Team communication best practices

- Introduce yourself and role to other team members
- Be as clear and concise as possible
- Expects authentic curiosity by actively listening
- Use names if you can and eye contact if culturally acceptable (hand gestures may be needed when wearing PPE)

Assertiveness and speaking up

- Regardless of role, all team members should be able to speak up about concerns in the name of patient safety
- Speaking up helps to prompt team members to think of other options
- Frame communications as concerns or with curiosity e.g., “I am concerned…” or “Talk me through the plan…”
- Communicate your feelings, concerns and ideas using clear and direct language
- If someone uses direct language towards you, try not to take it personally but see it in the context of the situation

Closed Loop communication

- Check back important information – confirm that you have understood
- Provide periodic status updates to others
- Gather sufficient data to make decisions, and prioritise decisions that need to be made ‘now’
- Offer potential solutions when available

Leadership and followership

- Set expectations on roles, culture and expected norms of team behaviour to unite the team
- Listen to concerns of others and validate them
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- Leaders should actively engage in conflict resolution – part of this is about viewing conflict as a potential contributor to high performance
- Be willing to occupy a followership role depending on the expertise that is called for in the moment

Debriefing (see Performance debriefing brief)

- Actively involve team in discussions
- Use ‘good judgement’: identify specific areas for improvement rather than focusing on judgement or blame
- Reflect on specific events/performances rather than more general events/competencies
- Incorporate multiple perspectives rather than just one viewpoint

Relevant literature


From Center for Medical Simulation in Boston, MA: Simulation Exercises for Labor & Delivery w/ coronavirus COVID-19: free, open access resources for sim-based training including faculty guides, narrated presentations, team evaluations, and multiple sim cases: ow.ly/9xG65oy22IF