Treating Patients with C.A.R.E.

OVERVIEW
Health care organizations face the challenge of assuring that all staff interacting with patients use effective communication skills. Patients have better health outcomes when good interactions with staff encourage them to adhere to treatment plans and follow up with care. Patient satisfaction is significantly enhanced when staff members communicate effectively with patients.

While some general concepts about customer service from retail and service industries may apply to health care, in many ways health care is different. It’s not the same as selling shoes, serving food, or working at a bank. The receptionist or medical assistant may be greeting a patient who is physically uncomfortable, frightened, or angry; family members may be anxious or distressed as well. Staff members in medical organizations aren’t simply selling the patient a product; instead they are involved in complex interactions with patients to promote improved health and manage health care resources.

THE CHALLENGE
Many health care organizations have accepted the challenge of creating an environment for patients that is welcoming and competent. In many cases this has called for a change in organizational culture. Changing an organization’s culture, however, is not a simple task. In addition to changes in policy and public pronouncements, an actual change in organization culture will not take place without a change in human performance at all levels of the organization. This workshop was developed specifically to address the communication skills of all staff members who interact with patients. Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. recognizes and respects that all members of the health care team affect health outcomes.

THE PROGRAM
Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. provides a conceptual model and specific techniques that guide all staff members - receptionists, nurses, medical assistants, business office clerks, maintenance workers (literally anyone who comes in contact with patients) – to communicate in ways that will enhance satisfaction and encourage patient partnership. Participants use their own experiences in health care to identify staff actions that make a difference. Essential skills are organized into a four-point model: Connect, Appreciate, Respond, and Empower (C.A.R.E.).

Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. consists of brief presentations, interactive exercises, videotaped case studies and skill practice to build learner awareness, knowledge, skills and confidence regarding communication. Case examples frame realistic issues involving patients and families. The workbook includes an annotated bibliography. At the end of the workshop, learners are asked to commit to trying out two new C.A.R.E. communication techniques and then to evaluate the outcomes associated with these approaches.

OBJECTIVES
By the end of Treating Patients with C.A.R.E., participants will:

- Describe what is meant by C.A.R.E.
- Discuss our organization’s healthcare service standards and how they related to C.A.R.E.
- Describe ways for using C.A.R.E. on the job to deliver impressive healthcare service.

The Institute for Healthcare Communication – Canada is a non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of health care by improving communication through education, advocacy and research.

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Treating Patients with C.A.R.E.
Faculty Development Course (Train-the-Trainer)

Overview
The benefits of effective communication between patients and providers and among healthcare team members are well documented: patients have better health outcomes, better adherence to treatment plans and more consistent follow-up, as well as higher levels of satisfaction with their care. The Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. curriculum further teaches effective communication skills to increase patients’ confidence in their care, convey an impressive impression of the facility and increase patients’ ability to carry out steps of treatment. Providers enjoy greater job satisfaction and lower rates of burnout and stress. Healthcare providers across all specialties and roles face continual pressures and challenges ensuring optimal patient care and satisfaction.

A variety of factors contribute to the challenges of providing consistently impressive patient care. Staff members are under time pressures, organizations frequently face resource limitations and patients may be experiencing pain and anxiety, and may vent their frustrations on healthcare staff. From the patient’s perspective, every person employed by the healthcare organization contributes to the care experience. A rich and growing literature supports the value of patient-centered care and a relationship of trust between providers and patients.

The Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshop has had a dramatic impact on the care of patients and their families in organizations across North America. Through the efforts of over 500 faculty, thousands of healthcare clinicians and support staff members have learned effective skills to improve their communication with patients and families. Individual healthcare team members who communicate effectively with patients and with one another are best equipped to navigate these challenges. As important as communication skills are to clinical and interpersonal interactions, many organizations do not provide training in this area.

As part of IHC’s effort to help organizations build training capacity around communication skills, IHC has developed this 3-day “train-the-trainer” faculty development course. Participants can become IHC-C faculty members, qualified to teach IHC’s Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshop, which provides evidence-based skills to help members of healthcare teams meet their patients’ needs and work together more effectively as teams.

Audience
Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. is open to clinicians and non-clinical support staff members and supervisors with training responsibilities and aptitude. Workshops can accommodate 8-24 learners to ensure individualized attention and optimal small group learning.

Content
The Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshop provides a conceptual model and specific techniques that guide all staff members—anyone who comes in contact with patients—to communicate in ways that will enhance satisfaction and encourage patient partnership. Participants use their own experiences in health care to identify staff actions that make a difference. The Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. faculty development course encompasses four areas of focus, described below:

1. Mastery of the content and facilitation skills for Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshop
   Participants in the Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. faculty course practice and observe one another presenting components of the C.A.R.E. workshop. There is particular focus on three key components of effective workshop leadership:

   Lecture versus Activity
   - The workshop is designed to include a great deal of activity and relatively few—and brief—lectures. All of the lectures are less than twenty minutes in duration and most are in the ten- to fifteen-minute ranges. It is very important that the workshop leader engages participants in the activities and does not get caught up in lengthy elaboration.
Graduated Involvement
- The workshop’s graduated design moves from the first exercise, which considers what it is like to be a patient. It continues with exploring each of the four components of the C.A.R.E. model and how these components are acted upon in real life situations. Video case scenarios provide stimulus for observation, analysis and discussion. Group exercises encourage learners to think through how these techniques apply to the participant’s own situations. In this way, participants move from personal experiences as patients, through abstract application of skills via video case situations, to realistic application to their own situations. It is critical that the workshop leader has an understanding of the design as a whole and of each component of the design — how it works, why it works and why it is part of the program.

