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### **Innovation in nursing leadership: Improvements in nursing communication**

**Statement of the Problem:** Improving nurse communication is directly correlated to increasing overall patient satisfaction. Best practices for increasing nurse communication will be presented using a professional practice model as a foundational approach. Proven strategies for nurse communication include bedside handovers, use of the patient story, commit to sit programs, nurse leader rounds, nurse-physician rounds and teach back methods. Individual nurse feedback on performance on these measures will also be discussed. Many quality programs are implemented only to have temporary gains in patient outcomes. This study describes a nursing leadership approach involving feedback to the individual nurse regarding their own patient's outcomes, therefore engaging the nurse at a personal level for motivation to sustain outcomes.

**Method:** Theories of human caring and motivation as well as professional practice models guide the theoretical orientation to this research. This study was conducted in a large academic medical center in the United States with >2000 nurses receiving their own scorecards on their performance related to nurse communication and patient satisfaction. Special emphasis was placed on positive nurse communication as a driver of patient satisfaction. Patient responses on patient satisfaction questionnaires were matched using medical record numbers with the nurse caring for them in the hospital using the nurse assigned to them each shift as documented in the electronic medical record. Analytics software was utilized to prepare the data for each unit manager to share with their staff.

**Findings:** Nurse communication scores have steadily increased each year for the past 10 years and have been sustained since the implementation of individual nurse feedback on their scores. Patient satisfaction scores are over the 90th percentile consistently. Nurses and unit managers have responded positively to the use of the individual nurse report as a feedback tool for coaching and motivating nurses.

**Conclusions & Significance:** Strategies employed to increase nurse-patient interaction improve nurse communication scores. Providing nurses with an innovative and positive approach to delivering individual nurse feedback on their performance contributes to sustained patient satisfaction.

### **Biography**

Cathy Rodgers Ward is an experienced Nurse Executive and Researcher and Chief Nursing Officer at the UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles, USA. He is also a Clinical Faculty in the UCLA School of Nursing. His research focuses on the effects of nursing leadership on patient outcomes in hospitalized patients. He has also received many awards including the 2017 UCLA Leadership Award, 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Alabama in Birmingham, the 2015 Transformational Leadership Award at UCLA and the United States 2011 Nurse week National Management Nurse of the Year.