

Communication Checklist

Beginning

- Knock and ask to enter the patient's room
- Address patient by name and acknowledge family
- Introduce yourself by name and role

Middle

- Inquire about patient concerns, listen, and repeat for understanding
- Avoid jargon and offer interpreters
- Explain how long things will take and what happens next

End

- Summarize plan of care and check for understanding
- Assure ability and willingness to follow plan
- Encourage questions of patient and family
- Thank the patient and family



Examples:

Knock. On entering, *"Hi, is it ok if I come in?"*

Introduce. *"Hi Mr. Smith, My name is Brad Sharpe, and I'm the supervising Doctor in charge of the medical team."* (Write your name on white board)

Acknowledge others. To patient: *"Who do you have with you?"*

To family: shake hands allowing intros, OR ask, *"Are you Family/friends, and allow intros."*

To patient: *"Would you prefer to have your family stay or step out while we talk?"*

Interpreters: *"What language do you prefer to speak? Would you like an interpreter?"*

Concerns: *"I'd like to review a few things with you, but first, is there anything you'd like to be sure we talk about today?"* Pause and listen... *"I see. So you're concerned the headache may be due to a tumor?"*

Duration: *"We'd like to do a test to understand why you're having this headache. The first test is the head CT scan which we expect to happen this morning. We'll have the result about an hour later and we'll talk again at that point about the findings and next steps."*

Summarize/Check Understanding: *"I'd like to just summarize what we know at this point ... (duration can also be incorporated here)..."* *"To be sure I've been clear, can you just repeat back to me your understanding of the plan?"*

Questions: *"It's my job to make sure we've explained everything well and answered your questions/concerns. What other questions do you have?"* (Specifically allow family to ask as well.)

Willingness/Barriers: *"Are you ok with this plan? Is there any reason you think you may not be able to go through with the plan we've talked about?"*

Thanks: *"Thanks."* Or *"Thanks for your time."* Or for family, *"Thanks for helping us understand your mom's medical history."*