Full Participation
- Unlike group discussions where some people get involved and others remain quiet, all of the C.A.R.E. workshop activities involve all participants. From a learning standpoint, the theoretical grounding of this approach can be found in the research on cooperative learning and, more recently, action learning. The task for the workshop leader is to explain the steps clearly and to encourage all participants to work with their partners on the tasks.

2. C.A.R.E. skills
   Essential skills are organized into a four-point model:
   - Connect, through a personal connection to the patient and family
   - Appreciate the patient’s and family’s situation, assuring they feel heard and understood
   - Respond in ways that are helpful to the patient and family
   - Empower, inspiring patients’ confidence to contribute to their own health and health care
   The workshop, which is presented in its entirety at the outset of this faculty development course, is a fast-paced interactive program that gives participants opportunities to practice key skills and techniques. Participants view video encounters between staff and patients and work in small groups on skills that apply in a variety of realistic situations.

3. Feedback skills
   Providing feedback is one of the most important elements of effective teaching. Learners report feedback is one of the most important qualities of effective teachers and preceptors, and research evidence shows that learners who receive regular feedback learn faster, perform significantly better and show more advanced professional judgment. Feedback is also highly valued by learners. When medical residents were surveyed to identify the characteristics of great teachers, provision of feedback was rated the second most frequently cited characteristic after clinical competence.
   Participants receive feedback from IHC Master Trainers and faculty and learn to provide feedback in accordance with the “www-ebvy” model of feedback. The “www-ebvy” model provides a structured approach for focusing on "what went well" and what could be “even better yet”. Properly implemented, this model ensures a safe and supportive environment for learners and specific observations to enhance learning.
   Faculty course participants practice applying this feedback model to their fellow learners’ rehearsal workshop presentations during the course. The feedback model is part of a structured coaching model with the following steps: (1) learner articulates his or her expectation and goals, (2) learner rehearses workshop facilitation to small group, (3) learner provides self-assessment of workshop rehearsal, (4) small group members provide structured feedback, and (5) learner incorporates feedback into practice.

4. Implementation and rollout of Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshops
   Toward the end of the faculty development course participants are involved in a discussion about how to roll out the C.A.R.E. workshop at their home organizations. Participants and Master Trainers brainstorm ideas and strategies for securing buy-in from their organizations’ senior management, recruiting staff to attend C.A.R.E. workshops, marketing C.A.R.E. workshops and measuring the impact of workshops. Course participants are invited to create action plans for themselves that include scheduling workshops, identifying workshop
participants, identifying the number of workshops needed to reach staff, working within organizational timeframes and related activities.

**Expectations**
Learners are expected to participate in all large and small group exercises and discussions. This is a validated approach for adult learners, grounded in the research on cooperative learning and action learning. Learners consistently report high value receiving feedback from their peers and sharing their experiences in this structured and safe environment.

To minimize distraction, IHC recommends that learners be freed from additional work-related tasks for the duration of the training.

**Learning Objectives**
After participation in this Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. faculty development course, learners will be able to:

1. Define the four key elements of the C.A.R.E. communication model for delivering impressive healthcare service (Connect, Appreciate, Respond and Empower),
2. Demonstrate the four key elements of the C.A.R.E. communication model and describe examples from practice,
3. Practice facilitation skills when presenting the Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshop, and
4. Create an action plan to deliver the Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. workshop at home organization.

**Methodology**
Participants in this faculty development course practice presenting components of the Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. (C.A.R.E.) workshop and provide feedback to one another. They practice engaging their audience in activities and maintaining the flow of the workshop.

Participants are exposed to the theory and practice underlying graduated involvement, consistent with best practices in adult learning. Train-the-trainer faculty development course learners practice guiding workshop participants as they move from personal experiences as a patient, through abstract application of skills via videotaped case situations, to realistic application to their own situations. All of the C.A.R.E. workshop activities involve all participants. From a learning standpoint, the theoretical grounding of this approach can be found in the research on cooperative learning and, more recently, action learning. The task for the leader is to explain the steps clearly and to encourage all participants to work with their partners on the tasks.

**Faculty**
The faculty members who teach the Treating Patients with C.A.R.E. faculty development course are experienced educators designated as IHC Master Trainers. Master Trainers have extensive clinical and clinical teaching experience.

**CME**
IHC is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for clinicians. IHC designates this educational activity for a maximum of 18 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™ of the Physician’s Recognition Award of the American Medical Association. Continuing education (CE) credit may be available to nurses, medical assistants, staff supervisors and other non-physician participants. IHC is pleased to provide any necessary documentation to help individuals gain CE credits for completion of this workshop. Information on CFPC accreditation is also available upon request.

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