

# Healthcare communication

[Health & Medicine](#), [Hospital](#)



Healthcare Communication HCS/350 Ms. Patrice Ross Introduction This paper provides information and definition regarding proper communication. It lists ways on how to be an effective speaker and listener. Healthcare Communication “ Small group communication refers to how a group of individuals who are dependent on each other share information and meanings through a common set of rules" (Northouse & Northouse, 1998, p. 196). Communication is a vital part of healthcare practice. Not only does healthcare providers have to understand the daily medical terminologies used and be able to provide effective communication skills, they also have to be an effective listener. Communication is a two-way process. A speaker that provides the information, and a listener who accepts the information being given. In the workplace, it is necessary to provide all relevant information regarding the patient’s hospital stay and condition. All staff need to provide any important changes in condition or necessary precautions needed to be observed in order to provide a safe environment for clients. In my experience as a psychiatric nurse, it is very important to let all the staff aware if any of the clients have any changes regarding their behavior, affect, or if they are having any thoughts about hurting themselves or others. It is necessary to provide this information to the nurse in charge and also the incoming shift, so we can make sure our nursing care is consistent. To provide an effective communication, it is needed to have an effective speaker and an effective listener. To be effective, a speaker needs to talk in a clear tone, short and concise, but complete. Organize what you have to say and make eye contact. It is also a good thing if you face the person directly, as some people read lips and are hard of hearing. Body language also helps. If you

have proper posture, not intimidating or slouching, then there are more chances that the listener would be willing to hear and listen to what you are trying to say. As a listener, listen without interruption, concentrate on what is being said, and take notes if needed. Sometimes, in the midst of chaos while working in a hospital, you get easily distracted. You have call lights going off at the same time, doctors calling back for orders, patients complaining of pain, family members asking about the patient's conditions. It is very important that while talking to another person, to stop everything you are doing and concentrate on that one discussion. There are more chances of understanding each other better and it is just more professional. Let the speaker finish what they have to say. Do not interrupt in mid sentence because if you let them finish, then you get the whole picture, and chances are, they will probably answer the question you had without you having to ask it. Knowing what to do to provide effective communication is helpful, but it also helps a lot if you know what not to do. You have to be aware of cultural differences. In the hospital I work, we have a lot of middle eastern doctors and nurses. Sometimes, it is hard to understand the accent and nurses tend to "assume" what was being said. Like what we all learned in school, we have to read back anything that the doctors order twice to omit mistakes. Nurses should also avoid being generic. When providing information about the patients, we need to be specific and personal. For example, we should not just write "multiple abrasions". We should specify the place, condition, and any complaints coming from the patient regarding that issue. I once received report from an RN saying my patient has swollen lower extremities but was unable to give me more information about it.

Communication breakdown happens quite a lot in hospitals. This is when the information does not get relayed to everyone in the healthcare team. Either the patient's condition was not reported to the nurse in charge because she stepped out or was with another patient, or the outgoing shift neglected to provide important information towards the incoming shift. Communication is a two-way street. For it to work, the message that the speaker is trying to provide needs to be heard and understood by the listener. As a speaker, you need to be short and concise to keep the listener's attention. As a listener, lessen interruptions and distractions. References Chitty, K., & Black, B. (2010). *Professional Nursing: Concepts and Challenges* (6th ed.). Maryland Heights, MI: Saunders. Northouse, L. L., & Northouse, P. G. (1998). *Health communication: strategies for health professional* (3rd ed.). Retrieved from The University of Phoenix eBook Collection database. Hansten, R. I., & Jackson, M. (2009). *Clinical delegation skills: a handbook for professional practice* (4th ed.). Retrieved from The University of Phoenix eBook Collection database.