


**The Magic of  
Storytelling to  
Improve the Patient  
Experience**


**Session C835**



2015 ANCC National Magnet Conference ®  
Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup> 2:15 pm - 3:15 pm

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## Learning Points

1. Describe the impact of the patient and family story on developing a collaborative plan of care.
2. Explain the foundational framework for informed caring and its impact on storytelling.
3. Apply strategies for engaging patients and families in storytelling.

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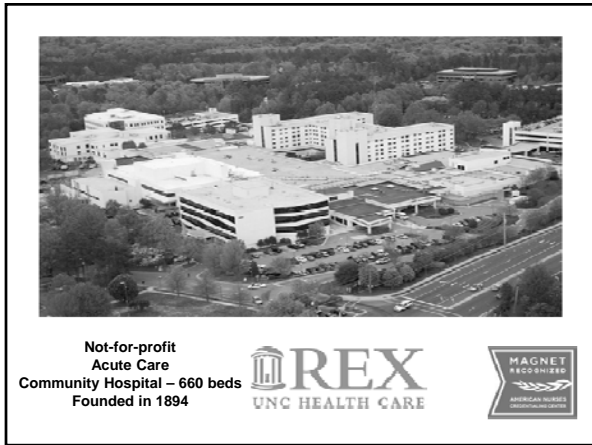
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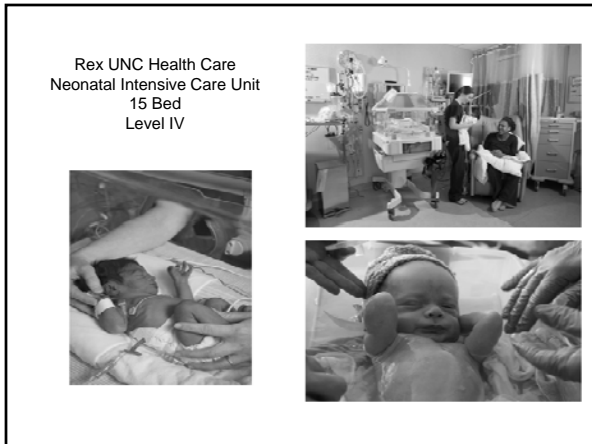
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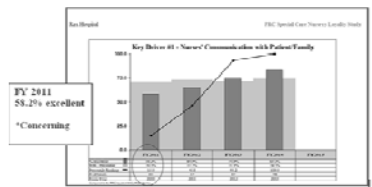
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# Background

- In 2011, PRC Key Driver #1 – Nurses’ Communication with Patient/Family 58.2% Excellent with an Inpatient NICU/PICU Percent Excellent Rank of 15
- Parent Verbatim: “Communication needs to be improved. It’s a scary time and communication can be better about what’s going on.”
- We reached out to parents that had a baby in the SCN 2010 or 2011 and asked them to participate in a focus group.



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# Challenges

- Rose colored glasses – recognizing the value of data on the parent experience and recognizing the value of the “parent voice”
- Unclear ownership of the parent experience
- No Parent/Family Advisory Council
- Lack of healthcare team facilitation skills in communicating with parents regarding their experience
- Team “uneasiness” in hearing opportunities for improvement directly from parents
- What to do with the information received from parents .... where do we begin?

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# Who’s going to take me where I’ve never been?



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**Silence has subtle but lasting consequences!**



Empathy versus Sympathy?  
Making a connection to the patient experience.

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**Four Defining Attributes of Empathy**

- To be able to see the world as others see it
- To be nonjudgmental
- To understand another person's feelings
- To communicate your understanding of that person's feelings

Theresa Wiseman – Nursing Scholar

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**Beginning the Journey.....**

Focus Group of "Alumni" NICU parents:

We asked only one question.

*"Would you tell us about your experience?"*



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### Reflections ...

- We were naïve and unprepared for the “flood of emotions” from the participants (both parents and mentors)
- Prior to the focus group, the plan was to get feedback to help us improve the parent/family experience
- After the focus group, the plan was to identify ways to alleviate parent stress and engage parents in the care of their baby
- The Answer: We needed more parent stories!  
One voice was silent during the focus group .....

