

**Davee Innovations:
Optimizing Communication in the Emergency Department
Update
January 31, 2008**

Operations

Front Line Triage Re-Organization

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Project Status: Began 12/4/07; Post-Test Discussions

Goal: Improve efficiency of triage process

A pilot was developed and implemented (effective December 4, 2007) that shifts a Registrar to the front line of triage. This removes the need for registration in the triage booths, allowing triage nurses to rapidly access incoming patients and reassess those that are waiting for care.

The feedback from nursing remained positive. Triage booths were occupied for less time and triage nurses were able to assess and reassess patients in a more timely fashion. Issues identified with registration process related to duplicate charts being created and patients leaving prior to second registration (updates) for demographic and financial information. Registration opted to put a hold on the pilot until these issues could be addressed. Meetings take place weekly to work through these issues, and registration will again be part of the front line triage team (date to be determined).

This may have significant future implications as well in terms of space allocation. These discussions have been inclusive of ED management as well as quality leadership from the hospital.

Triage Redesign

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Project Status: In progress

Goal: Enable triage staff and Surge MD to use expanded space for essential patient care activities.

The implementation of the triage/registration pilot identified the possibility of the reallocation of the existing registration space. By redesigning this space, it gives the triage staff and Surge MD the ability to obtain much needed space to perform such tasks as EKG's, lab work and medical evaluations. This would assist the ED in meeting the National Benchmarks of 10 minute door to EKG times as well as 4 hour CAP door to antibiotic time.

Meeting are being held weekly with Quality Leaders, ED staff, Registration and Abigail Brueggeman, Senior Project Manager, to develop the space and make it user friendly for all involved.

CSO Desk Relocation

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Project status: On hold

Goal: Effectively address patients' inquiries and direct patients to triage desk for assessment.

A pilot was developed to relocate the CSO desk to the right of the triage desk and the Security Office to the right of the treatment doors. The CSO/SO as a team by the treatment area doors will better maintain the security of the treatment area and have a better visual of those

entering the ED. Through this improved visibility, the CSO will be able to help filter those not needing care to help prevent unnecessary interruptions at the triage desk.

Signage

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Project status: Currently investigating signage options.

Goal: Improve signage to provide better direction to patients and their families to navigate the waiting room/triage and treatment areas.

Improved ED signage may decrease patients and their family's anxiety in an unfamiliar environment.

Barb along with a representative from Special Affairs met with the sign vendor January 16th for a walk through of the ED. Areas were identified where signage needed to be added, enlarged or readjusted to help assist our patients. In addition to the signs being made larger, they will also be changed to the color red to ensure easier visibility. We are currently waiting for the cost estimate and are told once accepted can have placement within 6 weeks.

ED Volunteers/Volunteer Advocate Training Program

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Project status: Currently in development; major roll-out to begin February 2008

Goal: Improve patients understanding of waits and delays in the waiting room as well as provide compassionate care

Barb has met with Dolly Johnson and Corinne Brophy from Volunteer Services to further develop the role of the Patient Advocate to include the waiting room. The ED Volunteer Advocate's main focus is currently in the treatment area. Developing the ED volunteer role is an ongoing process.

The program is complete and ready for presentation to the volunteers. Due to ongoing education for the ED nursing staff, the training program will be rolled out following the annual *Nursing Blitz*.

Patient Liaison Pilot Project

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Project status: Funding approved, currently in development

Goal: Improve patient care in the waiting room during peak hours and provide additional communication in the main treatment area

Barb is developing a communication patient liaison who will help alleviate triage nurses' workload by answering questions about the emergency department, act as an information intermediary to relay information from the medical team to the patients/families, and to provide "comfort" care needs such as securing blankets. The liaison would also be able to answer questions related to the process and flow of the department, update those that are waiting of the continual changes that occur during their wait thereby alleviating some of the stress and anxiety that often comes with a visit to the ED.

Education

CAT-T Project Intervention

Led by: Kirsten Engel, Paula Tanabe, Michael Gisondi

Goals:

1. Educate ED providers about the importance of effective communication with our patients, the implications of communication failures, and the challenges to this process in our daily practice.
2. Heighten awareness of the specific deficiencies in communication with patients in our ED using the results of the CAT-T pretest.
3. Promote change by facilitating participation in a team process to discuss, develop and endorse improvements in our clinical practice.

