Communication Strategies in an Evolving Health Environment

FLEX Program Reverse Site Visit
July 20, 2016
Alana Knudson, PhD
Overview

• **Why** is communication important?
• **Who** should be included?
  • Messenger
  • Audience
• **What** information should be shared?
• **How** should the message be communicated?
• **When** should messages be shared?
Why is communication important?

I would just reiterate: Communicate, communicate, communicate. It's about the people and it's about relationships. We cannot forget that.

Joel Allison, CEO of Baylor Scott & White Health in Dallas
Communicating change

The Kübler-Ross change curve

How have hospitals changed?

- Patient segregation
- Length of stay
- New types of practitioners
- Smoking
- Patient engagement and empowerment
- Payment models

Who should be included?

- Identify the audience
  - FLEX constituencies
  - CAH constituencies
    - Internal
      - Board, medical staff, partners
    - External
      - Community stakeholders
- Determine the messenger for the audience
Messenger - Determinants of Trust and Credibility

- Knowledge and Expertise
- Openness and Honesty
- Concern and Care
  - Empathy
  - Commitment

What information should be shared?

Questions to address:
• From what to what?
• What does this change mean for what I do and how I work on a daily basis?
• Will this make a difference?
• How will success be measured?
• What is the support level for this change?

Source: Randy Pennington, *Make Change Work: Staying Nimble, Relevant, and Engaged in a World of Constant Change.*
How to communicate complex information…

• Be concise
• Improvise
• Tell a story
• Use visual metaphors
• Continue asking “so what?”
• Listen
• Address cultural competency

Source: 6 Ways to Clearly Communicate Complex Information, http://quickbase.intuit.com/blog/6-ways-to-clearly-communicate-complex-information
Communicating to Different Generations

• Traditionalists
  • Formal communication, written preferred
• Baby Boomers
  • In-person communication, one-on-one
• Generation X
  • Timely and frequently, value direction
• Millennials
  • Electronic preferred, wonder what is next

Source: Jennifer J. Deal, *Retiring the Generation Gap: How Employees Young and Old Can Find Common Ground*
When should information be shared?

- Timing is important
- Consistently share information
- Repeat the message at least three times
- Provide regular updates on progress and changes
- Clarify messages quickly based on what you hear
- Respond ASAP
Top FLEX Communication Strategy
• Health disparities
• Efficient and effective health care delivery
• Payment policy
• Multidisciplinary health teams
• Health care, behavioral health, public health, oral health, long term care, and human services
• Patient and family engagement and empowerment
Gary Hart, PhD, Director
Center for Rural Health
University of North Dakota
School of Medicine & Health Sciences, Room 4909
501 North Columbia Road, Stop #9037
Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037
701.777.3848 • ruralhealth.und.edu • gary.hart@med.und.edu

Alana Knudson, PhD, Deputy Director
NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis
4350 East West Highway, Suite 700
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
301.634.9326 • walshcenter.norc.org • knudson-alana@norc.org