

ESSENTIAL  
HOSPITALS  
INSTITUTE

HCAHPS: Patient Experience College

Introductions and Developing a Communication Strategy

Transformation Center

*February 12, 2014*



## BEFORE WE START...

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- Reminders:
  - IHI Open School
  - Website registration
- Your feedback is very important for us. So please continue to share it with us. We truly appreciate the time you take to give us your thoughts and input.



## EXPERTS FROM THE FIELD

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- Carrie Brady, JD MA  
Principal  
CBrady Consulting
- Terry Rusconi  
Vice President of Performance Improvement  
University of Kansas Hospital



### **Nurse Communication (6 teams)**

Hennepin County Medical Center

Contra Costa Regional Medical Center

Stony Brook University Hospital

University Health System

Harborview Medical Center

Kings County Hospital Center

### **Pain Management (4 teams)**

University of New Mexico Hospitals

Woodhull Medical Center

Norwegian American Hospital

UF Health Jacksonville

### **Hospital Environment (2 teams)**

University Health System

Bellevue Hospital Center

### **Physician Communication (3 teams)**

Lakeside Medical Center

Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

University of Kansas Hospital

### **Responsiveness (8 teams)**

Arrowhead Regional Medical Center

Harris Health System Ben Taub

Metropolitan Hospital Center

Harlem Hospital Center

Jacobi Medical Center & North Central Bronx  
Hospital

Queens Hospital Center

Eskenazi Health

University of Texas Health Science Center

Oklahoma State University

### **Care Transitions (1 team)**

University Hospital

# DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

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- Communication is the foundation for success
  - » Communication is also the root of many failures
- Begin by learning from your own organization's experiences
  - » When has communication been the most successful?
  - » When has communication failed and why did it fail?



# CONSIDER EXISTING COMMUNICATION MODELS

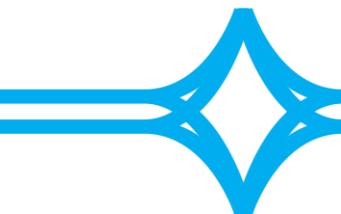
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- What models are you already using for other purposes?
- Consider how existing communication models can be embedded and reinforced in this improvement project
  - » E.g. SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation)
- If your project relates to one of the HCAHPS communication domains, model the behavior you are trying to create



# COMMUNICATION PLANNING TIPS WE CAN TAKE FROM HCAHPS

- Consider the state of mind of the person with whom you are communicating
- Communicate with courtesy and respect
- Listen and invite dialogue, don't just push information
- Rapidly respond to questions and concerns
- Communicate in a way your partners can understand
- Provide important information at key times
- Be consistent