Project Status: Planning Stages

The education component will extend the CAT-T's focus and emphasize the medical team and emphasize the team's performance. Two workshops will be held prior to the formal intervention. The education components will involve a brief didactic session (40-60 participants, 45 minutes) and small facilitated group discussions (20 participants, up to 2 hours). Education is expected to be completed by the end of 2008.

Currently discussions include examining the option of creating "Train the Trainers" aspect for interested residents/nurses to participate and become facilitators.

Davee Communication Website

Updated by: Laura Min Mercer

Goal: To disseminate information about health communication and the Davee Project.

The website update is ongoing. Currently, the website is located within the Emergency Department's webspace, located here:

<http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/emergencymed/davee/mission.html>

Patient Brochure

Led by: Barb Buckley

Project Status: Sent to NMH printing services; Copies available in February

The patient brochure, developed by Barb, along with nurse management and leaders, will provide patients with focused, targeted information about the ED process as well as answers to the most commonly asked questions. In addition, this will give ED volunteers an ice breaker to approach patients and provide talking points to patients in the waiting room.

Nursing Blitz Education

Led by: Barb Buckley

Project Status: Preparing presentation for January 31, 2008 – February 21, 2008

This annual RN education day will incorporate a 45 – 60 min presentation given by Barb about ED communication projects and achieving effective communication in the ED.

Robert Wood Johnson/Joint Commission

Led by: Sarah M. Donlan MD, Barb Buckley RN, Laura Min Mercer MA

Project Status: Planning Stages

Northwestern ED was invited to take part in this multi-site communication project which will include training sessions on communication. Attended an all-day conference at the Joint Commission on January 22, 2008, in Oakbrook, IL.

This has provided an excellent opportunity to benchmark with other institutions as well as disseminate the work we are doing on a national level.

Best Practices in Clinical Communications Beta Test Site Training Conference

Led by: Robert Wood Johnson/Joint Commission

Project Status: Conference attended on 1/22/08

Peter Pang MD, Sarah Donlan, MD (Resident Physician Lead), Barb Buckley, and Laura Min Mercer attended this conference in Oakbrook, IL. The conference began with a review of AHRQ survey results (from all test sites) and a chance to talk about and review NMH's results.

A variety of experts gave presentations on communication issues including training philosophy, implementing the plan, incentives and barriers, metrics and measurements, and sustaining changes. These experts included Rhea Seddon, Gregory Makoul, Christopher Beach, and Jeff Hill. Both Greg Makoul and Chris Beach are part of the Davee Team faculty and from Northwestern which demonstrates the depth and expertise of the Davee Communication Group.

Afternoon sessions included an overview of communication challenges from Roberta Fruth, RN, Senior Consultant, JCR, a review of the online training modules being developed for the communication trainings, case studies, and time spent talking with other unit-specific (ED) groups. We engaged in conversation with The Children's Medical Center and learned a few interesting ways they have increased patient satisfaction scores including hiring of 3 FTE RNs to callback patients regarding follow-up/discharge instructions.

Education Planning

Waiting Room LCD

Barb Buckley is currently investigating the feasibility of creating a NMH "Welcome to the ED" video which would be shown in the waiting room. She is currently preparing a proposal. There are many aspects to consider including partnership with NMH and ongoing support for electronic equipment and video production (costs and feasibility).

CME Communication Emergency Medicine Training

Potential idea for further education of emergency medicine physicians and also establishing NU ED as a leader in communication.

Research

Communication Assessment Tool – Pilot

Led by: Davee Communication Group

Goal: To assess feasibility of the CAT-T in the NMH ED

Project Status: Completed (July/August 2007)

Communication Assessment Tool – Team Pre-Test

Led by: Davee Communication Group

Goal: To collect baseline data that identifies the medical team's communication strengths and areas for improvement (to be addressed in the *CAT-T Project Intervention*).

Project Status: Data collection began 11/12/07

Data collection began on November 12, 2007 and is expected to continue through December 21, 2007 or until enrollment reaches 400 patients. The CAT-T enrolls patients immediately following discharge or upon being assigned a hospital bed. The research staff is collecting data from approximately 6 am – 10 pm during every weekday from Teams 1-4.

The team has also submitted a brief report to *Academic Emergency Medicine* based on pilot data. Future publications and abstracts will be submitted (SAEM-1/8/07, ICCH-1/21/08, FSM Lewis Landsberg Research Day).

