

“The Patient’s Voice”

To Err is Human: What every Patient Should know about Medical Errors

April 13, 2013

Marcy Saxe-Braithwaite, BScN, MScN, MBA, CHE



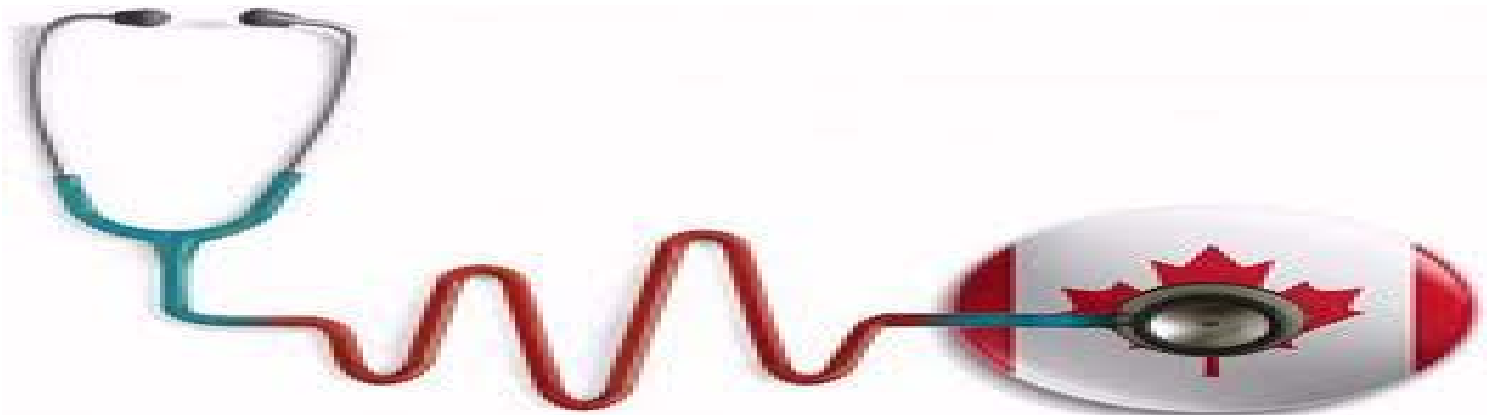
Today's talk ...

- To share with the audience insights into the importance of the "***Patient's Voice***"
- To share insights on the patient experience
- To discuss your role in Patient Centered Care
- To touch on the importance of communication
- To provide you with some thoughts for feeling more empowered so you have control over your healthcare experience



Today's health care environment

- Health care is undergoing a rapid transformation to meet the ever-increasing needs and demands of their patient populations
- Patients know more and have more expectations of how they want their patient experience to be lived out
- Patient's wish for a “**voice**”
- Numerous changes: enhanced technology, more options for treatment and medications, less providers, more system realignment/integration



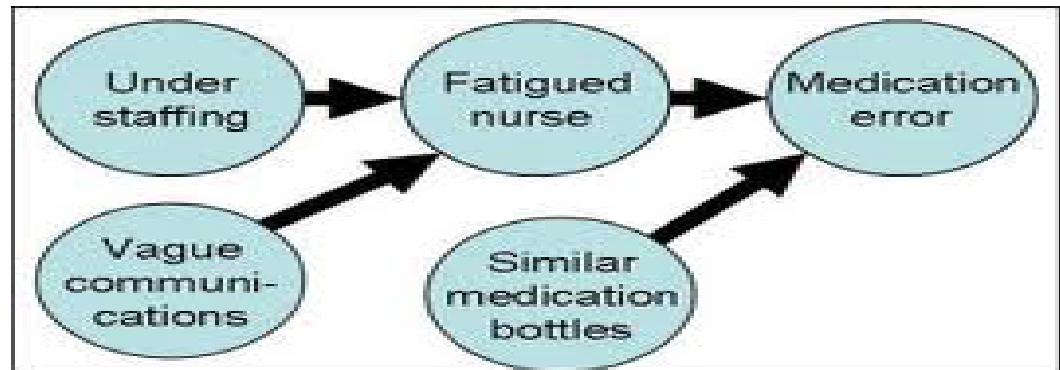
Patient Safety ...

- Hear about patient safety and medical errors every day in the newspaper and on the radio
- You hear errors happen and question who is at fault
- You pray nothing happens to you or your family member
- Lots of initiatives are underway to address the prevention of medical errors and promote patient safety
- Each of you have an important role to play



Medical errors

- Happen every day, not because the doctors and nurses are bad people, however, there are system issues, people issues, expectations, barriers to communication



Medical errors

- Doctors/nurses feel really bad every time an error happens – they often feel like a failure, they were not careful enough, they did not try hard enough, they should have asked for more help
- Mistakes are made by good people, humans err – errors are truly inevitable – often due to system issues not the character of the person
- The health care team fear speaking up about mistakes because of the blame/shame game, embarrassment, the consequences and fear of loss of their position



Medical errors ...

