

## Assessment of Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care



## Disclaimer

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The following has been adapted from the *Assessment of Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care* slide deck. Please email [pcc-ca@rti.org](mailto:pcc-ca@rti.org) to obtain a copy of the original slide deck.



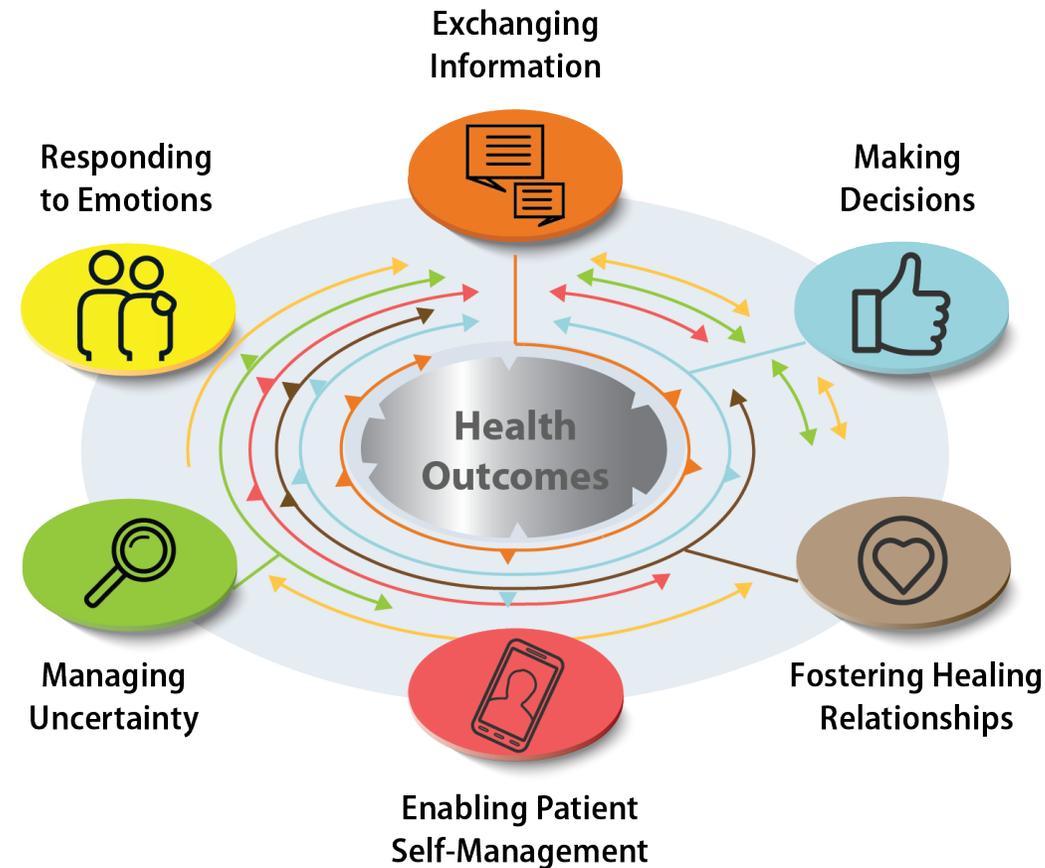
# What is Patient-Centered Communication?

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.



# Conceptual Model of Patient-Centered Communication



Epstein RM, Street RL Jr. Patient-centered communication in cancer care: Promoting healing and reducing suffering. National Cancer Institute; 2007. NIH Publication No. 07-6225

# What Are the Functions of Patient-Centered Communication?

Exchanging information	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
Making decisions	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
Fostering health relationships	builds trust, rapport, commitment, and mutual understanding about roles and responsibilities
Enabling patient self-management	help patients manage their symptoms and side effects and to navigate the healthcare system
Managing uncertainty	acknowledges uncertainties and recognizes that some uncertainties are not reducible and that helps patients manage uncertainty by providing information, support, and strategies
Responding to emotions	elicit, acknowledge, and understand patients' emotions and to respond with legitimation, validation, empathy, and support

# What Is the Role of Patient-Centered Communication Across the Cancer Care Continuum?



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

# 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.

**Patient-Centered Communication-Cancer-6 Items  
(PCC-Ca-6)**

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.

This survey asks about your experiences with doctors and other health professionals such as nurses and physician assistants. This is not a test, and there are no right and wrong answers.

**Instructions:**

- ✓ Please share your honest opinions. All of your answers will be kept private. The information will not be shared with your doctors, nurses, or anyone else who is not involved in your care.
- ✓ Please use a **BLACK** or **BLUE** pen or pencil to fill in the circles.
- ✓ Be sure to read all of the questions and answer each one.