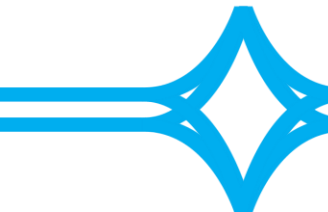
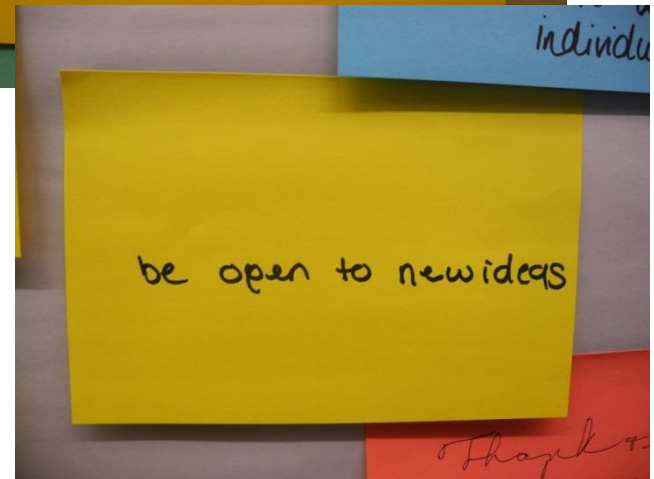
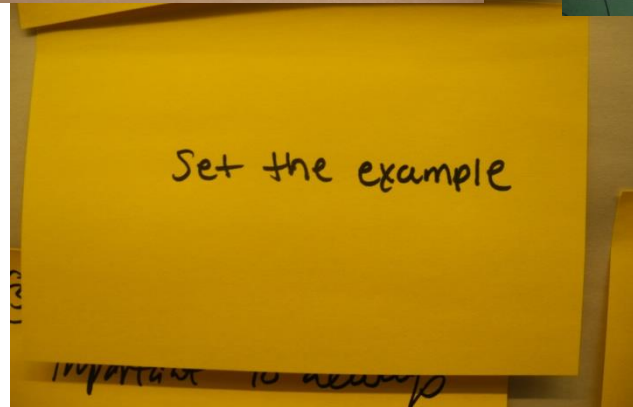
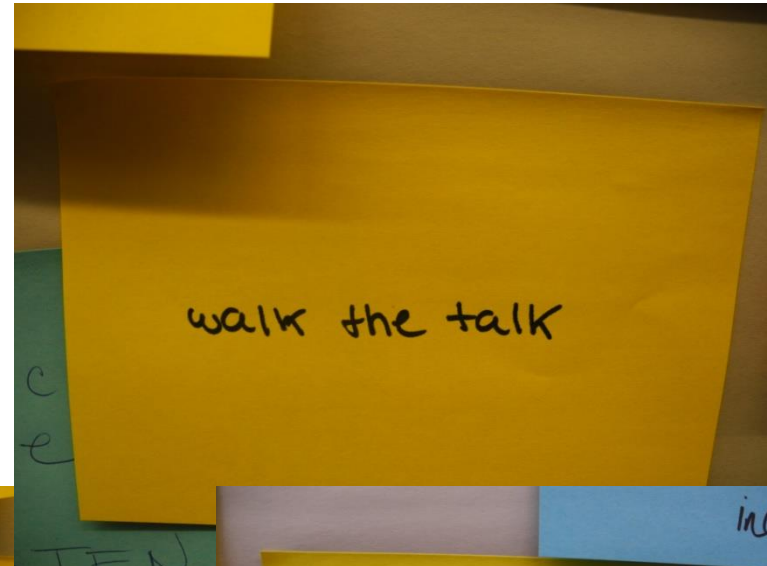
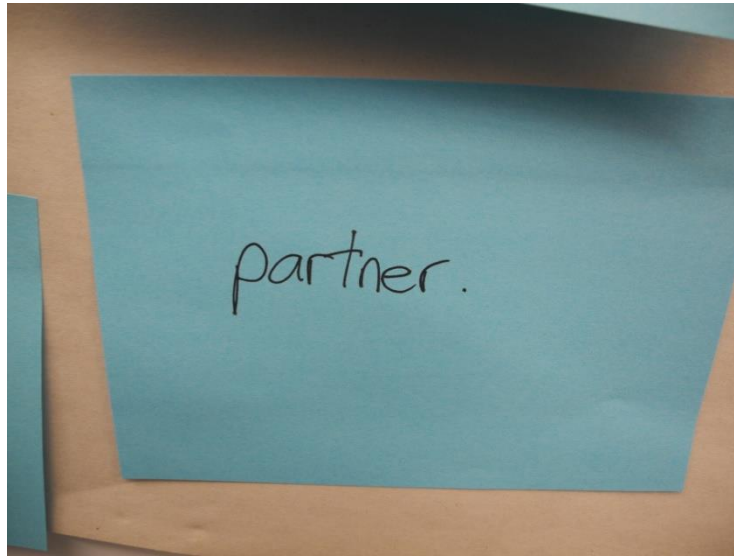
# Why are you doing this initiative?

- Dig deeper than the answer “to improve HCAHPS scores”
- What are the benefits for patients/families?
- What are the benefits for staff?
- What are the benefits to the organization?
  - » How does this initiative align with organizational priorities?





## BEGINNING OF PROJECT: SET THE RIGHT TONE



# MIDDLE OF PROJECT: KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN AND LEARN FROM YOUR TEAM

- Invite dialogue on what is working well and what isn't
- Expect and encourage identification of unanticipated barriers
- Discuss and disclose concerns and how they have been resolved
- Provide frequent updates and reinforcement of support



## MIDDLE OF PROJECT: AVOID COMMON COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWNS



Communication is sometimes suspended and replaced by a focus on “accountability”, which can turn dialogue and collaboration into shouting and arm wrestling.



