Relational Coordination: Patterns in the Clinical Microsystem

Tina Foster MD, MPH, MS
The Dartmouth Institute Microsystem Academy
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The 5 P’s

The 5 *Ps* of Labor:
- Passenger (flatus)
- Powers (uterine contractions)
- Passage (pelvis & maternal soft parts)
- Position (maternal)
- Psycho (maternal psychological status)
• Results – what comes out of our work

• Behaviors – how we do our work
What is Relational Coordination?

• “a mutually reinforcing process of interaction between communication and relationships carried out for the purpose of task integration”
• Studied in airlines, health care, and other settings using validated RC survey
• “Strength of relational coordination ties among participants in a work process predicts an array of strategically important outcomes including quality and safety, efficiency and financial performance, customer engagement and employee outcomes.”

http://rcrc.brandeis.edu/about-rc/Overview%20of%20Relational%20Coordination1.pdf

RC and Performance

Nine U.S. Airlines

Nine Northeast Orthopedic Departments
-Gittell et al, Medical Care, 2000
7 Dimensions of Relational Coordination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seven RC Dimensions</th>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Frequent communication</td>
<td>How <em>frequently</em> do people in each of these groups communicate with you about the work that we do together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Timely communication</td>
<td>How <em>timely</em> is their communication with you about the work that we do together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Accurate communication</td>
<td>How <em>accurate</em> is their communication with you about the work that we do together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Problem solving</td>
<td>When there is a problem in the work that we do together, do people in these groups <em>blame others</em> or try to <em>solve the problem</em>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Shared goals</td>
<td>Do people in these groups <em>share your goals</em> for the work that we do together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Shared knowledge</td>
<td>Do people in these groups <em>know about the work</em> you do in the work that we do together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Mutual respect</td>
<td>Do people in these groups <em>respect the work</em> you do in the work that we do together?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scoring: Between and Within Groups**

5 = Always, Completely; 4 = Often, A lot; 3 = Occasionally, Somewhat; 2 = Rarely, A little; 1 = Never, Not at all

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An Opportunity...

- Leadership interest in relational coordination in D-H surgery department
- Survey already planned...but what to do with results?
- Existing program to develop improvement coaches (eCTC); newer program to further develop communication skills (Tools to Relationships)
The Questions

- What can we learn about using the RC survey and results?
- Would improvement work and coaching improve RC?
Relational Coordination by Section

RC and Satisfaction

- Patient satisfaction associated with RC, especially for initial visit
- Provider engagement and job satisfaction associated with RC
Some Lessons

- Helpful but hard to keep focus on a specific process and roles
- Preparation
- Time/space/attention matters....
- Learning from each other is powerful
- Quantification attracted people, but in the end it was far less important than the conversations generated
- Ongoing work to develop communication skills embraced

Technical vs Humanistic

**Technical/Mechanical Improvement**
- Total Quality Management
- Lean
- Six Sigma
- Model for Improvement
- Process mapping
- Work flow mapping
- Data & Measurement

**“Humanistic” Considerations**
- Individual and group dynamics
- Communication
- Relationships
- Human dynamics
- Organizational learning
- Ownership
- Leadership
- Patients and families
Many Levels Important

- MICROSYSTEM – FRONT LINES
- MESOSYSTEM – SERVICE LINES & CARE PATHWAYS
- MACROSYSTEM – ORGANIZATIONS
- METASYSTEM – NETWORKS & REGISTRIES

Ongoing Work

- OneCF Learning and Leadership Collaboratives
  - Practice helps
  - Patients and families
Thanks!

Relational Model of Organizational Change

Relational Interventions
- Create Safe Space
- Relational Diagnosis
- Facilitated Dialogue
- Coaching & Role Modeling

Work Process Interventions
- Assess Current State
- Identify Desired State
- Experiment to Close the Gap

Structural Interventions
- Select & Train for Teamwork
- Shared Accountability & Rewards
- Shared Conflict Resolution
- Leader & Supervisor Roles
- Boundary Spanner Roles
- Team Meetings
- Shared Protocols
- Shared Information Systems

Relational Coordination, Coproduction & Leadership
- Frequent
- Timely
- Accurate
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Shared Goals
- Shared Knowledge
- Mutual Respect

Performance Outcomes
- Quality & Safety
- Efficiency & Finance
- Worker Engagement
- Client Engagement
- Innovation & Learning

https://rrcconnect.org/resource-center/intervention-database/
### Relational Coordination 7 Dimensions

#### Between Groups

- **Frequent**
- **Timely**
- **Accurate**
- **Problem-Solving**
- **Shared Goals**
- **Shared Knowledge**
- **Mutual Respect**

**2014 vs 2015**

#### Within Groups

- **Frequent**
- **Timely**
- **Accurate**
- **Problem-Solving**
- **Shared Goals**
- **Shared Knowledge**
- **Mutual Respect**

**2014 vs 2015**

5= Always, Completely ; 4= Often, A lot; 3= Occasionally, Somewhat

### Team Coaching Model

#### Pre-Phase

*Getting Ready*

- **Context**
  - Review of past improvement efforts and lessons learned
tools used
- Preliminary system review
  - Micro/Meso/Macro
- **Site Visit**
  - Resources
  - Logistics
- **Expectations**
  - Clarity of aim
  - Leadership & Team discussions about roles and logistics

#### Action Phase

*Art & Science of Coaching*

- **Relationships**
  - Helping
  - Keep on track
- **Communication**
  - Virtual
  - Face-to-Face
  - Available & accessible
  - Timely
- **Encouragement**
- **Clarifying**
  - Improvement Knowledge
  - Expectations
- **Feedback**
- **Reframing**
  - Different perspectives
  - Possibility
  - Group dynamics-new skills
- **Improvement Technical Skills**
  - Teaching

#### Transition Phase

*Reflection, Celebration & Renew*

- Reflection on improvement journey
- What to keep doing or not do again
- Review measured results and gains
- Assess team capability and coaching needs & create coaching transition plan
- Celebration!
- Renew and re-energize for next improvement focus
- Evaluate coaching

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Godfrey, MM (2013)