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Role of Patient-Centered Communication in the Association between Usual Source of Health Care and Patients' Ratings of Quality of Care

Overview

- Background
 - Usual source of care
 - Patient-centered communication
- Communication Framework
- Mediation Analysis – HINTS 4 (cycle 1)



Background

Usual source of healthcare

- Greater use of preventive services;
- Decreased use of emergency services;
- Higher ratings of quality and satisfaction
 - **Ongoing patient-provider relationships may, in part, be fostered by patient-centered communication.**

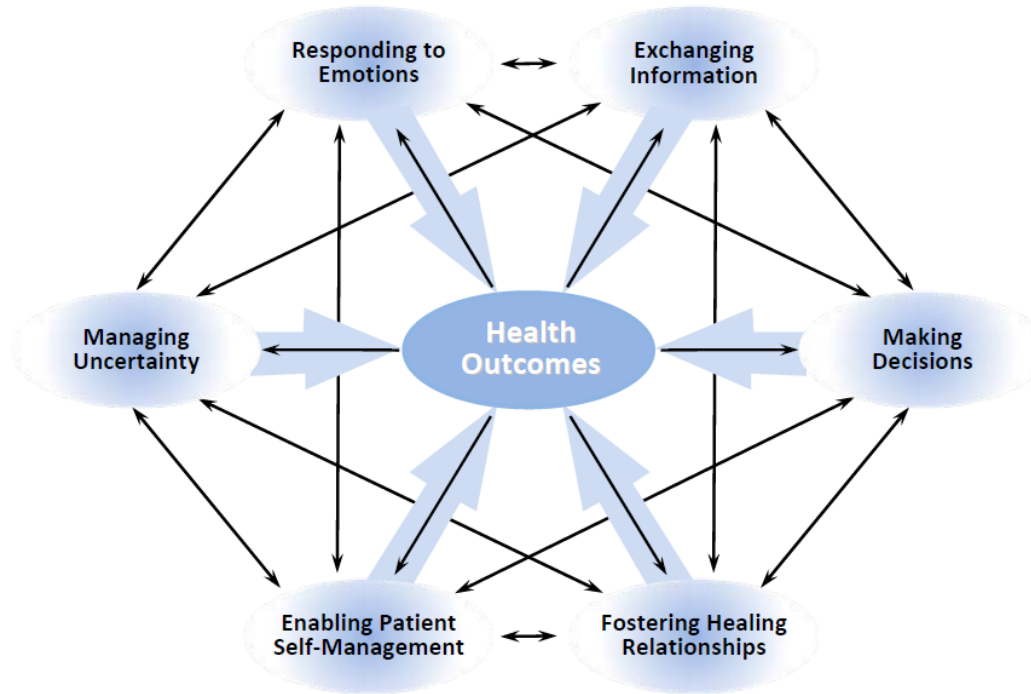
Patient-centered communication

- Adherence to treatment recommendations;
- Management of chronic disease;
- Quality of life;
- Disease-related outcomes.



Patient-Centered Communication Framework

Communication functions that guide clinical interactions:



Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care

Promoting Healing and Reducing Suffering

Epstein, R.M., Street, Jr., R.S. (2007) P. 18



Purpose



Evaluate the interrelationships between having a **usual source of care**, **patient-centered communication**, and patients' **ratings of health care quality**.



Hypothesis: the association between usual source of care and ratings of healthcare quality would be **mediated** by patient-centered communication.



Methods

Data

- HINTS 4 Cycle 1
- October 2011 - February of 2012
- n=3959

Mode

- Mailed questionnaire
- English and Spanish

Sampling

- Frame: comprehensive national listing of USPS addresses
- Design: two-stage, stratified sample (household/individual)

Response Rate

- Household x Individual
- Final: 36.7%



Measures

Sociodemographic Variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, annual household income, health insurance status.
Usual Source of Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Not including psychiatrists and other mental health professionals, is there a particular doctor, nurse, or other health professional that you see most often?” (yes/no)
Healthcare Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “In the past 12 months, not counting the times you went to the emergency room, how many times did you go to a doctor, nurse, or other health professional to get care for yourself?”
Ratings of Healthcare Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Overall, how would you rate the quality of healthcare you received in the last 12 months?”.



