

Advice from a Patient

Posted on [September 9, 2014](#)

I recently came across this “Advice from a Patient” printed in the 2014 annual report of the [Patient and Family Centered Care Innovation Center](#) and wanted to share it with all of you.

This may be a normal day at work for you, but it’s a big day in my life.

The look on your face and the tone of your voice can change my entire view of the world.

Remember, I’m not usually this needy or scared.

I am here because I trust you; help me stay confident.

I may look like I’m out of it, but I can hear your conversations.

I’m not used to being naked around strangers.

Keep that in mind.

I’m impatient because I want to get the heck out of here. Nothing personal.

I don’t speak your language well.

You’re going to do what to my what?

I may only be here for four days, but I’ll remember you the rest of my life.

How we communicate with our patients is often more important than the technical aspects of the care we deliver. Last month 16 of us including Medical Center President Patrick Muldoon, Dr. Margaret Hudlin, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Robert Quinlan, Patient Experience Officer, and 12 clinical department chairs participated in a physician-patient immersion simulation experience with trained patient-actors at the iCELS lab in the Medical School’s Albert Sherman Center.

The extraordinary patient-actors in the program present with all kinds of problems and personalities, ranging from angry to anxious to frustrated and confused. The content and scenarios are created with input from the Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) to ensure the sessions are as real as possible.

Our conversations were monitored and recorded to provide instant feedback and afterwards, I was coached on several simple communication techniques, including how to deal with a patient that was about to walk out because we lost her blood sample.

This invaluable training is a part of the Physician-Patient Communication Improvement Initiative (PPCI), sponsored jointly by the Medical Center and iCELS, the Inter-professional Center for Experiential Learning & Simulation (iCELS). More than 75 providers have completed the PPCI

training since March. There are several more sessions scheduled this September and October but space is limited, so I strongly encourage all physicians who care for inpatients to register as soon as possible at [PPCI Registration](#). I expect you'll be very glad you did.

All clinicians are encouraged to participate in patient-focused training courses provided by UMass Memorial Health Care through our [E-Learning 4 U](#) program.

Thanks for taking great care of our patients and one another,

Eric