Communication Course Proves to be a Valuable Tool for Clinic Physicians

Strong communication skills are essential to effective relationships with patients. In addition to improving patient safety and outcomes, good communication increases physician satisfaction and efficiency.

To help improve communication skills, the Center for Excellence in Healthcare Communication offers the Foundations of Healthcare Communication course. This course provides physicians with an understanding about the value of physician communication, teaches a specific model of communication and works through discussions of clinicians’ own challenging communication scenarios.

“It is reminiscent of medical school, learning how to do the patient interview,” said Dr. Riebel, Lakewood’s Vice President of Medical Operations, and a recent participant. Dr. Riebel said that different aspects of the interview were emphasized. “As clinicians, we interview patients several times a day. We learned helpful skills and it was beneficial to practice the actual skills with other physicians in the class.”

Participants work in small groups, discuss different approaches and practice physician-patient interactions. “We got into the patient’s expectations. ‘Patient expectation’ wasn’t in my vocabulary previously. We used to talk about the patient’s chief complaint,” said Dr. Riebel.

Drs. Riebel and Mallick agreed that meeting and working with physician colleagues for the day was a favorite part of the class. Physicians interact with other physicians from various specialties, which provided insight and perspective into how others handle a variety of issues and interactions. “There is good camaraderie and good conversation throughout the day,” Dr. Riebel said.

“In patient-centered care, it behooves physicians to make sure that their skills are up to par,” said Dr. Mallick, a Cleveland Clinic hospitalist who completed the course. “The class helps physicians see the perspectives of their patients.”

The Center, with the help of its 29 trained physician facilitators, has increased offerings from seven to more than 40 classes per month. Classes are held at the Foundation House, the Carriage House and the Cleveland Clinic Administrative Campus.

CEO and President Toby Cosgrove, MD, has asked that all employed physicians, residents and fellows attend the Foundations of Healthcare Communication course by March 2014. Since the course’s inception, more than 1,100 physicians have already attended, with an additional 1,000 currently registered to attend.

“We learned to address the expectations and the anxieties of our patients,” Dr. Riebel said. “The class was very worthwhile, a great investment of time, and it provides a wonderful value for physicians.”

For more information, visit the Center’s intranet site at http://portals.ccf.org/occ/HealthcareCommunication/tabid/9301/Default.aspx.

Each issue of OPE News is dedicated to keeping you in the loop on news around the Cleveland Clinic Patient Experience. Have feedback? Email PatientExperience@ccf.org.
In 2005, the Government of Abu Dhabi set out a comprehensive road map for economic diversification and progress, the Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030.

As part of this 25-year plan, a clear mandate was put in place to develop a sustainable, world-class healthcare infrastructure in the UAE in order to reduce the need for residents to travel abroad for care and meet the demands of a growing population.

Mubadala Healthcare, a business unit of Abu Dhabi’s Mubadala Development Company, acts as a catalyst for this change, identifying capacity needs within the Emirate’s healthcare industry and identifying renowned international medical institutions to help deliver the vision.

In 2006, Mubadala Healthcare selected Cleveland Clinic to manage and operate a world-class, multispecialty hospital in Abu Dhabi and set in motion the development of Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, currently the largest healthcare project in the world.

Dr. Marc Harrison, CEO, Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi says, “I arrived in Abu Dhabi more than two years ago to take the post and it has been a remarkable journey so far. The UAE continues to exceed my expectations on a daily basis as it blossoms into an economic and cultural force operating on a global platform. The combination of international influences – UAE residents represent more than 140 nationalities – with a local heritage of warmth and hospitality has resulted in a modern, worldly culture unlike anywhere I’ve ever been.”

“Understanding local values is one vital aspect of being able to serve the people of Abu Dhabi with a locally relevant patient experience. UAE Nationals are the second most represented nationality amongst our Caregivers and the insights they have shared have been valuable in shaping the patient experience. One good example is the importance of family. When a patient visits a hospital in Abu Dhabi, it is common for extended family members to accompany them. It is therefore essential to treat the entire family as part of the care team, which includes keeping them all updated on the patient’s status and care plan,” said Dr. Harrison.

Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi’s mission is to impact the community by providing compassionate, patient-centered care of the highest quality and to complement the UAE’s evolving healthcare industry.

Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi will deliver the Cleveland Clinic heritage and expertise, fulfill the critical healthcare needs of the UAE, promote a Patient Centered Model of Care and fulfill on our promise that “every life deserves world-class care.”

Dr. Harrison continued, “We are working with Mubadala Healthcare to ensure Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi fully reflects the UAE’s values and priorities. By working as a ‘unit’, we are best placed to deliver best-in-class care and experience to those who need it.”

