Improving Patient Communication in the Toronto General Hospital Emergency Department

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International Conference on Resident Education (ICRE)
October 19, 2018
OBJECTIVE

• To improve the quality of patient communication in the Toronto General Hospital Emergency Department Rapid Assessment Zone

Outcomes

• Primary
  • Patient-reported satisfaction with ED communication
  • Patient-reported anxiety due to lack of information
• Secondary
  • Provider-reported patient interruption
Methods
“The triage nurse was not very friendly...I don’t think she took my issue seriously”

“Patients should be apprised of the wait time and staff should seem more concerned and caring...”
ED tool to respond to patient inquiries

After confirming who the patient/family/friend is:

**Acknowledge:** Acknowledge the patient’s situation, so they feel engaged.

“Sir, I can see here that you have been waiting for over 3 hours”, or “I know that you are in a lot of discomfort right now.”

**Empathize:** Empathize with the patient, so that they feel heard.

“We know it is frustrating to wait for hours; we are working as fast as we can”, “It is very difficult seeing a loved one be in discomfort.”

**Inform:** Inform with as much information as is available.

“There are 5 people ahead of you in this section, and the last patient seen had been waiting 3 hours, but we are unable to give more accurate information given that sicker patients need to be seen first and more can arrive at any time.”

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If you have any questions about this tool or the evidence behind it, please contact:
Ahmed Toher at ahmed.taher@mail.uottawa.ca or Lucas Charter at lucas.charter@vhn.ca

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PDSA 1
Toronto General Hospital is part of the University Health Network. This Emergency Department manages over 50,000 patients per year, including complex patients with cancer, transplant and other life-threatening issues.

We understand that wait times may be long at times, and we appreciate your patience as we help all patients.

**UHN’s Purpose**
Transforming lives and communities through excellence in care, discovery and learning

**Our Values**
Safety, Compassion, Teamwork, Integrity, Stewardship


We care about your feedback: you can contact UHN Patient Relations by phone at (416) 340-4907 or by email at patientrelations@uhn.ca
Why Am I Waiting in the Emergency Department?

Four Basic Rules of E.D. Engagement:
1. Every patient can have one additional family member or friend with them in the examination room.
2. Keep your cell phone or camera in your pocket or purse.
3. Keep it clean and sanitize your hands.

Highly Specialized E.D. Nurses
On-Call Experts
- Surgery
- Obstetrics
- General Medicine
- Cardiac Care
- Etc....

PDSA 3

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mygmoUzjb4
Likert Scale Surveys

232 Patients

67 Providers

- Patient-reported satisfaction with ED communication
- Patient-reported anxiety due to lack of information
- Provider-reported patient interruption
I am satisfied by the overall level of communication I received from the staff during my ED visit

Baseline
- Strongly Disagree: 5
- Disagree: 10
- Neutral: 22
- Agree: 18
- Strongly Agree: 10

PDSA 1
- Strongly Disagree: 2
- Disagree: 12
- Neutral: 7
- Agree: 24
- Strongly Agree: 13

PDSA 2
- Strongly Disagree: 2
- Disagree: 10
- Neutral: 24
- Agree: 14

PDSA 3
- Strongly Disagree: 3
- Disagree: 9
- Neutral: 23
- Agree: 24

Baseline

PDSA 1

PDSA 2

PDSA 3

25-Jan - 27-May
I felt anxious due to lack of information about my ED visit
Q/A
## Likert Surveys

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