Getting To The Heart
Strengthening Team Communication

By Laura Miller, MD
Team-based care is essential for patient care and for institutional survival in increasingly complex times. Right now, at least two challenges demand strong team-based care approaches: 1) national shortage of primary care providers and 2) continuing care for complex populations coming to care with the advent of the Affordable Care Act. Clinics are meeting this challenge in a variety of creative ways, including with staff training.

Two key elements of team-based care are the huddle and MA-Provider communication. The huddle sets up the whole team for a patient-centered visit. MA-provider relationship, and the qualities and content of the communication between this dyad is essential for patient-focused, efficient, equitable delivery of care and services. In many ways, MA-provider communication is the heart of the team, hence the title of this project “Getting to the Heart.”

The program is a work in progress, developed in consultation with Melanie Tervalon, MD, MPH. and consultant. It began in 2012 when Coleman and Associates brought their Dramatic Process Improvement program to Long Medical Care — East Oakland. Many tactics of the Coleman Process were beneficial, but the challenge of MA-provider communication remained. Getting to the Heart is a program to improve communication between MA and provider. It is financially viable, and improves both patient and staff experience of care.

This guide-book covers an 8 week time period, in which MA-provider dyads are engaged in several conversations. It serves as a way for the dyads to document their open-ended conversations, discoveries and agreements in the interest of strengthening the team-based, patient-centered care approach at the clinic.

Thank you all for your time and effort in this project, which is the “heart” of my California Health Improvement Project (CHIP), which was initially presented in late 2014. In turn, the CHIP is the centerpiece of the UCSF-CHCF Health Care Leadership Fellowship.

For additional information and any feedback, please contact me at lmiller@lifelongmedical.org or lmiller@chcnetwork.org
Week #8 – Location Specific Learning and Reflection

Dyads present their findings and “best practices” at site All-Staff meeting. Staff will collect data and feedback and adjust the program so that it can be used for continued training and team development.

Your notes on the best practices of others to consider:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Teams develop a model for continued learning of the dialogue process

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Week 1 Launch at Site All-Staff Meeting.

- Description of the Program
- The Huddle Show — a review of best practices for the huddle.
- Distribution of the guidebook
- Dialogue demonstration.

Weeks 2 through 7

A series of dialogues designed to enhance communication and strengthen the MA-provider relationship. Lunch will be provided and time will be paid. Creativity may be required for team to find the time; each dyad may need to solve this according to their needs.
Week 2 Purpose, Values and Trust

MA and provider come together to share a meal and to speak to each other from the heart about the work that they do. Use the work book to first write answers, and then be ready to share.

**Purpose:**

I am

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

I work at this clinic because

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What makes me feel good about the work that I have done at the end of the day

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What have we learned?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

How did these changes enhance patient care?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

How did these changes enhance my experience of work?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

How do we plan to continue our development?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Week 7 Case Review

What went well?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

What needed to be done differently?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

How did trust show up?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

How did our agreements make themselves evident?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Did we learn something new that we need to incorporate?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Values:
These are the values that are important in my life

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

These are the values I bring with me every day I come to work at the clinic

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Trust:
I think trust in a work-colleague is

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Lack of trust in a work colleague looks like

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Week 3  Power, Roles and Relationship Agreement

**Power** (in the context of MA and provider in the clinic setting).

To me, power is ______________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

How can power be a good thing? ______________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

How can power be a bad thing? ______________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

**Roles:**

What is my role in the clinic?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Week 6  Case Review

What went well?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

What needed to be done differently?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

How did trust show up?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________

How did our agreements make themselves evident?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Did we learn something new that we need to incorporate?
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____________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Week 5 Case Review — think about clinic sessions together in the prior week.

What went well?
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________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What needed to be done differently?
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________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How did trust show up?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How did our agreements make themselves evident?
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________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________

What are the duties that you many have that your dyad partner may not know about?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How do you see the role of your dyad partner?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Agreements
Dyad partners focus on key elements of the clinic session and discuss how they wish to handle these elements. Examples include: timeliness, huddles, 30 second report, download, the unforeseen. Make notes on what you have mutually agreed to.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Did we learn something new that we need to incorporate?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
**Week 4**

**Review Prior Sessions and Agreements**

What I have learned

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

How I want to move forward….

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

As a dyad we have learned:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

As a dyad we want to move forward with:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Mid Point Review:**

At an All-Staff Meeting after week 4, the process and progress will be reviewed. This will be facilitated by clinic staff.