Triage Nurse Satisfaction Survey

Led by: Barbara Buckley

Goal: To gather information regarding the triage process and suggestions for improving the triage process from triage nurses.

Project Status: Survey online, 26 respondents

The survey has been distributed online and has 26 responses. Barb will be using some of this information for her Nursing Blitz presentation.

Waiting Room Survey

Led by: Peter Pang, Laura Min Mercer

Goal: To gather patients' perceptions of the ED prior to a health visit.

Project Status: Development stages

This survey is currently being developed to gather patients' perceptions of the ED and understanding of the ED processes (e.g. triage). This survey will move forward once the CAT-T Pre-Test is nearing its end or is completed.

Publication Planning

CAT-T Brief Report

Corresponding Author: Peter S. Pang

Status: Submitted, rejected, resubmission planned for another journal

Journal: *Academic Emergency Medicine*

The brief report gives an overview of the CAT-T and its pilot in the NMH ED.

SAEM Abstract #1 CAT-T Pre-Test

First author: Sarah M. Donlan

Due: January 8, 2008

Status: Submitted, under review

Conference: SAEM

Uses CAT-T data

SAEM Abstract #2 CAT-T Demographics

First author: Sarah M. Donlan

Due: January 8, 2008

Status: Submitted, under review

Uses CAT-T data

SAEM Abstract #3 CAT-T Waiting and Length of Stay Times

First author: Sarah M. Donlan

Due: January 8, 2008

Status: Submitted, under review

Uses CAT-T data

Illinois College of Emergency Physicians Abstract CAT-T

First author: Sarah M. Donlan

Due: January 11, 2008

Status: In progress

Uses CAT-T data

Feinberg School of Medicine Lewis Landsberg Research Day

Lead: Laura Min Mercer, Jordan Duval-Arnold

Due: TBD

Status: Initial stages

Uses CAT-T data

National Communication Association Annual Conference

Lead: Laura Min Mercer

Due: February 13, 2008

Status: Initial stages

CAT-T PreTest Manuscript

Corresponding Author: TBD

Status: Scheduled for writing following completion of Pre-Test

Journal: TBD

International Conference on Communication and Healthcare

Lead: Greg Makoul

Due: 2/1/2008

Location: Oslo, Norway

Dates: September 2-8, 2008

*Goal for 2008: International presence via presentation/paper at ICCH

CORD

Lead: Sarah M. Donlan

Due: January 15, 2008

ACGME Educational Conference 2008

Lead: TBD

Due: Abstract submission closed

Location: Grapevine, Texas

Dates: February 28-March 2, 2008

Emergency Nurses Association Faculty for Leadership Conference 2009

Lead: Barb Buckley, Paula Tanabe

Due: March 14, 2008

Location: Reno, Nevada

Dates: March 4-8, 2009

Status: Workshop proposal prepared; will be submitted in February

Healthcare improvement/quality groups

Miscellaneous Projects

Communication Article Compilation

Coordinator: Laura Min Mercer

Project Status: Ongoing

Communication article literature searches are regularly performed and relevant articles collected in both electronic and hard paper form and an EndNotes database is kept.

ED Video Clips

Coordinator: Laura Min Mercer

Project Status: Initial planning stages

Video clips and photographs of ED communication situations will be created for use in presentations and education settings. We are exploring ideas that will allow us to find an efficient, easy to use and tag catalogue system, possible opportunities to bring a library science educated person as part of the team.

Effective Communication Brainstorming Sessions

Led by: Barb Buckley

Goal: To gather ideas and statements RN's already use or possible statements they think will be helpful when communicating with patients and families.

Project Status: Ongoing

The RN's meet regularly to share helpful statements and identify when key communication occurs during the ED visit. These statements and moments will be collected and revised by Barb for inclusion in the *Nursing Blitz* presentation.

Future Funding

Currently identifying different grants for possible grant proposal submissions to continue ED communication work.

Background

Effective communication is key for high-quality, patient-centered healthcare. In order to better understand what effective medical communication is, we were prompted to first extensively review the literature. We have conducted literature searches, compiled other Emergency Departments' efforts to improve patient experiences through training and/or informational campaigns, and explored communication best practices and applicability to the emergency department environment. These remain ongoing endeavors.