“As we build this state-of-the-art hospital, we are constantly reminded of the values that drive the Cleveland Clinic: patient experience, employee engagement, patient safety and measurable quality. To that end we are building teams of engaged Caregivers, a necessary part of creating a culture where service excellence is an expectation.”

“The UAE has demonstrated that the drive for economic and social development is constant, fervent and filled with hope for success, both today and for generations to come. We are delighted to be playing our part in this exciting journey.”
NICU “Nurturing Hands” Program Seeks Volunteers

Cleveland Clinic Children’s has introduced a unique volunteer opportunity in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The program, called “Nurturing Hands,” seeks volunteers to cuddle, hold, rock, sing and socialize with hospitalized infants.

Volunteers are required to contribute a weekly, 2- or 3-hour shift from Sunday through Saturday between 9 am and 8 pm for a minimum of six consecutive months.

To learn more about volunteering with Nurturing Hands, please contact Kyle Shubeck in the Volunteer Services Department at 216.442.5228 or shubeck@ccf.org

For more information about Volunteer Services, please visit the Volunteer Services intranet site at http://portals.ccf.org/occ/PatientExperience/VolunteerServices/tabid/10415/Default.aspx.

New Welcome Guide Introduced at all Inpatient Locations

As of Sept. 10, patients have started receiving an all-new printed Welcome Guides at all our inpatient locations. With one guide, we can ensure the same information is shared with patients and families no matter what hospital they stay at. The guide was developed based on input from patient groups and was reviewed by subject matter experts to create a complete and accurate source of information.

The new Welcome Guide includes regulatory documents, such as Patient Rights and Responsibilities; room accommodations; improved safety information and resources to help prepare patients for discharge.

The 31-page booklet also includes an amenity guide for each hospital, which contains general visitor information such as food and retail options. Amenity and Welcome Guides will be placed in your local storeroom inventory in mid-October. View the new Welcome Guide at http://portals.ccf.org/Portals/115/87982_CCFRP_low%20res.pdf.

Patient & Provider Relations Celebrates 2nd Anniversary

On Sept. 16, the Patient & Provider Relations Service Center (also known as the Referring Physicians Hotline) reached its second anniversary. In the two years since its beginning, the team has provided extraordinary service to external referring physicians and their patients. Thousands of calls and countless numbers of satisfied callers later, it is still going strong.

The Patient and Provider Relations Service Center acts as a one-stop shop for external referring physicians. It also services Patient Facilitated Service (formerly Executive Patient Services) and the Home Health Care Department.
Maureen Duffy (pictured, right) is a volunteer coordinator in the Volunteer Services Department. She serves as a liaison between Cleveland Clinic volunteers and the departments in which their assignments are located. She is specifically responsible for the volunteers at our 13 Cleveland Clinic Family Health Centers. We recently sat down with Maureen to ask her a few questions and learn more about her.

Office of Patient Experience: What is the best part about your job?
Maureen Duffy: This job is very special. It allows me to interact with an important group of individuals who can have a huge impact on our patient experience because they are often making the very first and last impression at a Family Health Center. The motivation for why volunteers come to serve varies, but the one thing they all have in common is an altruistic attitude. I find it incredibly rewarding to be exposed to individuals with such a spirit of generosity on a regular basis.

Office of Patient Experience: Our volunteers go through a matching process. Can you give us some insight about this process?
Maureen Duffy: In the initial interactions with the potential volunteer, it helps to be very observant and ask the potential volunteer key questions. These questions allow you to get to know them as a person and what skills and interests they’d be bringing to volunteering. Once I get a feel for these kinds of things, I am able to present them with volunteer opportunities that would be fulfilling to them and satisfy our needs.

Office of Patient Experience: You seem so passionate about volunteer services. What keeps you engaged?
Maureen Duffy: I am motivated by being able contribute something positive through the experience I’ve acquired and the talent I possess. I have been a patient and I know it can be a fearful and frustrating experience, so I find it beneficial to be able to reduce some of those negative effects through what I do within our volunteer program.

Office of Patient Experience: What are some of the things you like to do?
Maureen Duffy: I am visually inspired and very observant. I enjoy nature. I love to go to the beach and be near water. I love to look at the moon and the stars at night. I like to expose myself to a variety of cultural experiences. I love conversation and laughing – humor is very important to me. I am also an avid reader.

Office of Patient Experience: What is your favorite book?

Office of Patient Experience: What is your ultimate goal?
Maureen Duffy: I would like my presence, and the unique characteristics that make me “ME,” provide value to others and enhance their lives.