# END OF PROJECT

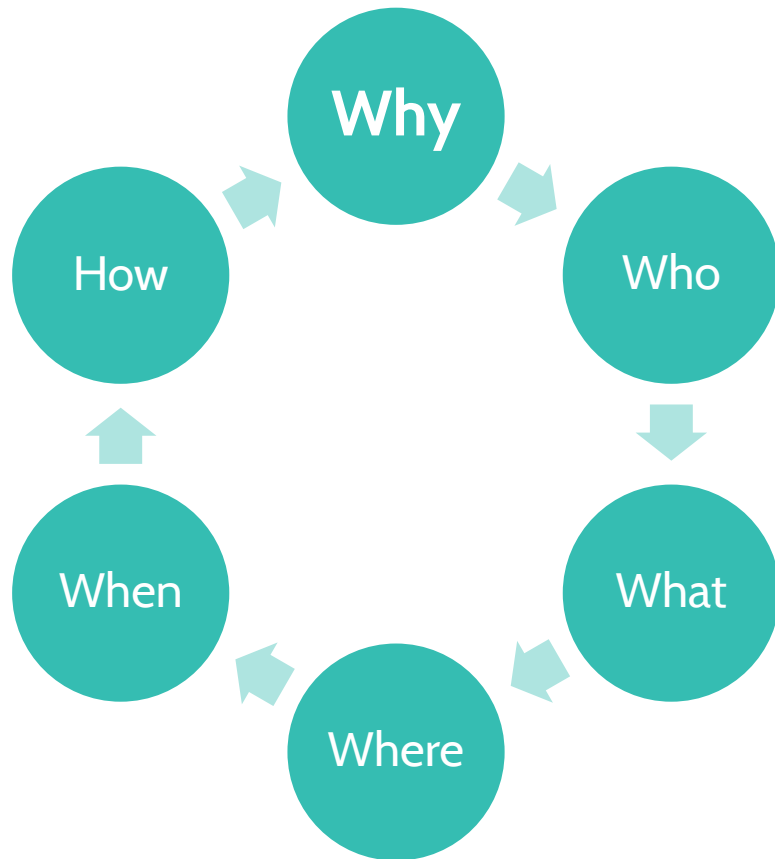
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- Describe results and what happens next
  - » Will the intervention be continued? Spread to other departments/units?
  - » What support systems will be in place to promote sustainability?
- Communicate not only successes, but also lessons learned from what didn't go well
  - » Research has demonstrated that a learning culture (as reported by staff on the AHRQ patient safety culture survey) is associated with HCAHPS success
- Don't forget to thank everyone involved (at the beginning, end and throughout the project), even if the results were not ideal

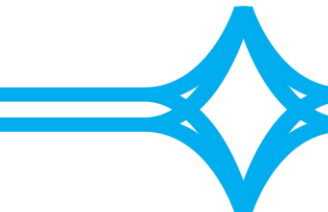


# SIMPLE METHODS FOR SUCCESS

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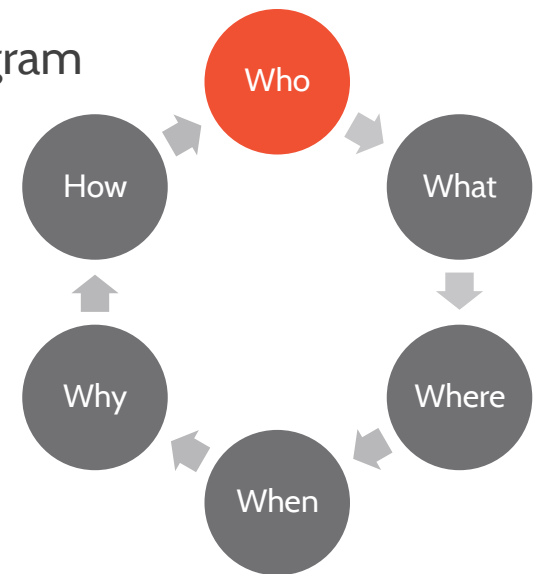


Before every communication, consider why you are communicating. What is the result you are trying to achieve?



