

Teaching Strategies for the Promotion of EFFECTIVE PATIENT COMMUNICATION IN VULNERABLE WOMEN

GINNY MOORE, DNP, WHNP-BC | VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING

Background

Too often, patients leave health care encounters without the information they need to successfully manage their diagnosed conditions. This leads to mismanagement of conditions, additional provider visits and increased costs. More importantly, the lack of understanding oftentimes results in decreased patient satisfaction and poor health outcomes.

Purpose

Effective communication skills are an essential component in the ability to obtain necessary information regarding health conditions and treatment plans. Patients need to know what questions to ask and the confidence to ask those questions during clinical encounters. The purpose of this project was to educate patients through the use of written instruction and skills training about questions they could ask their health care providers to better understand their health.



Objectives

1. Increase self-reported knowledge of questions to ask during health care encounters in a population of vulnerable women.
2. Increase self-reported confidence in asking questions during health care encounters in a population of vulnerable women.

Population

Project participants were women in a recovery community providing residential transition and treatment for incarcerated women with co-occurring disorders.

Methods

IRB approval - January 15, 2015 – Vanderbilt University. Two individual sessions of 30 minutes in length were scheduled for each participant.

Session 1

- Completion of pre-intervention survey
- Completion of Medicine Wallet Card from Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Review of Ask Me 3 patient education program from National Patient Safety Foundation
- Role-play application of information to either a past or upcoming healthcare encounter

Session 2

- Completion of post-intervention survey
- Description of communication experiences with healthcare providers since first session

AHRQ Medicine Wallet Card

The AHRQ Medicine Wallet Card is a form divided into three main sections. The first section, 'Nonprescription medicines', lists various over-the-counter drugs like cold/cough medicines, aspirin, allergy relief, antacids, sleeping pills, laxatives, diet pills, and others, with checkboxes for each. The second section, 'Vitamins, herbs, and supplements', lists items like vitamins, glucosamine, St. John's wort, ginkgo biloba, ginseng, and others, also with checkboxes. The third section, 'Medicine Wallet Card', contains instructions to show the card to a doctor or pharmacist, a space for the patient's name, contact information, and a logo for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).The Ask Me 3 form is a patient education tool. It includes a table for 'Prescription Medicines' with columns for Name and how much medicine (example: Tetracycline 250 mg), Color, and What it is for (example: Respiratory infection). It also has a table for 'Date began taking', 'How much to take and when' (example: 4 times a day, 9 a.m., 1 p.m., 5 p.m., 9 p.m.), and 'Do not take with' (example: Antacids or dairy products). To the right, there are fields for 'Blood type', 'Medical condition(s)', and 'Emergency Contact' (Name, Home phone, Work phone, Cell phone).

