

LISTENING IS THE BEDROCK OF
GOOD HEALTH CARE




No one had ever bothered to ask before.

But **Maia Dorsett, MD**, was eager to find out what was really worrying her patients in the emergency department at Barnes Jewish Hospital and Medical Center in St. Louis. Was it just the medical maladies that concerned patients who showed up in her ER near Ferguson? Or were there other issues that weighed on them just as heavily, maybe even more so? After she gathered their responses on index cards that queried 'What Worries You Most?', she was amazed by what they revealed.

Many patients were less worried about medical care, and more concerned with such basic needs as food, housing and safety— powerful factors in health that are often overlooked in the rush to diagnose and treat. Patients reported unreliable transportation, inadequate health insurance, food insecurity, and “getting killed in the streets.”

That fact-finding mission during Right Care Action Week inspired Dorsett and her colleagues in the emergency department to focus more on delivering the right care, by taking extra time to listen fully to their patients' priorities, despite time constraints and administrative demands.

Listening was the focus of Right Care Action Week 2016.



“I worry about not knowing what to expect from my doctor!”

“Health care is an assembly line.”

“My prescription costs have gone up drastically.”



During the second national Right Care Action Week, October 16–22, Dorsett and more than a thousand individuals like her organized and participated in listening activities in 26 states and the District of Columbia to show their support for what right care means and how different health care should be.

They participated in ...

Listening Booths—Clinicians, trainees and other organizers set up tables in public places, such as parks and farmers markets, posted a sign that read ‘Ask me about health care,’ and invited passersby to share their personal experiences and their thoughts about our health care system.

Story Slams—Organizers hosted storytelling events during which individuals came together to discuss their health care experiences and their ideas for improving care.

‘What Worries You Most?’ Cards and Calls—Clinicians passed out index cards to patients in the office or hospital settings, asking them to indicate what worries them most. Some clinicians chose to phone patients to begin a conversation that allowed patients to talk about issues that might not come up during time-constrained office visits.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Medical residents from Thomas Jefferson Hospital at their Listening Booth; Clinicians at Jacobi Medical Center (Bronx, NY) with ‘What Worries You Most?’ responses (2 photos); and physicians in New Haven at their Listening Booth.

From California to Georgia,
Arizona to Indiana,
Maine to Minnesota....



People like...

- **Robin Cogan, RN**, organized a Listening Booth at a daycare center in Camden, NJ, and 26 parents attended. The session, conducted mostly in Spanish, exposed concerns about the lack of translation services at doctors' offices, difficulty securing follow-up appointments with pediatricians, and inability to effectively express frustrations and worries about the health care system. Cogan and her colleagues are working on the solutions. They have also shared their findings from the Booth with their project partner, the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers.
- **Jad Al-Danaf, MD**, an internal medicine resident at Thomas Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia, set up a Listening Booth in a local Metro station. Passengers voiced concerns about not having a trusting relationship with doctors, insurance-limiting health care options, and disparities in care based on socioeconomic status. Now Al-Danaf and his colleagues have a better understanding of some of the issues clinicians must address to help their patients reach their health goals.
- **Alan Roth, MD**, a family medicine physician at Jamaica Hospital Medical Center in New York, enlisted 50 medical residents and faculty to phone a patient or two a day and simply invite a conversation about an issue that they never had time to talk about during office visits. Patients were delighted by the calls, many disclosing they had not been compliant with prescribed diets or drugs. As a result of these findings, Roth and his fellow clinicians are now delving deeper into the patient interview process during visits, and some will continue the practice of calling patients.

The Findings

111

Total events

3,205

Total people engaged

231

Event organizers

EVENT TYPES:

34

Listening Booths

18

Story Slams

32

'What Worries You Most?' Queries

27

Other, includes speaking engagements

Top concerns identified from 'What Worries You Most?' cards:

TOTAL CARDS COLLECTED **690**

TOTAL RESPONSES **822**

20%

ACCESS TO CARE

18%

COST OF CARE

12%

HEALTH CARE QUALITY

10%

POLITICAL ISSUES

10%

INSURANCE

9%

PERSONAL/FAMILY MATTERS

20

Partner organizations, such as:
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF NURSING
PATIENTS FOR CHANGE UNITED
CALIFORNIA HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION
INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHCARE
IMPROVEMENT OPEN SCHOOL
AMERICAN MEDICAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION
PREVENTION INSTITUTE

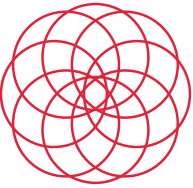
1 million

reached by tweets

Right Care Action Week is an initiative of the Right Care Alliance, a grassroots network of activists affiliated with the Lown Institute. The network includes clinicians, patients and community leaders who recognize the epidemic of overuse and underuse in health care and feel a moral responsibility to act and advocate for a transformed health system.

The Lown Institute, a nonprofit think-and-do tank, is dedicated to increasing understanding of the scope, causes and consequences of poor health care and supporting a movement for transformative change. The Institute was founded by renowned cardiologist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Bernard Lown, MD, and supports his vision for compassionate health care.

Right Care Action Week is generously sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



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INSTITUTE

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