

## **The impact of communications on quality healthcare**

*“... this modern, interdisciplinary approach to health care sometimes highlights age-old issues in human communication...”*

*US News & World Report, Sept 2018*

### ***Why is quality communication in healthcare so important?***

- Patient education – ensuring that patients truly understand diagnoses and treatment plans, especially instructions that must be followed at home for ongoing well-being
- Patient safety – ensuring that procedures and treatments are communicating correctly
- Patient comfort – focusing on the need to connect on a human level, employing empathy
- Provider effectiveness – “Overall, effective communication leads to increased patient and clinician satisfaction, increased trust with the clinician, and functional and psychological well-being.” (NEJM, 2018)

### ***What are the challenges involved in quality communications in a healthcare setting?***

- Time constraints
- Language / culture / background differences
- Lack of interest in improving and/or lack of understanding as to why improving communication in a healthcare setting is critical for providers and for patients
- Lack of training on effective methods that are helpful in overcoming these challenges

### ***What are the impacts of miscommunication and of quality communication in healthcare?***

- Healthcare miscommunication cost at least \$1.7B and nearly 2,000 lives in a five-year period; in addition, communication failures were a factor in 30 percent of malpractice cases examined within that five-year period. (2016 CRICO Strategies report)
- An estimated 80% of serious medical errors involve miscommunication between caregivers during the transfer of patients. (Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations)
- “Human error is to blame in most cases of medical mistakes and many of these problems begin as a simple miscommunication between members of the care team.” (US News & World Report, 2018)
- “Effective communication among care team members and with patients and their families has been linked to an increased likelihood for patients to recommend the organization and to rate their overall care more highly.” (Patient Safety & Quality Healthcare, 2017)
- “Research clearly shows how effective communication in healthcare institutions improves the quality of staff relationships, increases efficiency and profoundly impacts patient safety.” (Becker’s Hospital Review, 2018)