- The health care system is often silent about medical errors
- Why? Fear of consequences
- For health care providers – their training is to cure, cause no harm, do the best they can and do not err
- With errors comes sense of incompetence, failure, emotional hurt, fear of punishment, blame, shame, loss of their position
- For patients – fear for lack of care, retaliation, negative consequences, uncertainty with next steps
- Do not wish to upset the health care team, especially their doctors and nurses



Patient's need voice

- Many health care organizations are now adopting a philosophy entitled: ***“Patient Centered Care”***
- This is a philosophy that focuses on the patient's needs, voice, and options for care
- An adopted definition is: “Providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs and choices to ensure the patient's values guide all clinical decisions
- Patient centered care empowers patients/families to become active participants in their care



Patient centered care ...

- Patient centered care really improves health care through the eyes of the patient
- All patients deserve high quality health care
- The patient 's views and experiences are integral to improvement efforts
- It is vital to know what they expect from their experience, what has happened to them in the past and what worries them with respect to this experience
- The patient's values and their voice need to be part of your care plan



Therefore, as the patient you would like ...

- Care that is respectful and responsive from knowledgeable staff
- Have the benefits of physical and emotional comfort
- Good communication from all employees and the physicians
- A clean safe environment where they are not at risk of injury
- Encouragement to be independent and manage their self care as best as possible



Why pursue patient centered care???

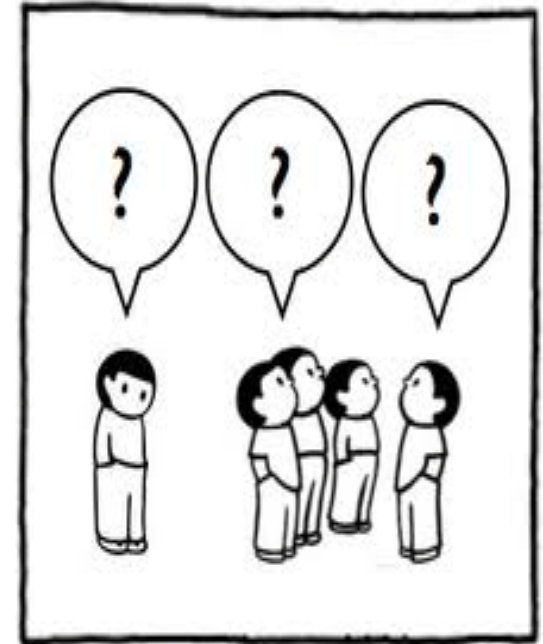
- Increased patient/family satisfaction
- Improvements in quality of care delivered
- Higher staff satisfaction
- Less patient complaints
- Increased responsiveness to the patient's need through a positive attitude, compassion, caring, empathy and confidence in all you do



Patient experience...

You can ask the staff at the hospital/organization

- What do patients say about their experience?
- How do you know?
- What do you do about their feedback?
- What changes have you introduced?
- What are some patient safety initiatives underway? How can I participate?



Communication

- Why is communication so important?
- What works and what does not?
- What elements need to be involved in all communication with patients?



What are some barriers to communication???

- We make too many assumptions
- We judge others
- We do not want to change our habits/routines
- We need to demonstrate we are right and the other person is wrong
- We are engaged in conflict resolution
- Our message is long, unclear and disorganized versus concise, clear and organized



To be successful in communicating ...

- Successful communication entails trust and honesty
- Speak clearly, avoid jargon
- If you promise a patient something, keep your promise
- Be responsive
- Listen carefully – do not interrupt, do not get upset, do not get defensive
- Think before you speak
- When you answer the phone, state your name, it is more welcoming

Communication



So how do you have voice???

- If you as the patient or family have questions, ask your health care team, if you do not know the answer ask them to find someone who does
- Write down your questions so when the doctor comes in you are ready to ask and take note
- Ensure you are listened to and that your complaints or concerns are answered in a timely manner
- Seek answers that satisfy you, do not excuse the doctor/nurse as they are too busy to listen to you



To improve the patient experience ...

- The culture needs to be built on compassion, honesty, accountability, respect and trust
- Remember that good customer service entails having a hospitality heart – staff are here to serve others and meet their needs
- It would be great if we could meet or even exceed the patient's expectations
- This entails continuous quality improvement – this often means a change in organizational culture



© 2006 MARIE LAFRANCE

A time for reflection ...

- When you are in need of health care services, remember your voice is vital for the health care system to hear, listen to and take into account your reflections
- Only with patient feedback and tangible suggestions can the health care system improve



Warren Bennis states

***“Good leaders make people feel that they are at the heart of things,
not at the periphery***

***Everyone wants to feel that he/she makes a difference to the success
of the patient/family’s experience within their organization***

***When that happens people feel special and cared for and that gives
their work meaning”***



Recommendations

- Patient safety is a top priority
- Health care providers must listen to their patients/families to determine how best to meet their needs
- Higher levels of patient satisfaction lead to better outcomes
- Leadership is responsible for keeping health care providers engaged in providing patient centered care
- Listen and learn from the patient's stories and experiences
- Health care providers need to involve patients in every decision regarding their care



Thank you for your time today!!

- My contact information is:

Marcy Saxe-Braithwaite

marcy@wmc.on.ca

Have a great weekend!