Measures: Patient-Centered Communication

Exchanging
Information

- “Give you the chance to ask all the health-related questions you had”
- “Explain things in a way you could understand”

Responding to
Emotions

- “Give the attention you needed to your feelings and emotions?”

Making Decisions

- “Involve you in decisions about your healthcare as much as you wanted?”;

Enabling Patient
Self-Management

- “Make sure you understood the things you needed to do to take care of your health?”

Managing
Uncertainty

- “Help you deal with feelings of uncertainty about your health or healthcare?”.

Foster healing
relationships

- “During the past 12 months, how often did you feel you could rely on your doctors, nurses, or other healthcare professionals to take care of your healthcare needs?”
- “Spend enough time with you?”



Data Analysis

SUDAAN version 9.0.1

- Analyze the complex survey data
- Obtain correct variance estimates.

Weighted Data

- Representative estimates of the adult US population.

Mediation analysis

- Barron and Kenny's method



Regression Models: Establish Mediation

Step 1



☐ Causal Variable - Outcome

Step 2



☐ Causal Variable - Mediator

Step 3

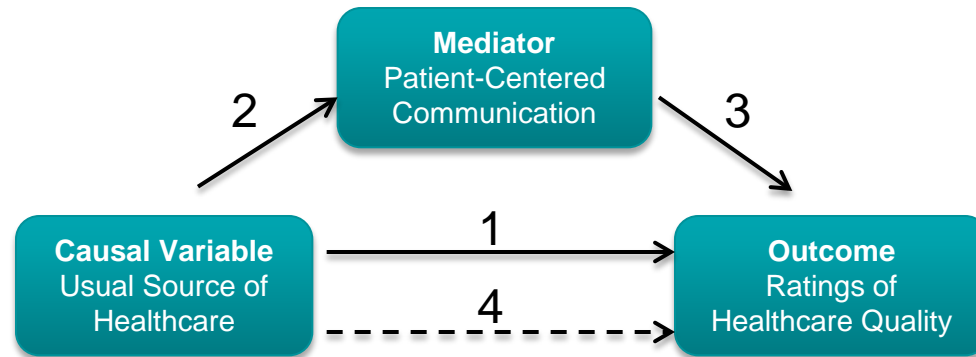


☐ Mediator - Outcome

Step 4



☐ Causal-Outcome [Mediator]



Results

Usual source of care observed more frequently among:

