Patient-centered communications

- Effective communication is critical to successful delivery of health care services
- The Joint Commission supports efforts to improve communication between health care professionals and patients

It's been estimated that there are more than 300 languages spoken in the United States and more than 90 million Americans have low health literacy, meaning they have difficulty understanding and using health information. The Joint Commission recommends an approach to communicating health information that encompasses language needs, individual understanding, and cultural and other communication issues. The Joint Commission’s Health Equity portal provides extensive information and resources about patient-centered communications, including:

Monographs, reports and white papers
- *Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient-and Family-Centered Care: A Roadmap for Hospitals*
- *Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Community: A Field Guide*
- *R3 Report: Patient-Centered Communication Standards for Hospitals* — Provides the rationale and references that The Joint Commission employed in developing the patient-centered communication standards for hospitals. The standards address qualifications for language interpreters and translators; how to identify and address patient communication needs and collect patient race and ethnicity data; and ways to ensure patient access to a support individual and non-discrimination in care.

Videos
- *Promoting Health Equity and Patient-Centered Care: Joint Commission Standards and Resources*
- 2016 Health Equity Forum: H&HN video interviews with co-chairs from The Joint Commission and the American Hospital Association, hosts of the forum.

Podcasts
- *Why health literacy is important for patients and health professionals:* Literacy skills are a strong predictor of health status according to Christina Cordero, PhD, MPH, project director, Standards and Survey Methods, The Joint Commission. [7:20]
- *Why patient-centered communication matters:* Patient-centered communication is critical to safe, high quality health care. Christina Cordero, PhD, MPH, project director, Standards and Survey Methods,
The Joint Commission, discusses the current state of patient-centered communications and available resources. [8:48]

Other resources

- Standards Interpretation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): addressing the collection of patient race, ethnicity, and preferred language data; bilingual providers as interpreters; and practitioners communicating directly with patients.
- Health Equity — Case Studies and Promising Practices
- Health Equity — Organization and Staff Transformation
- Health Equity — Basic Research and General Resources
- Quick Safety, Issue 13: Overcoming the challenges of providing care to LEP patients (May 2013)
- Speak Up™ campaigns on patient advocacy: “Ask Your Advocate to Speak Up” and “Know Your Rights.” Speak Up is a free, national patient safety campaign from The Joint Commission that urges patients to take a role in preventing health care errors by becoming active, involved and informed participants on the care team.