

Patient Whiteboards as a Communication Tool: Transforming Care at the Bedside Show Me the Evidence

- One of Joint Commission's (TJC) National Patient Safety Goals (NPSG) is improving communication
 - In 2007, TJC announced a new NPSG that "encourage(s) patients' active involvement in their own care as a patient safety strategy"
 - Patient whiteboards allow the ability to share a wide range of information with patients, families, and care providers

What Does the Research Say?

Whiteboards should have a patient-centered approach and include the following:

- Placement in clear view from the patients hospital bed
- Erasable markers attached to the whiteboards
- Day and date
- Patient's name
- Bedside nurse
- Primary physician
- Goal for the Day – patients should guide determination of their goal in collaboration with the bedside nurse each morning.

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What Does the Research Say Continued

Whiteboards should have a patient-centered approach and include the following:

- Anticipated Discharge Date – even though this date may change, patients benefit from thinking about discharge in advance
- Family member's contact information
- Questions for providers

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Additional Information

- Activity – ex. Bedrest, ambulate 4 times, up to chair with meals
- Assistance Level – communicates to families and other staff what level of assistance the patient requires. Ex., Hover mat, 2 assist, walker
- Fall Risk – provides 'at-a-glance' information for fall prevention
- Scheduled procedures or tests – communicates to patient what to expect and can include prep if indicated

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The Trial Period

The 11th Floor UPC and staff meeting attendees chose 2 templates for whiteboards to trial. We will trial one at a time for a week's time starting Tuesday, May 8th.

The trial templates are to be filled out at the change of shift (ideally during bedside report) with the patient's input. The trial templates will be on paper and taped to the existing whiteboard or given to the patient.

The RN is responsible for writing on the whiteboards at the start of the shift.

The CNA can update the information with the exception of the "Goals for Today."

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The Trial Period Continued

Nursing staff will complete a brief feedback tool at the end of shift.

The Clinical Manager will round with patients to obtain feedback.

At the conclusion of the trial period, a decision will be made after discussion of the results with UPC.

New whiteboards will be placed in all patient rooms.

Periodic auditing and Peer Review will be done to measure compliance with updating whiteboard communication.

Reference: Sehgal N, Green A, Vidvarbi A, Blegen M, Wachter R. (2010) Patient whiteboards as a communication tool in the hospital setting: A survey of practices and recommendations. *Journal of Hospital Medicine*. 5(4), 234-239.

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