Institute for Healthcare Communication

IHC Patient-Centered Communication Series:

Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes (DUMO) Faculty Development Course (Train-the-Trainer)

Overview

When there are adverse events and outcomes in a patient's care, providers' responses have a powerful effect on all the parties' ability to communicate about and resolve the situation satisfactorily. Patients and families increasingly expect and demand providers will handle adverse events and disappointing outcomes forthrightly and honestly. Many accrediting bodies (e.g., the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Hospitals and Organizations), patient safety organizations (e.g., the National Patient Safety Foundation), professional associations (e.g., the American Medical Association), malpractice liability carriers and state legislatures now either promote or require disclosure and, in some instances, require early financial compensation when there has been an adverse outcome.

Clinicians and staff throughout provider organizations need the skill and understanding to communicate effectively when patients and families are disappointed with the outcome of care. In order to address this constructively, clinicians must understand what caused the disappointing outcome, how the patient and family feel and think about it and respond in a timely and empathic manner. This process begins with shared decision-making before the fact and empathy rather than defensiveness or avoidance when the disappointment occurs. When the outcome may be the result of medical error, it requires a particularly thoughtful response on the part of the clinician, staff, organization and malpractice carrier.

Effective communication that leads to a satisfactory resolution in these painful situations involves four considerations: the ethics involved, the need for psychological healing, understanding of legal requirements and the tort system and recognition of the business/economic consequences. To help organizations and individual training professionals develop the perspectives and skills needed to address these considerations, IHC has created a series of programs of varying intensity and depth for practicing clinicians, risk managers, administrators and others who will be involved in helping to communicate about and ultimately resolve these situations with patients and families.

Simply telling clinicians that they "ought" to disclose an unanticipated outcome or error is ineffective. Recognizing this, *Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes (DUMO)* was developed to enable clinicians to appreciate and hone the perspectives and skills that are essential to responding constructively when there has been an adverse outcome. To help organizations disseminate the knowledge and skills for effective disclosure, IHC has developed this "train-the-trainer" faculty development course. This intensive 2.75-day course is designed for individuals who will teach *DUMO* workshops. Participants in this *DUMO*

faculty development course may seek certification as IHC faculty members. Only certified IHC faculty members may teach the copyrighted DUMO curriculum.

Audience

Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes (DUMO) is designed for a variety of healthcare professionals who are or plan to become involved in training. Workshops that *DUMO* faculty will teach are for clinicians in all practice specialties and settings, and for organizational risk managers and administrators who direct the organizational response when adverse events have occurred. It is beneficial for DUMO faculty to have experience in one or more the following areas:

- clinical care

- risk management

- communication training

- workshop leadership

Content

There are four key components to this faculty development course:

- Experiencing the workshop as a participant with a master trainer modeling workshop facilitation;

- Deepening one's own skills in disclosure and resolution of adverse events and outcomes;

- Developing skills for guiding clinicians and organizations in managing disclosure situations; and

- Practicing workshop facilitation and delivery skills in preparation for leading the 3.5-hour *DUMO* workshop independently after an initial observed and coached certification workshop.

As part of the *DUMO* course content, participants will learn the ethical, psychological, legal and business aspects involved in pursuing a successful resolution with patients and families after unanticipated adverse events and outcomes. Participants learn about the **AID model** to guide clinicians in their approach to the disclosure situation, including: **Acknowledging** to the patient and family their timely and empathic recognition of the disappointment that has occurred, but without conjecturing about causation prior to a conclusive investigation; **Investigation** to develop clarity about causal contributions; and **Disclosure** of the results of the investigation and their impact on the patient and his/her care.

For situations where the care was reasonable yet still resulted in an adverse event or outcome, the **ALEE approach** provides a useful framework: how to **Anticipate** and **Adjust** to start the conversation, how to **Listen** to learn patient and family thoughts, emotions concerns and questions, how to **Empathize** with painful emotions without becoming defensive and how to **Explain** the contributors to the adverse outcome and answer questions and give explanations that demonstrate that the care provided was reasonable.

This program also addresses situations where there were sufficient problems in the care and the investigation concluded the harm should have been preventable. Here we teach the **TEAM approach**: presenting the **Truth** (the conclusion of the investigation) in a sufficiently **Transparent** manner that addresses the patient's and family's ability to understand and is done by a **Team** of people brought together thoughtfully in recognition of who and what will be needed to pursue resolution. The TEAM model also teaches **Empathy** skills for recognizing and responding to the full range of impacts, **Apologizing** and demonstrating **Accountability** to solve the problems in care that caused the harm and finally, **Managing** all aspects of the situation through to the best resolution possible.

