



PI Newsletter: Communication

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Responding to Our COMMUNITY
Healthcare needs



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Forms of Communication:



- Written
- Verbal
- Body Language
- Attitude
- Tone

Communication: A Joint Commission Priority Focus Area

The Joint Commission (JC) reports that poor communication has been cited as a root cause in more than 60% of all sentinel events reported to them. It is the most frequently cited root cause – illustrating the important role that good communication plays in delivering quality care to our patients. The JC recognizes that effective communication permeates every aspect of an organization; from the provision of care to performance improvement that results in marked improvement in the quality of care delivery and functioning.

In response to the statistics, The JC selected communication as a priority focus area. The accrediting arm of The JC developed standards that encourage effective communication, and National Patient Safety Goals that address poor communication.

Recently, The JC

Sidebar: Priority Focus Areas (PFAs)...

are processes, systems, or structures in COHC that significantly impact the safety and quality of care we give to our patients. Based on the results from the last JC survey and submitted reports, The JC determined four PFAs for COHC. They are Communication, Information Management, Patient Assessment and Medication Management. Information form the priority focus areas is then used to help guide the focus of the on-site survey activities.

announced that communication is one of COHC's four Priority Focus Areas. For more on PFAs see Sidebar: Priority Focus Area. There is no doubt that communication will be integral component of COHC's next unannounced JC survey. This means, The JC Surveyors will trace our ability to:

- ☛ effectively communicate among our internal and external audiences;
- ☛ how well COHC's staff members work with patients to understand their concerns and use the information obtained to design

and implement treatment that meet the needs of the patients;

☛ and, and how well our staff members educate our patients and their families so that they actively participate on their health care team and make informed decision about their health and health care.

Effective Communication requires coordination, cooperation among staff members and departments, the sharing of information that is accurate, relevant, and timely to internal and external audiences.

What is Communication?

Communication is the exchange of information between people, groups, or entities. The word communication acts as a large umbrella, covering a variety of forms of communication, including written and verbal, body language, atti-

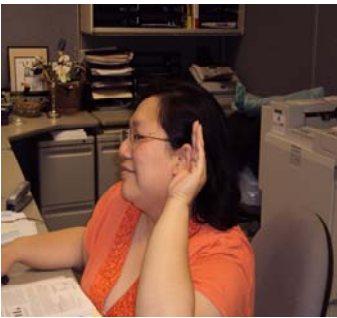
tude, and tone. It not just about what a person says, but how he or she says it. Communicating a message can be successful if it is a two-way process, and in the end both the sender and re-

93% of communication includes such nonverbal behaviors as tone of voice, mannerisms, and body language—Fowler K.

ceiver perceive its meaning in the same way—The JC

10 Ways to Improve Communication Skills

- 1) **Listen without judgment.** The key to good communication is listening well. Save your judging for later after you have heard and understood what was said.
- 2) **Listen with the willingness to be swayed to the other person's opinion.** No obligation to actually being swayed, but stay open to the option.



- 3) **Listen without thinking about what you will say next.** Take time before you respond.
- 4) **Do not be invested in being right.** Being right is not the point. If you must be right, you are not able to listen nor communicate because you have set up a barrier already. If you are always right that means the other person is always wrong. That cannot be true.

- 5) **If your mind wanders, ask for repetition.** We all are subject to distraction. Try to stay focused.
- 6) **In all cases repeat back what you heard and ask if it is correct.**
- 7) **Listen to yourself.** Find quiet moments and pay attention to what you are hearing from yourself. Does your body tighten up about certain issues. Body language is not something to read only in other people.
- 8) **Say it honestly, but with consideration for the listener's feelings.** Be polite, respectful and sincere.
- 9) **Understand and acknowledge that most things are not black or white, but somewhere in a gray area.** Get comfortable with gray.
- 10) **Have integrity and build trust. Don't say what you don't mean.** Don't promise what you won't or can't fulfill. Follow through with any commitments you make.

Source: Dr. Lehavi: Improve Your Communication Skills

What Do Patients Say about COHC?

Providing care to patients that is respectful and helps them maximize their health is among the most important things we must do. Over the past few months, COHC have randomly collected patient satisfactions survey. The results not only showed that we have additional work to do in the areas of wait-time and scheduling patient appointments; It also showed that patients appreciate our staff and the services we provide. Comments surveyed patients made about COHC and staff.

"I feel comfortable here." – Medical Dept. Patient

"The doctors won't give up on you." - Medical Dept. Patient

"The first time I went to COHC, I had pain in my tooth. The Dentist and Dental Assistant worked fast and helped me out. After that day, I kept going back. I love COHC and would not go anywhere else." - Dental Dept. Patient

Take the Challenge: Find the 2009 National Patient Safety Goals

B	S	N	C	N	O	A	S	A	I	S	T	E	N	F	M	S	L
A	S	N	R	M	F	U	T	T	A	C	M	E	O	N	O	E	A
P	A	T	I	E	N	T	I	N	V	O	L	V	E	M	E	N	T
D	B	C	T	D	A	O	M	O	O	M	O	M	O	A	F	T	A
M	H	V	I	I	T	T	E	I	T	M	P	B	E	O	U	I	B
E	D	E	C	C	W	S	O	T	A	U	A	U	D	Y	N	N	B
T	N	E	A	A	I	H	U	H	A	N	D	O	F	F	F	E	R
R	T	O	L	T	O	S	T	N	C	I	O	E	E	V	V	L	E
D	E	C	V	I	H	E	V	E	E	C	V	D	I	U	S	E	V
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M	I	C	S	F	E	I	L	N	E	N	N	O	T	E	T	S	O
E	D	E	R	E	C	O	N	C	I	L	E	M	E	D	S	I	N
A	T	V	B	T	W	O	I	D	E	N	T	I	F	I	E	R	S
S	O	A	V	Y	N	A	E	T	T	H	I	F	K	N	P	A	E
V	N	V	T	S	S	A	V	C	L	A	V	I	C	R	C	D	O

ABBREVIATIONS

HANDWASHING

HAND OFF

READ BACK ORDERS

COMMUNICATION

MEDICATION SAFETY

SENTINEL EVENTS

RECONCILE MEDS

TIME OUT

TWO IDENTIFIERS

CRITICAL VALUES

PATIENT INVOLVEMENT