IMPROVING PATIENT SAFETY IN HEALTHCARE THROUGH EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION

Omar Jumaan Rashed, Hamad Abdulrahman Mobark Al Mohanna Al Dosari, Afrah Saud H. Almasoudi Alnawmasi, Abdullah Mofareh Ahmad Alkhaldi, Naif Daifallah Bakhit Alzahrany, Bishi Mansuor Algrni, Mousa Hassan Mousa Zeid, Turki Khalid M Alabdulrahman, Raed Fares Rwailli Al Anazi, Eman Fayez Mohammed Albishi, Kawthar Abdulazeem Aldarisi, Hessah Ahmed Mohammed Bin Jidah, Mousa Hasser Hmoud Masrahi, Majed Ghazi Alotaibi, Sarah Nasser Fahad Aldossari, ʻsharifah Saleh Ahmed Alshahri

Abstract:

The numerous interactions that healthcare professionals have on a daily basis require EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION. To ensure that the right information is provided in a timely manner, staff members need to be proficient in both collaborative teamwork and efficient communication. Patient care is jeopardized in the absence of efficient communication.

Breakdowns in communication have long been identified as the primary cause of most sentinel events examined since 1996 and as the primary cause of nearly all sentinel events reported to The Joint Commission's Sentinel Event Database. Power disputes, competing roles, unclear duties, and hierarchical inequalities can all result in poor communication, which jeopardizes patient safety and treatment quality.

Keywords: nurse-physician communication, SBAR, STICC, patient safety.

Introduction:

Overcoming Communication Obstacles to Promote Effective Healthcare Teamwork: Two individuals, teams, or things. The term "communication" refers to a broad range of interactions, including written and spoken exchanges as well as more nuanced forms including tone, attitude, and body language. Effective communication involves not only what someone says, but also how they express it.

Patient safety depends on nurses and other caregivers having effective communication, yet there are several obstacles that lead to ineffective communication and an unhealthy dependence on individual action. For instance, nurses are taught to use narrative and descriptive language, frequently using a broad brush to paint verbal pictures. Conversely, doctors are highly action-oriented and seek to know the core of the issue so that quick solutions can be found. The following are some of the communication obstacles that exist between doctors and nurses:

- Absence of guidelines, rules, and processes pertaining to the format, time, or intent of verbal reports.
- No common mental model or framework for communicating verbally in healthcare.
- There are no guidelines for verbal communication of information over the phone or in person.
- Divergent views regarding the information that ought to be included in a verbal report, even among nurses.
- Constant diversions and interruptions.
- How often you communicate.1.

Healthcare businesses need to stress the value of teamwork in order to promote communication as a part of daily work. Although strategies for fostering teamwork must be modified to fit the particulars of each firm, the following steps are essential to establishing an atmosphere in which employees of all levels collaborate effectively:

- Train the team;
- Get rid of the hierarchy.
- Clearly define positions and duties.

Implement a strict policy of no tolerance for disruptive conduct. The High Cost of Disruptive Behavior in Healthcare: Intimidating and disruptive behaviors, such as harsh language and hostile conduct among healthcare professionals, can lead to medical errors, poor patient satisfaction, and avoidable negative outcomes. They can also raise healthcare costs, drive away qualified nurses and other clinicians, administrators, and managers, and cause them to look for new jobs in more formal settings.2,8

Leaders in the healthcare industry and caregivers have long recognized the serious consequences of disruptive and threatening behavior. Communication is impeded by intimidation, verbal outbursts, condescending attitudes, and refusal to participate in assigned tasks, all of which can result in failures in care procedures. The Joint Commission released a Sentinel Event Alert9 encouraging institutions to take a series of 11 steps to minimize disruptive and threatening behavior because it is such a major issue. 2009 saw the introduction of a new standard by the Joint Commission, known as LD.03.01.01, which mandates that accredited organizations provide a formal procedure for handling undesirable behavior in addition to a code of conduct outlining

acceptable and unacceptable actions.10 The new standard and the Alert also aim to foster an environment where nurses and other members of the care team feel empowered to voice concerns when they arise.

The following9 are some of the Alert's tactics that are especially pertinent to encouraging successful communication:

All members of the healthcare team should receive training on professional behavior, including how to be polite on the phone, how to conduct business, and general people skills. They should also be held responsible for setting an example of desired behavior and enforcing the code of conduct consistently and fairly.

- Create a comprehensive strategy to deal with disruptive and intimidating behavior that includes a zero-tolerance policy, active participation and support from the leadership of the medical community, lowering the fear of reprisals for reporting such behavior, and deciding when and how to take disciplinary action.
- Create a mechanism for reporting instances of unprofessional, obstructive, and intimidating   behavior.
  The passage emphasizes how important communication is to the healthcare industry, particularly between doctors and nurses. Communication failures are identified as a primary cause of errors, and the significance of teamwork for patient safety is emphasized.
  Techniques for Clear Communication in the Medical Field:
- Communication obstacles: The paragraph addresses particular obstacles that lead to difficulties in communication. These consist of disorganized conduct, disparate communication philosophies, and absence of structure.
- Communication improvement techniques: The book places a strong emphasis on a methodical approach to better communication. This entails establishing an environment of open communication, carrying out requirements analyses, and producing communication resources.

- Communication systems: Various implementable communication systems are described in the paragraph. Standardized hand-off protocols, organized communication strategies like STICC and SBAR, and easily navigable communication technologies are a few of them.

- Nurse-physician communication: Nurses are given specific techniques to enhance their contact with physicians. These entail communicating in a clear, succinct, and solution-focused manner.

