Doctor–Patient Communication Survey Study

- The Influence of Doctor/Practice-Patient Communication on overweight and obese populations in the STARNet
What is Health Literacy?

“The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.”

- Healthy People 2010
Health Literacy...

- How well a patient understands
  - Written Communication
    - Educational handouts
    - Prescription directions
    - Instructions for treatment plan
  - Verbal communication
    - Doctor → Patient (Communication)
    - Nurse → Patient
Patients with poor health literacy level have difficulties that range from:

- Reading pill bottles
- Dosing schedules
- Educational brochures
- Informed consent documents
- Difficulties processing oral communication
- Risk conceptualization
- Naming medications + description of functions
- Poor understanding of their condition and management
Health Literacy Prevalence

- National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS, 1992)
  - Over 90 million Americans had inadequate functional literacy
    - Level 1 or 2 (out of 5)
  - More common among elderly, minorities, immigrants, low SES
Examples of HL
Health Coaching: Teaching Patients to Fish

- Article From the Family Practice Management web site
  - [www.AAFP.ORG/FPM](http://www.AAFP.ORG/FPM)

- Author: Amireh Ghorob, MPH

  “Give a man a fish, and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he eats for a lifetime.”
5 points to Health Coaching

1. Ensuring Understanding
   - To make sure PTs understand care plan →
   - “Close the Loop”… i.e. “Teach Back”

2. Knowing your Numbers
   - Teach PTs their ABC’s
     - A = A1c
     - B = BP
     - C = Cholesterol LDL

3. Shared decision making
   - Use the concept of Ask-Tell-Ask
   - Coaches ask PTs what is…
     - important
     - what they want to learn
     - choices PT want to make,
     - agreement w/ clinician’s instructions
     - What behavior changes PT motivated to make.

4. Behavior Change
   - Set realistic goals for PT
   - Create an action plan in partnership w/ PT

5. Medication Adherence
   - The more actively the PTs is involved, the higher the level of adherence
TAFP: The Influence of Doctor/Practice-Patient Communication on overweight and obese populations in the South Texas Ambulatory Research Network

Research Question:

1. How does Doctor/Practice-Patient Communication influence overweight and obese patients’ health habits, knowledge, satisfaction with medical care and overall health outcomes?

Hypothesis: I expect to see better health outcomes on individuals receiving care from practice with high frequencies of patient contacts Post Doctor’s Visit and who provide referrals and educational outreach to their patients. I am also curious to see if Health Literacy or Socio-Economic Status levels play any significant role in patients who receive high volume of interim contact.

- Simple Pilot study → Doctor Patient Communication Influence on Health Outcomes
- 3 surveys
Office Manager Survey

• Practice Descriptive Info
  – SIZE OF THE CLINIC
  – AVERAGE # OF PATIENTS PER DAY
  – % OF PATIENTS WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE
  – # OF EMPLOYEES – PA, MA, NP ETC.

• Resources used to Communicate
  – Brochures
    » What are the reading levels this materials is written in
    » What subjects are covered for OB Dx
  – Websites
    » Which ones are recommended
    » Are they patient friendly…? Not like the CDC website….
  – Diagrams

• Practice Needs
  – What would help your practice communicate more effectively (open ended question)
Office Managers Survey Cont.

• Methods used to communicate w/ PT
  – Who provides Patient Education in your practice
    » What is the Average amount of time spent educating a patient with OB Dx
    » Who educates the patient
    » Are patient educational services ever referred such as Nutritionist, Personal Trainers, physical therapist, Etc.
      • Are those services provided free of charge or through insurance?
      • Does a patient insurance limit their options for educational services?
  – Frequency of Contact with a PT after Visit
    » Who does the contact
    » What is asked of an overweight or obese person during this contact? (What is measured?)
  – Written material = reading level
    » Composition of material
    » Any measure for retention of Info (quiz, web site)
  – Use of pictures or diagrams
    » What is depicted
  – Emails/ TXT Messaging
    » What kind of information is conveyed
    » Is there a person in the practice dedicated to answering patient questions
      • If so on average how much time does that occupy of their 8 hour work day
  – Telephone
Patient Survey

- Demographics
  - Socio-economic Status
  - Income
  - Education
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Language Preference
  - Number of Average Doc Visits per year
    - Acute issues #
    - Chronic #
- Preferred Method of Communication
  - To Receive Information:/To Provide Information
    - Phone
    - Txt
    - Email
    - Mail
  - In the last year how many times has your doctor contacted you by one of these means?
- How do you Learn
  - Auditory Learner
  - Visual Learner
  - Written language
  - Hands On Approach
  - One time Instructions
  - Multiple Reinforcement/ Refresher courses
Patient Survey Cont.

• Satisfaction w/ Visit or treatment
  – Staff Courtesy
  – Amount of Time Doc Spent w/ You
  – Satisfaction w Care & Communication w/ you regarding medical condition
  – Did you feel rushed
  – How confident do you feel that you will follow your treatment plan
  – Is the material provided to you patient friendly and easy to grasp

• Health Literacy measure (Not sure if this is needed anymore…maybe still good to have to compare results against HL)
  – S-TOLFA – Short - Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults
Patient Survey Cont.

• Health Habits:
  – How many times a day do you eat a meal
  – What is your favorite meal
  – Where do you eat in your home
  – Do you cook your own food or eat out # of days for both
    » (If eat out more than in: What stops you from cooking at home?)
      • Don’t know how
      • $$
      • Time
      • Availability
  – What trigger over eating for you
    » Hungry
    » Bored
    » Depressed
    » Makes me happy
    » Fun
  – How many times per week are you active
    » Do you go for walks
    » Lift weights
    » If no, what are the barriers that keep you from doing these activities

• Disease Knowledge Level
  ▸ Small 1 – 5 questions to determine if the patient understands;
  – Cause of Disease
  – Treatment plans for disease
  – Disease maintenance
  – How important is it to you to improve your health
  – What is your greatest barrier to achieve your health goals
• Common Practices & techniques
  – What is the normal course of care for an obese or obese patient
  – What constitutes success in a patient like this

Take Data from the 3 surveys and use a Data query to correlate overweight or obese Patient’s Health Outcomes.
Ideas?

- What do you think?
- What do you not like about it?
- What do you like about it?

Any Concerns as Patients?