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1. How much do your doctors and other health professionals make you feel comfortable asking questions?
  - Not at all
  - Not Very Much
  - Somewhat
  - A Lot
  - A Great Deal
2. How often do your doctors and other health professionals have open and honest communication with you?
  - Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always
3. Many decisions need to be made in cancer care, such as decisions about treatment choices, where to go for care, or how to manage side effects. Please think about all of the decisions there have been in your care. How much do your doctors and other health professionals give you information and resources to help you make decisions?
  - Not at All
  - Not Very Much
  - Somewhat
  - A Lot
  - A Great Deal
  - Does Not Apply

# 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

## Comunicación sobre el cáncer centrada en el paciente-36 preguntas (PCC-Ca-36, por sus siglas en inglés)

Gracias por su tiempo en contestar esta encuesta.

Esta encuesta le hace preguntas sobre sus experiencias con los doctores y otros profesionales de la salud, como enfermeras y asistentes médicos. Esto no es un examen y no hay respuestas correctas ni incorrectas.

### Instrucciones:

✓ Por favor, comparta sus opiniones honestas. Todas sus respuestas se mantendrán privadas. La información no se reportará a sus doctores, las enfermeras o cualquier otra persona que brinde atención médica.

✓ Por favor, para manejar sus respuestas.

✓ Asegúrese de contestar todas sus respuestas.

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### Compartir la información

1. ¿Con qué frecuencia sus doctores y otros profesionales de la salud...

	Nunca	Rara vez	A veces	Con frecuencia	Siempre
a. Hablan con usted sobre sus preocupaciones y preguntas?	<input type="radio"/>				
b. Le dan información útil, incluso cuando usted no la solicita?	<input type="radio"/>				
c. Se aseguran de que usted tenga la información que necesita?	<input type="radio"/>				
d. Le ayudan a entender la información que necesita?	<input type="radio"/>				
e. Se aseguran de contestar sus preguntas?	<input type="radio"/>				

2. ¿Qué tan cómodo(a) le hacen sentir sus doctores y otros profesionales de la salud cuando usted les hace preguntas?

- Nunca
- No mucho
- Algo
- Mucho
- Muchísimo



What Are the Opportunities for Assessing Patient-Centered Communication in Clinical Settings?

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- 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

Potential Challenge	Solutions
Concern regarding patient burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use brief assessment</li><li>• Determine optimal frequency of assessment</li></ul>
Patient concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain purpose of assessment and how results will be used</li><li>• Assure patients of confidentiality</li></ul>
Clinician questions and concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek input on preferences for receiving results</li><li>• Provide opportunities for training, coaching, hands-on practice</li></ul>
Leadership questions and concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan for how assessment findings will be shared and used for quality improvement</li><li>• Clear path for follow-up</li></ul>
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify options for fitting assessment into the clinical workflow</li><li>• Can be completed in waiting room or as follow-up to clinical visit</li></ul>

# More information

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with links for 'About', 'Practice Areas', 'Services + Capabilities', 'Centers', 'Impact', 'Experts', 'Emerging Issues', and 'COVID-19 Research + Response'. The main heading is 'Patient-Centered Communication in Cancer Care (PCC-Ca) Instrument'. Below the heading, there is a sub-heading 'A publicly available tool for assessing six domains of patient-centered communication'. The page includes a 'Project Summary' section, a 'SHARE' button with social media icons, and a 'CLIENTS' section listing 'Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute' and 'National Cancer Institute'. There is also a 'PARTNERS' section listing 'Fight Colorectal Cancer', 'University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (past partner)', 'Bryce Reavis, Director, Center for Health Measurement, Duke University School of Medicine (consultant)', and 'Richard Street, Professor, Department of Communication, Texas A&M University (consultant)'. An 'OUR EXPERTS' section lists 'Katherine Treiman, Senior Research Scientist', 'Lauren McCormack, Division Vice President, Public Health Research', and 'Rebecca R. Moultrie, Public Health Analyst'.

This section is titled 'Telling the Stories of Patients and Caregivers'. It features a video player with a play button and a 'WATCH LARA'S STORY' button. Below the video, there is a 'Meet Ben' section with a 'Cancer Survivor Advocate' title. The text describes Ben's journey with colorectal cancer, his diagnosis at age 28, and his current role as a survivor advocate. A small circular logo for 'Care of Angels' is visible in the bottom left corner of this section.



<https://www.rti.org/impact/patient-centered-communication-cancer-care-instrument>



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