time. If you don’t find what is most important in the team members you meet, try to find others who may be available to you.