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### Improving Nurse-Provider Communication

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# Improving Nurse-Provider Communication

Caitlin Martel-Harrington, RN & Martha-Mary Lane, RN

## Background

*Ineffective communication among healthcare staff has been shown to cause an increase in errors and decrease in patient satisfaction. In both the ACU and ICU, direct communication is required between providers and nurses in order to achieve goals of care and ensure patient safety.*

## Problem

*Lack of nurse-provider communication results in poor patient outcomes. Implementing a purposeful communication plan among all healthcare staff increases patient and staff satisfaction rates within the hospital setting as compared to those without communication plans/goals.*

## Review of Literature

- Manojlovich et al. (2019) designed a (Level 4) qualitative study in which 163 physicians, nurses, and nurse practitioners were observed during rounds, interviewed, and asked to participate in focus groups regarding communication (and barriers to communication) among staff over a two-week period. Nurses and patients who participated in/contributed to rounds helped lessen physician cognitive load and interruptions in care. Physicians who took time to build rapport with nurses helped increase nurse participation in rounds and improved overall communication. Limitations for this study include: presence of researchers on the units may have caused changes in typical behavior of participants and there may have been potential bias in selection of participants from leadership staff.
- Hitawala et al. (2020) conducted a (Level 1) study in which anonymous surveys were obtained assessing satisfaction rates among nurses related to nurse-provider communication as well as among patients related to patient-provider communication. The surveys were conducted upon admission and then again prior to discharge. During the patients' stay, visual aids were given to the patients about care team members and their respective roles, as well as daily plans in care. Patient satisfaction rates were 68.8% upon admission and increased to 93.3% prior to discharge. Similarly, nurse satisfaction rates were 74.4% and increased to 94.7%. Limitations to this study include: small sample size, short study period, and single-center nature of the study.
- Kato et al. (2022) conducted a (Level 4) study involving 19 nurses in three focus groups. The nurses were interviewed and data was analyzed. The communication aspects that were perceived by nurses to be the most important were: direct communication between physicians and nurses, collegiality and respect, attentiveness and responsiveness, directness and support (especially in backing up RNs in difficult situations), relationship development/rapport among staff, and consistent/timely use of technology. Limitations for this study include: single location used, no participant demographic data was collected, and small participant pool.

## Future Implications

### NEXT STEPS:

- Set communication expectations for all staff
- Quarterly check-ins for all staff regarding communication efficacies vs barriers
- Patient surveys upon admission and prior to discharge
- Proper training for all staff in communication technology

## References

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