Ask Me 3®

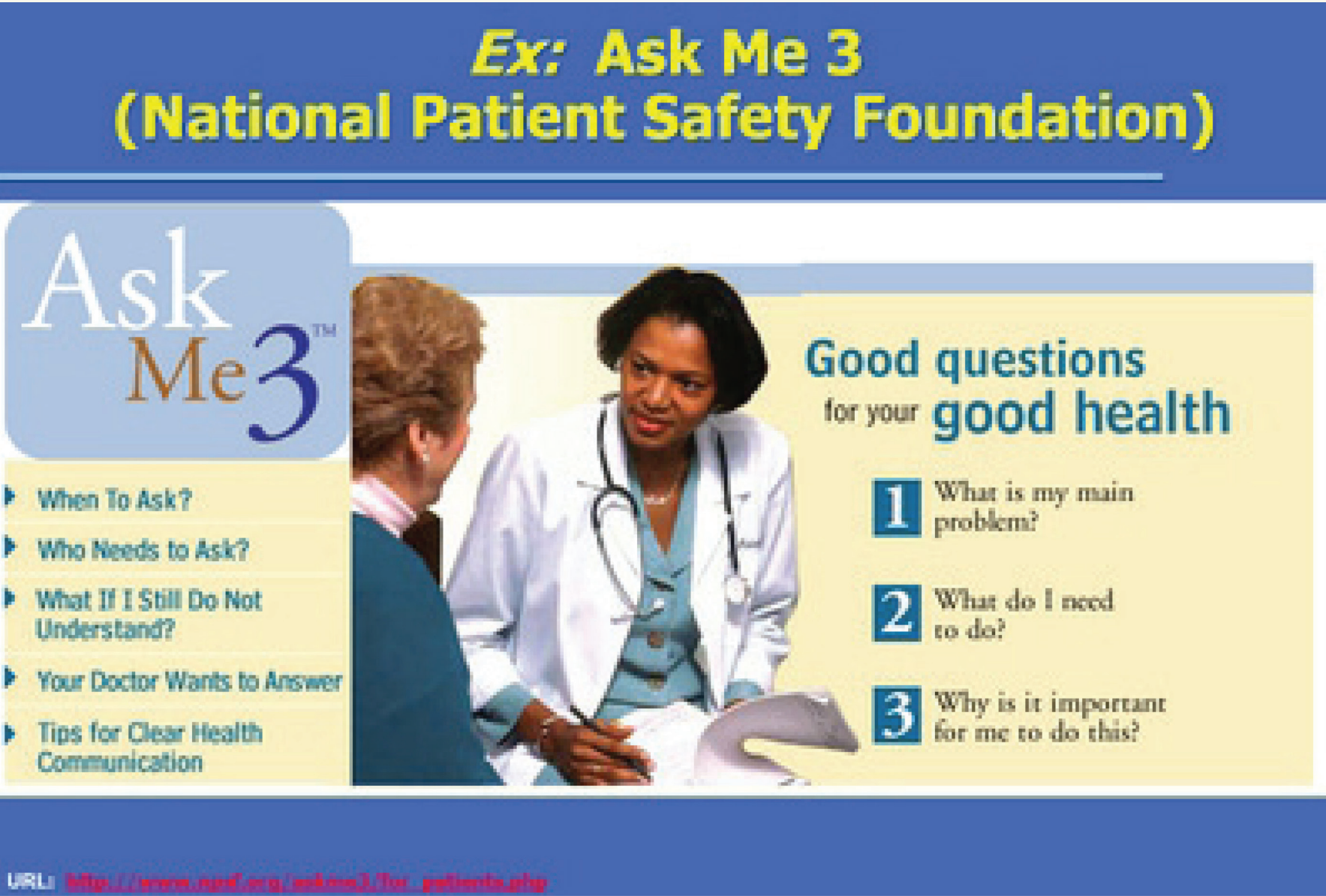
Health information is not clear at times. The Ask Me 3® program run by the National Patient Safety Foundation can help. The program gives you three questions to ask your health care provider during a health care visit, either for yourself or for a loved one. They are:

- **What is my main problem?**
- **What do I need to do?**
- **Why is it important for me to do this?**

Asking questions can help you be an active member of your health care team.

For more information on Ask Me 3, please visit www.npsf.org/askme3

Ask Me 3®



Ask Me 3 is a registered trademark licensed to the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF). Vanderbilt University is not affiliated with nor endorsed by NPSF.

Outcomes

The effectiveness of the practice change was evaluated with a pre and post-intervention, self-report survey rating participants' knowledge of questions to ask healthcare providers and self-perceived confidence in asking those questions. The survey was a self-developed, pen and paper, Likert scale tool. Given the small number of participants (n=13), pre and post-intervention scores were evaluated as comparative data. Project findings indicated self-reported increases in knowledge of questions and confidence in asking questions during health care encounters.

Pre/Post Intervention Survey

Question 1: I know what questions to ask to get information about my health

Responses	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
No	2	0
Not Sure	5	0
Yes	6	13

Pre/Post Intervention Survey

Question 2: I feel confident about talking with my health care provider.

Responses	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
No	5	0
Not Sure	2	0
Yes	6	13

Conclusion

The ability of patients to communicate effectively with health care providers has been associated with improved outcomes and increased patient satisfaction. At highest risk for lack of essential communication skills are vulnerable populations. This project confirms the value of teaching essential communication skills to vulnerable women.