Assessment of Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care
Disclaimer

These slides represent a subset of information from *Advancing Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care: A Toolkit for Researchers and Practitioners* and are for educational purposes only. Any changes to the slide deck represent the view of the presenter, not RTI international.

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We are glad that you are using this slide deck. If you decide to adapt the slides, please use the following language:

The following has been adapted from the *Assessment of Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care* slide deck. Please email pcc-ca@rti.org to obtain a copy of the original slide deck.
What is Patient-Centered Communication?

Patient-centered communication (PCC) helps provide high-quality, patient-focused medical care. Clinicians communicating in a patient-centered way

- show care and respect for the patient as a person;
- solicit the patient’s perspective and preferences;
- try to understand how the patient’s health is affecting their everyday life and well-being;
- involve patients in their care; and
- make evidence-based decisions that are consistent with patient values and feasible to implement.
### What Are the Functions of Patient-Centered Communication?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exchanging information</td>
<td>assess and understand patients’ information needs, to facilitate reciprocal sharing of information, and to achieve a shared understanding of the patient’s health status and concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making decisions</td>
<td>understand patient’s preferences for involvement in decision-making, to let patients know when there is a decision to be made, and to engage patients so that decisions are based on the best scientific evidence and reflect the patient’s values and preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering health relationships</td>
<td>builds trust, rapport, commitment, and mutual understanding about roles and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling patient self-management</td>
<td>help patients manage their symptoms and side effects and to navigate the healthcare system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing uncertainty</td>
<td>acknowledges uncertainties and recognizes that some uncertainties are not reducible and that helps patients manage uncertainty by providing information, support, and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to emotions</td>
<td>elicit, acknowledge, and understand patients’ emotions and to respond with legitimation, validation, empathy, and support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Is the Role of Patient-Centered Communication Across the Cancer Care Continuum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Detection</th>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Survivorship</th>
<th>End of Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing individualized, linguistically accessible information about screening</td>
<td>Addressing the patient’s anxiety, fear, emotional response to a cancer diagnosis</td>
<td>Eliciting patient’s experiences of treatment, symptoms, and side effects</td>
<td>Helping patient understand and manage uncertainty about recurrence</td>
<td>Eliciting the patient’s report of symptoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making about screening when risks/benefits are unclear or when multiple options exist</td>
<td>Communicating bad news clearly and compassionately</td>
<td>Sharing information about treatment effectiveness</td>
<td>Eliciting discussion of the patient’s concerns and symptoms</td>
<td>Communicating prognosis while maintaining hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing the patient’s concerns and worries about possible cancer diagnosis</td>
<td>Helping patients recall important information</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communicating bad news clearly and compassionately</td>
<td>Making decisions about treatment, life support, and hospice care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping patient navigate the healthcare system to follow-up on abnormal results</td>
<td>Eliciting preferences for role in decision-making</td>
<td>Eliciting and responding to emotions of patient and family</td>
<td>Engaging patient (and family) in making treatment decisions if recurrence or progression occurs</td>
<td>Helping patients and families navigate transition to hospice or other end-of-life care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Does Patient-Centered Communication Influence Cancer Care Outcomes?

- Although clinician-patient communication can directly affect health outcomes, more often than not, effective communication will have an indirect effect on health outcomes via its effect on factors closely linked to better health and well-being, e.g.,:
  - Greater patient satisfaction with the support and information received from the healthcare providers
  - Stronger patient commitment to the treatment plan
  - Better self-care and caregiving skills for managing symptoms and side effects of treatment
  - Coping with difficult feelings
Measurement and the PCC-Ca

- The Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care (PCC-Ca) instrument is a validated measure of patient-centered communication.

- Developed by RTI, the University of North Carolina and other researchers together with patient advocates.

- Based on the National Cancer Institute (NCI) conceptual model of patient-centered communication.
Measurement and the PCC-Ca

• Publicly available instrument

• Spanish and English version

• Short form has 6 items that measure patient-centered communication overall

• Long form has 36 items which measure patient-centered communication overall and each of the six communication functions individually
What Are the Opportunities for Assessing Patient-Centered Communication in Clinical Settings?

• To inform quality improvement initiatives
• To diagnose potential problem areas in patient-centered communication
• To evaluate interventions
• To provide feedback to clinicians
## Potential Challenges and Solutions to Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Challenge</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Concern regarding patient burden                 | • Use brief assessment  
• Determine optimal frequency of assessment                          |
| Patient concerns                                 | • Explain purpose of assessment and how results will be used  
• Assure patients of confidentiality                                 |
| Clinician questions and concerns                 | • Seek input on preferences for receiving results  
• Provide opportunities for training, coaching, hands-on practice       |
| Leadership questions and concerns                | • Plan for how assessment findings will be shared and used for quality improvement  
• Clear path for follow-up                                             |
| Logistics                                        | • Identify options for fitting assessment into the clinical workflow  
• Can be completed in waiting room or as follow-up to clinical visit   |
More information


Pcc-ca@rti.org