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HIT and Communication

- We don't talk to each other the way we used to, and that has an impact on care.



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HIT and Communication

- HIT implementation alters the form and pattern of communication and information exchange
- Design problems can interfere with the clarity of information communicated between providers
- Patch-work systems that do not interact with each other, or that interact inefficiently, and lead to gaps in information, resulting in error

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HIT and Communication
Social Network Analysis

- Study of the pattern of interactions among a set of people, departments, organizations, or other social groups

"For example, physicians consult with one another in diagnosing a patient's illness. They interact with nurses, pharmacists, and medical technicians in providing patient care. Physicians, clinics, hospitals, medical laboratories, home care agencies, and insurance companies may all share a common electronic medical record system."
Anderson, 2002

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HIT and Communication Social Network Analysis

**Relational
Data**

- Who does the provider routinely refers patients to, consult with, discuss professional matters with, or take on-call coverage for?

Clustering

- Are there physician subgroups in the practice who have similar patterns of referrals, consultations, discussion, and on-call coverage?

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Semi-Structured Observation A Tool for Communication Analyses

“Healthcare is a communication and information intensive sector with a history of mixed success in the introduction and usage of information systems. Some of the problems can be ascribed to simplistic design processes and methods unsuitable for the complexity of healthcare.”

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Semi-Structured Observation A Tool for Communication Analyses

- Speech Act = smallest unit in human communication
- Three kinds of meaning of speech acts

**Literal
Meaning**

- “It’s cold in here” means it is cold in here.

**Social
Function**

- “It’s cold in here” might mean “turn off the air conditioning”

Effect

- Someone turns off the air conditioning

Component12/Unit5 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Austin, 1982 30

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**HIT and Communication
Workflow Support & System Design**

- Communication inefficiencies abound
- Edwards and team reported the following example:

"The physician in this case study attempted to make three consultations by landline telephone as the first mode of contact. In the case of consult #3, the physician called, paged, and called a second time, finally leaving a message with the secretary. Each of the three attempts at contact resulted in deferment to an asynchronous mode of communication. Perhaps, had the physician been able to rely on a single, trusted, method of communication, he could have saved time by forgoing the follow-up page and phone call." Edwards, et. al. 2009

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**HIT Design for Teamwork and
Communication**

Unit5.3: Tools to Enhance
Communication and Care
Coordination.

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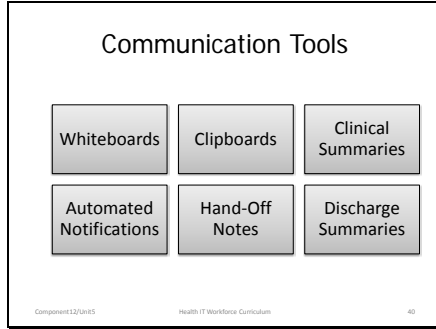
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Objective

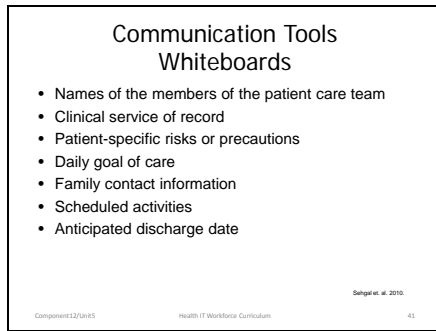
- Describe ways in which HIT design can enhance communication and care coordination.

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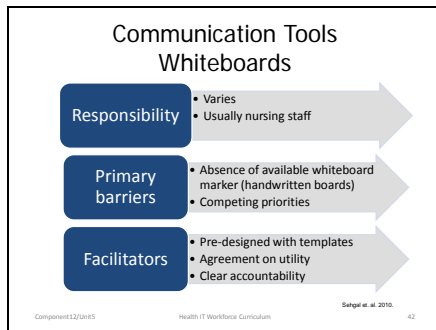
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Communication Tools Whiteboards

Manual

- Single, visible display
- Data manually entered by identified individuals.
- Must be erased and replaced as data changes
- Can use color as flags
- Manually move patient from one location to another
- Only accessible at a single location



Electronic


- Single, legible, highly visible, user-friendly display
- Data extracted real-time from interfaced clinical information system
- Able to key in variable data, such as patient assignments
- Can use color & symbols as flags
- Hands-free patient tracking
- Accessible from anywhere

Component12/Unit5 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Selgel et al. 2010. 43

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Communication Tools “Clipboard” Tools

- Paper-based
- May be entirely manual or a print-out from the EHR
 - Single data source
 - Multiple data sources
- Print-outs may require whitening-out or crossing-out non-essential items
- Manual forms may entail bundling (organizing pieces of information and taping them together)
- Both can require annotating



Component12/Unit5 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Gurnea, Xiao, & Hu, 2009. 44

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Communication Tools Clinical Summary Tools

- Electronic; designed to be viewed on-line
- Facilitate communication, discussion, and planning
 - Provider-Provider
 - Team-Team
 - Facility-Facility
- Pull clinical data from various places in the electronic health record into one view
 - Vital signs (high, low, most current, ranges)
 - Significant events, problems, allergies, medications
 - Daily goals, progress toward outcomes
 - Other patient-specific information

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Summary

- Effective communication is a necessary pre-requisite to improving care coordination, a top national health care priority
- The greatest risk for ineffective communication occurs during provider hand-off and transitions of care
- Health IT can both enhance and hinder effective communication and care coordination
- The HIT professional is instrumental in implementing information and communication technologies to support interdisciplinary care coordination

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