What is notable is the paucity of information. Despite the recognition of the importance of communication, the lack of research and formal curricula has hindered efforts to build upon the work of others. At the same time, the tremendous need for effective communication provides ample opportunity for Northwestern to not only demonstrate effective communication in the day-to-day clinical setting, but also the opportunity to disseminate to others what we have learned. We hope to not only improve our patients' experiences, but also the experience of other ED patients.

In addition, an internet website for Davee Innovations: Optimizing Communication in the Emergency Department was created. This has dual purposes: 1) as an educational resource for others 2) as a means of effective communication to the various team members involved in this project. Regular website updates are planned in order to provide the most up-to-date information.

Project Focus: Locally and Nationally

First and foremost, providing the best patient experience in the Emergency Department is our goal. Effective communication that meets patients' needs but then provides an understanding of their ED visit above and beyond their expectations is our ultimate goal. Improving communication between the medical team and Northwestern Memorial Hospital patients is the first step toward achieving these goals. We consistently strive to improve our communication with our patient base through innovative changes in operations, evaluation, and training of medical personnel. Through evaluation of our own medical team's communication skills and needs and review of NMH patients' expectations, we will be able to develop a targeted, focused educational component for faculty, residents, and nurses.

Nationally, by focusing on our own improved communication within the emergency department, we hope to advance emergency medicine's communication efforts. These include meeting national guidelines set forth by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education and the Joint Commission. Our efforts to understand the ED patient and medical team are at the forefront of emergency medicine communication research.

The Medical Team Focus

Due to the complex nature of care in the emergency department and the constantly changing medical team, the Davee Communication Group decided to evaluate communication of the "medical team." The emergency department medical team consists of attending physicians, residents, nurses, and other medical staff. Individually, these health care professionals may have

a limited amount of direct face-to-face contact with the patient, but, in combination, define the type of care and communication each patient receives.

Building on Individual's Strengths and Formalization of the Davee Communication Group

Ultimately, the best people will be the single most important success factor. A number of faculty members have been recruited for the Davee project. These people were invited to participate based on their talents, experience, enthusiasm, and dedication toward our patients and improving communication. Please see below for a brief biography about each faculty member.

The Davee Communication Group has set their initial focus on two main areas: 1) Improving communication between the health care team and the patient. First steps have been to better understand the patient's needs and perspectives. This will direct educational interventions toward those ends 2) improving the waiting room experience. At the same time, we continue to plan with focus on each phase of the patient's experience through the ED.

Faculty Members of the Davee Communication Group

James G. Adams, MD, Professor and Chair, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Adams has established himself as an expert on organizational performance and ethics within emergency medicine. He is committed to enhancing the patient experience and leads the Davee project.

Christopher B. Beach, MD, Assistant Professor and Vice Chair, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Beach brings to the Davee Communication Group his expertise in patient safety and quality.

Kirsten Engel, MD, Consultant

After residency, Dr. Engel's past research has focused on patient-provider communication in the emergency department which led to becoming a Semi-Finalist for the SAEM Annual Meeting Scientific Award in the Young Investigator Category in 2006. She remains interested in identifying barriers to effective information exchange in the acute care setting and assessing the impact of these difficulties on patient outcomes of satisfaction, comprehension, and adherence.

Michael A. Gisondi, MD, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Gisondi, Assistant Director of the Residency Program, completed a faculty development fellowship prior to coming to Northwestern. His interests broadly include medical education and continued development. His skills will be used to help the Davee project meet educational goals.

Demetrios N. Kyriacou, MD, PhD, MPH, DTM&H, Associate Professor, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Kyriacou will be working on an operations communication project and lending his research expertise to the Davee team.

Martin J. Lucenti, Jr., MD, PhD, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Lucenti, Director of Clinical Operations, will be participating in the operations aspect of the

Davee project.

Gregory Makoul, PhD, Director, Center for Communication and Medicine

Dr. Makoul has done extensive research within medical communication including the development of several communication assessment instruments. His expertise will help the Davee team identify areas of opportunity, educational programs to address those areas, and measurement of improvement.

Peter S. Pang, MD, Associate Medical Director, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

As project director, Dr. Pang is in charge of the day-to-day oversight of the Davee project. Dr. Pang's research interests include communication and heart failure.

Paula Tanabe, PhD, RN, MPH, Research Assistant Professor, Dept. of Emergency Medicine

Dr. Tanabe's extensive research experience grounds the Davee project to ensure research-based knowledge and dissemination of information throughout the academic community. Dr. Tanabe currently has two research projects involving sickle cell patients and nurses.