

Mindful Communication: Bringing Intention, Attention, and Reflection to Clinical Practice
Interim Report to the Physicians Foundation for Health Systems Excellence
Spring, 2009

Project Status:

This report reflects the period since the last report, Spring, 2008, until now. *Mindful Communication* is entering the final phase of the project. Since the last report the focus has been on the analysis of the effects of this project on physician well-being and physician behavior. The project team has completed and submitted one manuscript for publication (see attached) describing the strong and positive effects of this educational intervention on physician burnout and physician-patient relationship. This manuscript, currently in review *JAMA*, has been submitted for inclusion in their Medical Education theme issue scheduled for December, 2009.

Two more manuscripts are being prepared for publication. The first one, well underway, describes the personal effects of *Mindful Communication* on the physician participants. The data for this report has been gathered through in-depth recorded interviews of a large sample of participants. The second report reflects the persistence of the positive changes on physician behavior and physician-patient relationship measured at the end of the 12-month intervention, and again 3 months after the conclusion of the intervention. The data analysis for this report is being finalized at the present time.

Finally, initial analysis of the effects on physician practice behavior over the course of the intervention as compared with non-participating practitioners has been reviewed. These data reflect specifics regarding the practice measures of quality and efficiency using quality of care measures developed by a large local health insurer (Excellus) and the Rochester Individual Practice Association (RIPA) as part of its nationally recognized pay for performance program as well as standard patient satisfaction measures.

These data for participants compared to community physician controls have been examined for measures from 2006 (pre-intervention) and 2007/2008 (post-intervention). In addition to total cost of medical care attributed to participants, more disease-specific measures will be examined. These include sinusitis, diabetes, asthma, mental health, non-specific diagnoses often resulting in referrals to specialists, emergency room visits, and generic medication prescribing. Thus far, they show no detectable differences in efficiency and quality indicators thus far. The project team is currently reviewing this analysis and planning additional inquiry of the claims data warehouse to ascertain whether more subtle differences in physician behavior are detectable.

Goals and Objectives:

The project is meeting all goals and objectives it set out thus far. Specifically, it has collected and analyzed nearly all survey measurements of participants collected at five different times, and is finalizing the practice measurements as described above.

Members of the project team either in full or in smaller subgroups, have met at least twice monthly.

The following presentations have been made relating to *Mindful Communication*:

Intentional Medicine: Attentive and Reflective Practice Through Mindfulness. Internal Medicine 2009 Scientific Meeting, American College of Physicians, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, April 23, 2009.

Turning Toward the Moment: Challenges in Clinical Practice and the Integration of Mindfulness, Narrative Medicine, and Appreciative Inquiry. Day-long post conference institute at Investigating and Integrating Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society, 7th Annual International Scientific Conference for Clinicians, researchers and Educators, Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, Massachusetts, March 22, 2009.

Mindful Practice: A Novel Curriculum for Medical Students and Residents. Investigating and Integrating Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society, 7th Annual International Scientific Conference for Clinicians, researchers and Educators, Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, Massachusetts, March 21, 2009.

Turning Toward the Moment: Mindful Communication in the Healing Relationship, Psychotherapy Training in Rochester, Strathallan Hotel, December 4, 2009.

Health Humans: The Mind, Body, and Soul Connection. Center for Interfaith Studies, Nazareth College and the Genesee Valley Nurses Association, Theta Sigma Tau Honor Society, Pi Psi Chapter, Monroe Community Hospital, November 12, 2008.

Mindfulness in Medicine and the Ethics of the Moment. Trends in Cardiovascular Medicine: Cardiology for the primary Care Physician, Sierra Heart Institute, Lake Tahoe, California, October 17, 2008.

Mindfulness in Medicine: Embodied Awareness and Personal Renewal for Healthcare Providers. Integrative Medicine in Modern Healthcare, Crouse Hospital and State University of New York Upstate Medical Center, Syracuse, New York, September 20, 2008.

Interpersonal Mindfulness. Faculty Development for the Mindful Practice Curriculum, University of Rochester School of Medicine, September 10, 2008.

Mindful Communication: Bringing Intention, Attention, and Reflection to Clinical Practice. Poster presentation, European Association for Communication in Healthcare 2008 International Conference in Communication in Healthcare, Oslo, Norway, September 2-5, 2008.

Healing through Mindfulness and Embodied Awareness. Mended Hearts Education and Support Group, F.F. Thompson Hospital, Canandaigua, NY, June 12, 2008.

Challenges:

The only significant challenge that the project has faced is how to effectively handle the inquiries about the project. Many of these come after presentations, and are handled “on the spot.” But members of the team are beginning to receive inquiries regarding the dissemination of information about the project including the curriculum that was developed for *Mindful Communication*.

Manuscripts being prepared and submitted cannot be shared until publication. Summary information has been given out regarding the project. However, it is clear that more comprehensive information should be prepared for sharing and dissemination. The project team has discussed the completion of a curriculum guide that could be used along with consultative assistance from team members for individuals and organizations interested in creating similar interventions in their communities.

The creation of a ready-for-publication guide, although not directly budgeted for in the project, would be very helpful in approaching this challenge. The team would like to consider with the Foundation creative ways for this to come to fruition.

Personnel:

The only change since the last report was the addition of statistical analytical support for reports. It is reflected in the budget review.

Budget:

Please see attached documents for the 2009 budget “adjustments” and “budget vs. actual” excel files.