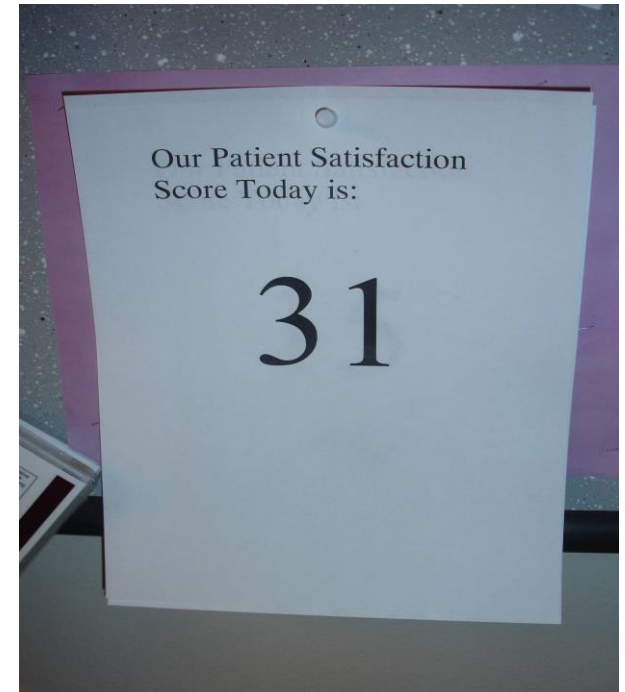
# WHO

- **Who** are you communicating with?
  - » Project team
  - » Patients and families
  - » Frontline staff
  - » Leadership
  - » Staff of the department or unit involved in the program
  - » Departments or units not involved in the program
- **Who** is responsible for initiating the communication?
- **Who** is responsible for verifying understanding?



# WHAT

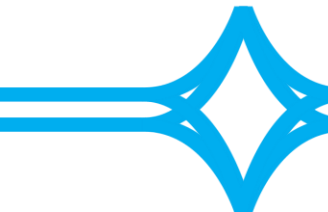
- **What** information are you communicating?
  - » Scope of project
  - » Process/structure of project
  - » Goals and purpose
  - » Status
  - » Opportunities for partnership
  - » Obstacles and paths
- **What** are you expecting people to do with this information? Is the information designed to achieve the desired result?
- **What** is the unspoken message?



# WHERE

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- Use multiple communication methods, including:
  - » Newsletters and posters
  - » Discussion at meetings
  - » Orientation and training
  - » Coaching (as a group and one on one in the moment)
- Give everyone an opportunity to participate in the discussion





# WHEN

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- All the time!
  - » When things are going well
  - » When things are not going well
  - » Update leadership and staff regularly
- Over-communicating is better than under-communicating
  - » Maintain a flow of communication at the beginning, middle and end of the project. Don't start strong and then fade away.
- Consider the best timing
  - » When are your partners most receptive to information?
  - » When are they most distracted and overwhelmed?



# HOW

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- Consider the most effective method for the message
  - » For example, using a combination of data and stories
- Don't assume the information will trickle down
- Ask team members what tools they need to communicate more effectively
- Ask partners to identify their preferred methods of communication
  - » How do they like to be informed and how do they like to participate in the discussion
- Tailor communication to different partners while promoting consistent messages



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<http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/systems/hospital/qitoolkit/qiroadmap.html> (Tool D.2)

# AHRQ Performance Improvement Project Evaluation Template

(can be used to support communication at the end of the project)

<http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/systems/hospital/qitoolkit/qiroadmap.html> (Tool D.8)

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# Communication Plan Template



# DISCUSSION

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## NEXT STEPS

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- Please look forward to our next Webinar:  
March 26<sup>th</sup>: **Building Your Team**
- Interested in sharing on our next webinar? Look out for opportunities to submit your work and be an active part of the future webinars
- Should you have any questions or ideas, please contact:

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