*“The voice of the NICU fathers”*

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### Parent Feedback

- *I would like to have more opportunity to bathe my baby.*
- *I feel “in the way” of the Nurse.*
- *I don’t like feeling that I have to ask permission to touch or kiss my baby.*
- *Could I have the same nurse sometimes?*
- *When I come to the hospital to breast feed my baby, it’s the one thing “I” can do for my baby. I’ve arrived before to find my baby already fed. I then had to go pump and missed feeding my baby.*
- *Nurses spend a lot of time on the computer instead of caring for the baby.*
- *Can I hold my baby more often?*
- *It felt terrible to go home and leave my baby in the NICU. Other Moms were being wheeled out holding their baby and I left with empty arms.*
- *I really wish I could have experienced a wheel chair ride out on the day of my baby’s discharge – just like the Moms with well babies.*

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### Three Key Areas of Focus and Three Desired Outcomes

#### ▣ Focus

1. Transform the culture through relationship-based care
2. Form a Family Advisory Council
3. Learn how to facilitate parent stories

#### ▣ Outcomes

1. Staff trained in key principles of relationship-based care
2. Family Advisory Council formed
3. Overall Quality of Care Scores, as measured by PRC, will increase from an Inpatient NICU/PICU Percent Excellent Rank of 58% to 75%

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## Relationship-Based Care

### What do patients want?

- Listened to
- Treated with respect
- Cared for gently
- People caring for them to talk to each other and coordinate activities
- Honesty
- Timely information
- Guidance so they can make informed decisions

-Mary Koloroutis - Relationship-Based Care *A Model for Transforming Practice*

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### The Power of the Parent Story.....



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**How does the patient story engage the patient and the caregiver?**

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## The “Magic” of the Patient Story

- Helps the healthcare team identify opportunities to improve the care provided
- Nurtures the patient and family-centered care experience through understanding the patient's perception of care provided
- Supports quality and safety goals
- Engages emotions – touches the heart of both patient and caregiver



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## Some reasons why *stories* are effective in healthcare delivery

- A *story* is mentally richer than simple instructions
- A *story* motivates and inspires acceptance, action, and compliance
- A *story* has the power to engage and involve the patient
- A *story* ignites empathy and imagination
- A *story* is more likely to be remembered and retold
- A *story* opens the door to conversation and better two-way communications
- A *story* transfers knowledge and can change behavior

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## 1, 2, 3....go!

- ▣ Be.....prepared
- ▣ Be.....empathic
- ▣ Be.....an active listener
- ▣ Be.....non judgmental
- ▣ Be.....proactive



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# Start with Making a Personal Connection

- First, you must *know* your “own” story
- Ask the patient what name you should call them
- Express to the patient that you have time to be with them
- Help create an environment of comfort and caring
- Look for nuances
- Be prepared for how to respond to interruptions from outside demands on your time.



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# Facilitating a Patient Story

- Reflect on your assumptions and stereotypes
- Reflect on what matters to your patient
- Review the patient’s chart
- Ask open-ended questions
- Do not interrupt
- Make a connection to the patient’s life
- Be aware of your body language
- Ask the patient for their perception of the plan of care
- Summarize “actionable” concerns with the patient
- Express gratitude for the time spent together
- Soothe emotions
- Integrate key aspects of the patient story into the care provided
- Follow through

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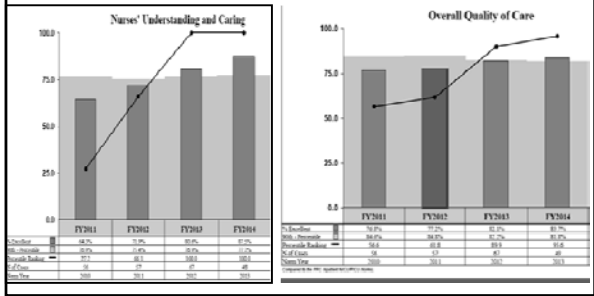
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**Is it about the score?    *You decide.....***



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**The Magic begins.....**

- Parents developed two videos to share their stories with other parents
- Parents as Leaders: leading the formation of a Family Advisory Council
- Parents as Educators: Developmental Care, Discharge Readiness
- Parents serving on Neonatal Service Line Committee
- Parents Participating in Policy Changes: Family Presence in the NICU
- Parents as Mentors: Supporting new parents in the NICU

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REX NICU Stories: Dad to Dad

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# Questions?

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