Expectations

Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes (DUMO) trains healthcare professionals who have or plan to have responsibility for professional training. Organizational support is key to the effectiveness of disclosure training programs, and we expect sponsoring organizations to implement ***DUMO*** as part of—and in alignment with—other efforts to ensure forthrightness and transparency.

Learners are expected to participate in all activities in the full 2.75-day program. To minimize distraction, IHC recommends that learners be freed from additional work-related tasks for the duration of the training.

Learning Objectives

The content for the ***Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes (DUMO)*** faculty development course includes learning objectives for the DUMO workshop, plus objectives related to teaching the DUMO workshop. Five learning objectives relate to the content of ***DUMO.*** By the end of the program, participants will:

1. Understand the rationale for greater openness when there has been disappointment with care and possibly injury associated with a medical or systems error.

2. Appreciate others' perceptions of situation (e.g., patients, family, colleagues, staff).

3. Consider steps to take before, during and after a disappointing outcome.

4. Acknowledge and respond constructively to the emotional and ethical challenges in these situations.

5. Practice the disclosure skills in a variety of clinical situations.

In addition, a series of learning objectives relate to participants' ability to teach the ***DUMO*** workshop. Upon completion of this faculty development course participants will be able to:

6. Identify and describe the specific behaviors for utilizing the team, selecting an appropriate time for disclosure, selecting appropriate text to be disclosed and appropriate tone to be used.

7. Provide examples of research to support the concepts taught in the workshop.

8. Modify the script by generating personal examples to further explain concepts taught in the workshop.

9. Appreciate the importance of the role of empathy in disclosure.

10. Understand the role of workshop facilitator in delivery of the **DUMO** workshop

11. Evaluate their presentation skills and develop a plan for improving performance through follow-up practice.

12. Advocate for the importance of effective, ethical communication in disclosure.

13. Articulate the teaching points for each slide.

14. Set up the interactive exercises by explaining the purpose and procedure for each.

15. Utilize effective group facilitation skills.

16. Understand the patient's and family's thoughts, emotions and needs when adverse outcomes occur.

17. Apply two or more interviewing techniques with a standardized patient/clinician.

18. Demonstrate effective responses to patient situations presented by workshop participants.

19. Respond effectively to each of the video scenarios.

Methodology

Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes (DUMO) is an intensive and highly interactive faculty development course, conducted over three consecutive days at a host organization, with 5 to 25 learners. All IHC courses are predicated on best practices in clinician-patient communication and emphasize a standard large and small group learning format to provide peer observation, feedback and coaching. Early in the program we ask participants to identify their own learning objectives. We take this process very seriously and encourage participants to help us understand what they wish to gain from the course.

The course combines large group presentations and exercises with small group interactive learning using a faculty-to-learner ratio of 1:5 to allow significant attention to individual support and feedback and practice disclosure conversations. Each session offers principles, teaches skills and allows learners to practice skills in a controlled environment (small group learning).

During the program, learners practice disclosure and coaching strategies with one another and with "simulated" clinicians (actors). The simulations provide realistic and contextually relevant scenarios for "real time" coaching practice. Because of the emphasis on practice, learners have adequate opportunity to refine their own clinician-patient communication skills as well as to develop their disclosure and coaching skills.

IHC will provide each learner with a completed set of educational materials: a faculty manual (with slide scripts, facilitation guides, teaching strategies and tools), disclosure training video vignettes, annotated bibliography and a carrying bag.

The course materials include a variety of suggestions and possibilities that leaders have found to be useful. Each component of the workshop is discussed in detail. Optional ways of presenting the workshop are considered.

Faculty

Trainers from the Institute for Healthcare Communication are healthcare providers and administrators, risk managers and attorneys with expertise in and experience with the issues involved in discussing adverse outcomes with patients and families.

CME

The Institute for Healthcare Communication is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians. The Institute for Healthcare Communication takes responsibility for the content, quality, and scientific integrity of this CME activity. *Disclosing Unanticipated Medical Outcomes* is designated by the Institute for Healthcare Communication as a continuing medical education activity meeting the criteria for up to 20.5 hours in Category 1 of the Physician's Recognition Award of the American Medical Association and for nursing continuing education credits.

For further information, please contact:

Institute for Healthcare Communication
171 Orange Street, 2R
New Haven, CT 06510-3111
(800) 800-5907
info@healthcarecomm.org
website: www.healthcarecomm.org