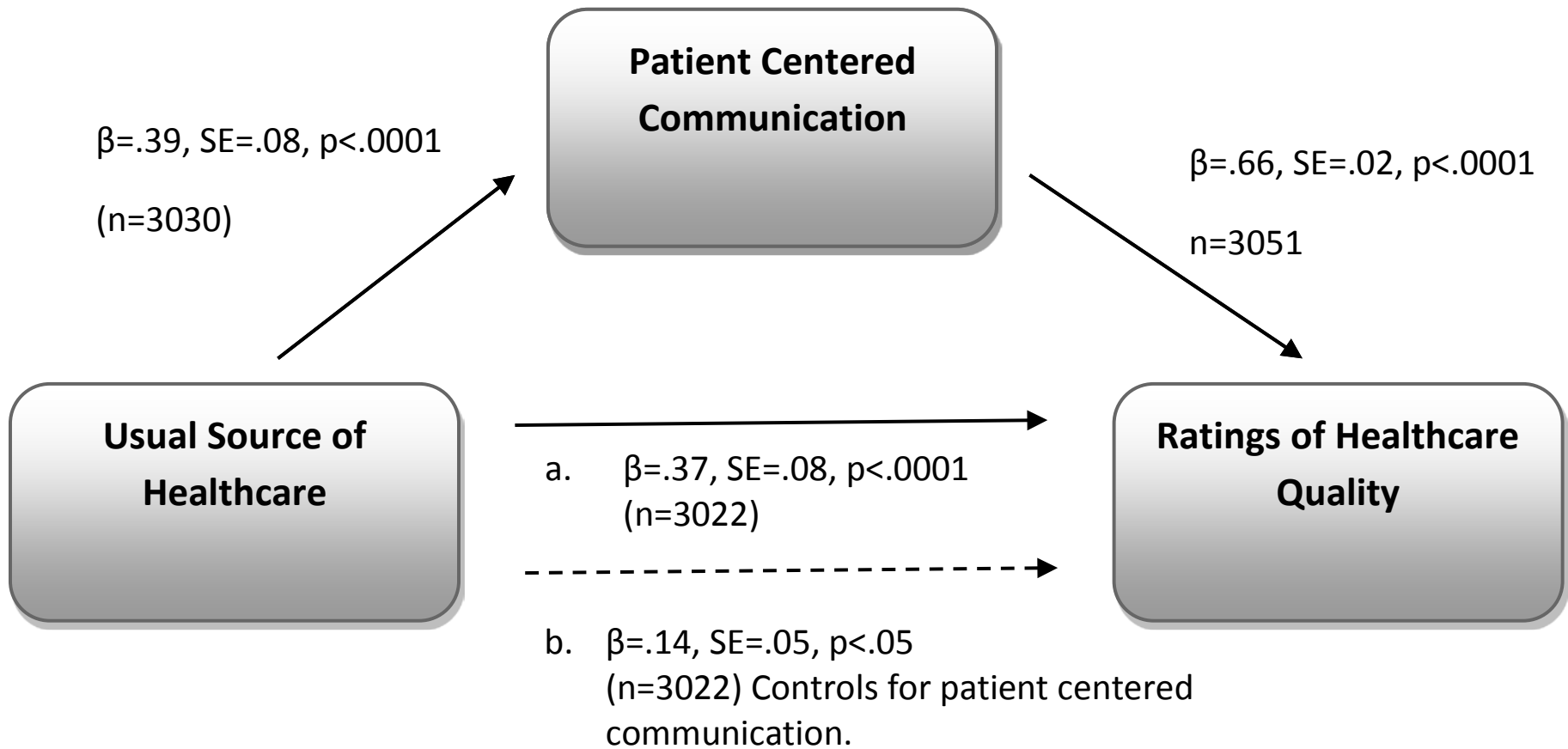
- Females
- Older adults
- Non-Hispanic whites
- Those with higher education
- Those with health insurance
- Those with higher incomes

Those with a usual source of care had significantly:

- More visits to healthcare providers during the past year;
- Higher ratings of healthcare quality;
- More patient-centered communication.



Results



* Sobel test statistic: 4.82, $p<.0001$. Regression analyses control for gender, age, education, income, race/ethnicity, health insurance status, and frequency of healthcare use.



Limitations

- Data are cross sectional
- Assessment of the patient-physician relationship can be nuanced and complex
- Low response rates



Summary

- Respondents with a usual source of care reported better healthcare quality, and more patient-centered communication.
- The impact of usual source of care on ratings of care quality was hypothesized to operate through exposure to patient-centered communication, and our results supported this hypothesis.



Conclusions

- This nationally representative study lends support to putting a usual source of healthcare and patient-centered communication in the center of the patient-centered medical home.
- With high rates of chronic disease and associated complex care regimens in the U.S., patient-centered communication may be more important than ever.
- Fostering healing, trusting, and effective patient-provider relationships takes significant effort on the part of patients and their medical team.
- Research to investigate how to promote patient-centered communication and that evaluates its impact will play an increasingly important role in our efforts to reduce chronic disease and improve population health.

