

## Studer Group Lists Guides For Nurse Communication

- Before I call, have I seen and assessed this patient myself?
- Are there standing orders?
- Do I have these items at hand?
  - the chart
  - list of current meds, IV fluids and labs
  - most recent/current vital signs (to include O2 sat and pain score)
  - date and time of any lab tests that were performed and the results of previous tests for comparisons
  - code status
- Have I read the doctor's most recent progress notes and nurses' notes from the previous shift?
- Have I discussed this call with my charge nurse?
- When ready to call:
  - identify self, unit, patient and room number
  - know the admitting diagnosis and date of admission
  - briefly state the problem, what it is, when it happened or started and how severe it is
- What do I expect to happen as a result of this call?
- Document whom you spoke to, time of call, and summary of conversation.
- Engage and treat physician with respect.

### Reference

Studer Group. *Patient Safety Toolkit*. Gulf Breeze, FL: Studer Group., 2007.

## Effective Communication Plays A Pivotal Role In Nursing

The importance of teaching and learning about how to communicate with patients is well-established within nursing. However, less emphasis is placed on communicating with other health care professionals and in stressful situations. Effective communication and collaboration among health professionals is imperative to providing patient-centered care.

You may be thinking, "Duh, this is obvious!" The first step in correcting a deficit is to recognize the deficit and the need for improvement. Nurses understand that communication among health care professionals has tremendous opportunity for improvement. As preceptors, it is your responsibility to role model the right communication skills for new nurses and nursing students and to ensure that communication with health care professionals is a competency for new nurses to master. Communication skills could become a mandatory, yearly competency for all nurses.

As with any skill, effective communication comes with practice, feedback and reflection. This can be accomplished through leading by example, role playing and providing feedback on witnessed interactions with physicians and other team members. It is only through practice that we can increase perfection and make changes.

One of the most common barriers of effective communication for new nurses and nursing students is fear and lack of self-confidence. Standardized communication tools can help decrease anxiety and ensure the accuracy of information to help build nurses' self-confidence when reporting to members of the health care team. Using a standardized format will serve as a tool in stimulating critical thinking skills for new nurses and provides preceptors with another tool to use in the evaluation process. Whether you create your own communication tool or borrow from another, using one will produce benefits for all, including patients!