- General communication strategies: Here are some more pointers to help all healthcare providers communicate effectively. These include emphasizing problems with systems, promoting peer education, andencouraging active listening. The need of a coordinated effort from healthcare organizations and staff to establish effective communication methods is emphasized in the passage's conclusion. Improving patient safety and overall care quality will require this investment.

Developing an Infrastructure for Open Communication in Healthcare:

Enhancing communication necessitates a systems approach, which includes fostering an environment that values open communication as a vital element of high-quality, safe care. Organizations may enhance communication by using a requirements assessment, a methodical process for setting objectives, spotting differences between expected and actual performance, and assigning priorities for action11. Techniques for assessing behavioral needs include work samples, tests, key consultations, questionnaires, interviews, and group discussions.12 To find out if the right information was received, a supervisor might, for instance, watch a work group engaging in hand-off communication and invite the group members to participate in an interview. Similarly, an instructor might meet with a key consultant to go over work examples.

The creation or enhancement of communication tools and policies that satisfy staff requirements and organizational objectives should then be done using the information gathered from the communications audit. Interdisciplinary evaluation forms, prescription order forms, progress notes, read-backs, time-outs, and briefings are a few examples of communication tools. Effective communication tools13, whether they be verbal or written, should

- Make things easy to utilize.
- Require little time or effort to use or finish.
- Effectively communicate a wealth of facts.
- Promote interdisciplinary cooperation.
- Reduce the chance of communication mishaps.

Communication Platforms for Enhanced Teamwork and Patient Security Effective communication systems flatten hierarchies, promote teamwork, and mitigate the negative effects of stress and effortThirteen Systems techniques are designed to stop breakdowns in communication or to make them obvious so that the problem can be fixed before the patient suffers any harm. The following traits of systems that assist in preventing communication breakdowns are present13:

They provide consistency and predictability by requiring personnel to follow the same procedures every time. They are also simple to comprehend and adhere to. For instance, the same individuals, at the same time, and with the same procedures always carry out a "time-out" before to surgery.

Redundancy in features. There is a redundant function that helps lessen the effects of the failure if the system fails in one area. For instance, the time-out procedure enables other caregivers to identify a breakdown and halt the procedure if the surgeon forgets to label the surgical site. Include functions that are forcing. Something that makes it simple to do the right thing and difficult to do the wrong thing is known as a forcing function. Ascertain that individuals are unable to circumvent the system. If the system had no forcing functions, this is what would occur.

Reduce the dependence on human memory.

Communication systems can use a variety of tactics, including written policies, check- lists, or protocols, to digital personal digital assistants and physician order input systems.Techniques for structured   communication
The Joint Commission mandates that healthcare organizations increase the efficacy of caregiver communication as one of its National Patient Safety Goals. This entails obeying verbal commands, compiling a list of acronyms to avoid using, and submitting crucial test and result results on time. Managing hand-off communications is the last part of this objective. Organizations must create standardized procedures to guarantee that crucial information is passed from one caregiver to the next during a hand-off in order to comply with the requirements pertaining to care transitions. The details usually include the patient's present state of health, ongoing medical care, any recent changes to their condition, and any potential complications or changes that need to be watched out for.

While using a specific hand-off technique is not mandated by The Joint Commission, the following structured communication techniques could help enhance both hand-offs and overall organization-wide   communication13.
 Briefings: Concise conversations among team members to exchange notes, determine tasks, pinpoint resources, and foresee any roadblocks. In order to prevent surprises, these talks foster cooperation, establish the ground rules for honest communication, and get everyone on the same page. Before a procedure or a shift, briefings can be useful, and when a process is finished, debriefings can be useful.

Group Rounds: When the entire care team visits the patient at the same time, they review the patient's care, exchange concerns, brainstorm solutions, and foresee potential complications. SBAR, or Situation, Background, Assessment, and Recommendation—The SBAR technique was created by a doctor to standardize the information that team members share and to help establish expectations that certain information pieces will be shared each time a patient is discussed. As the name suggests, team members discuss the situation, relevant background information, their assessment of the situation, and their advice for what to do next while using the   SBAR   technique.
Calibrate Situation Task Intent Concern (STICC)—The scenario (what we confront), the task

(what we should do), the intent (why), the worry, and calibration (tell me if you don't understand, can't do it, or see something that I do not) are the main points of emphasis of this technique, which is used by the US Forest Service to provide guidance to firefighters. Nurse-physician dialogue techniques

Nurses have the following options for enhancing nurse-physician communication: Refer to the doctor by name. Ensure that the chart and patient information are easily accessible. Clearly state any worries you may have regarding the patient, along with why. Make a plan for a follow-up. Pay attention to the patient's issue rather than any mitigating factors. Act appropriately, not combatively. Keep an eye on the patient's issue until it has been handled.1.

Broad communication techniques The following14 are additional tactics that encourage efficient communication between all healthcare providers:

- Seek out issues with systems rather than individuals. Do not permit employees to assign blame.
- Examine the thought processes of the employees.
- Numerous test kinds are available to investigate people's communication styles.
- Encourage good listening techniques, take into account providing instruction in this area, and acknowledge that listening without consenting is acceptable.
- Promote staff members' involvement in peers' education. One effective method of getting nurses working on different shifts to collaborate on a common issue is through case presentations that the nurses make to their peers.

Conclusion:

Nurses have the chance to improve communication in a meaningful and long-lasting way because they are the healthcare providers on the front lines. In order to effectively execute a communication effort, be it a new system, a process modification, or a culture shift that highlights communication as an essential element of patient safety, businesses should adopt a systematic strategy that incorporates stakeholders at every stage. Because it yields positive results, effective communication is worth the time and effort invested by the company and its employees. Thirteen.

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