

# Review of the SBAR Technique



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COLLABORATION FOR HOME CARE ADVANCES IN MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICE



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# The SBAR Technique

- ◆ **The SBAR Technique promotes systematic and efficient communication between health care professionals about a particular patient condition or issue.**
- ◆ **SBAR stands for:**
  - Situation
  - Background
  - Assessment
  - Recommendation
- ◆ **SBAR provides a script that can be used to organize information for communicating collaboratively with a physician about a patient. It is effective both verbally and in writing.**

# The SBAR Technique: Situation

- ◆ **Identify yourself and the patient. Briefly state the problem, what it is, when it happened or started, how severe it is or appears to be.**

*“Dr Austin? This is Jane Williams from Lakewood County Home Care. I’m calling because our mutual patient, Adele Sorensen, is experiencing dizziness, fatigue, and reports losing her balance 3 times a week.”*

# The SBAR Technique: Background

- ◆ Provide pertinent background information related to the Situation. This may include diagnoses, current medications, most recent vital signs, most recent lab results (and results of previous tests for comparison if relevant), or code status.

*“Ms. Sorensen, has just been discharged following hospitalization for a hip fracture and is currently undergoing physical therapy to restore ambulation. She has a history of chronic anxiety disorder and has been taking Valium 10mg bid. The only other medication she is taking is Motrin 400mg prn for occasional hip pain. Her vital signs are all normal. She reports being fearful of falling while doing her exercises or ambulating.”*

- ◆ The biggest challenge at this step is in not giving more information than is necessary. Be prepared to offer other information if asked, but consider “What information will the physician find useful to address this particular issue?”

# The SBAR Technique: Assessment

- ◆ Say what you think is the problem or state specifically why you are calling and what the issue is today.

*“I suspect Ms. Sorensen’s dizziness and loss of balance are related to her Valium, which has a long half life in elderly patients. I fear that continued use of this medication will result in her falling and possibly another fracture.”*

# The SBAR Technique: Recommendation

- ◆ **State your recommendation or what you want, or ask the physician what they would do if you do not know.**

*“Can you prescribe a different anxiolytic for Ms. Sorensen? Or would you prefer to see her in your office first?”*

- ◆ **At the conclusion of the communication, document the patient’s condition, the physician notification, and any change in the plan or orders. If the physician has no orders, document their response.**

# SBAR Worksheet\*

## Communicating with a physician about a patient issue or complication

<b>S</b>	<p><b>Situation</b> <i>Identify yourself and the patient. Briefly state the problem, what it is, when it happened or started and how severe it is or appears to be.</i></p> <p><b>This is</b> &lt;your name&gt; <b>from</b> &lt;your agency&gt; <b>calling about your patient</b> &lt;name&gt;</p> <p><b>The problem I am calling about is</b> _____</p>
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Background:</b> <i>Provide pertinent background information related to the Situation. This may include diagnoses, current medications, most recent pain intensity score, most recent lab results, and the patient's code status.</i></p>
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Assessment:</b> <i>Say what you think is the problem. State <b>specifically</b> why you are calling and what the issue is today.</i></p> <p><b>I think the problem is</b> _____</p> <p><b>The problem seems to be</b> _____</p> <p><b>I am not sure what the problem is but I'm concerned because</b> _____</p>
<b>R</b>	<p><b>Recommendation:</b> <i>State your recommendation or what you want, or ask the physician what they would like to do if you do not know.</i></p> <p><b>I suggest or request that you</b> &lt;say what you would like to see done&gt;</p>

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