

# Communicating with Urgency

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# Overview

- Why is communication a problem?
- What ways have been used to improve communication?
- What are other ways to help?
- Ethnography
- Video Ethnography

# Why is communication a problem?



*"I'll have to get back to you—I'm going into a tunnel."*

# What ways have been used to “fix” the problem?

Communication skills training has been the predominant way of teaching people to communicate better

These courses are often abstracted from everyday clinical work, even in simulated or role-played situations

Generic solutions are created for across the board use

# What are other ways to help?



# Ethnography

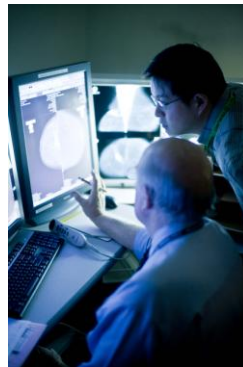
## “Teaching ethnography to empower clinicians to improve clinical handover”

Sarah White

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

Jinah Kim, Shannon Lowcock, Clare Richmond

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital



Presented at the  
International Forum on Quality and Safety in Health Care 2009

# Introduction

- What is ethnography?
- Clinical handover was identified as a problem in the department
- Project objectives

# The Problems

- Poor clinician engagement in quality improvement
- Poor clinical handover

# The Strategy for Change

- Ethnographic observations by non-clinician
- Ethnography taught to three clinicians

# The Results

- Three pilot projects were developed:
  - The “Cowboy Round” – Clare Richmond
  - Improving whiteboard use – Jinah Kim
  - Improving formal nursing handover – Shannon Lowcock
- These projects were developed and implemented with little guidance from the lead researcher as senior staff within the department had shown enthusiasm in participating in the project.

# The Results

- Engagement
- Ownership
- Tailored solutions for local problems

# Lessons

- Validity
- Enthusiasm
- Awareness

# Conclusions - ethnography

- Ethnography is easy to learn and use
- Staff are engaged with identify problems and developing solutions

# Video Ethnography

Trialed in emergency and other departments by UTS  
(funded by ACSQHC -

<http://safetyandquality.gov.au/internet/safety/publishing.nsf/Content/PriorityProgram-05-CH-NIPP>)

Positive feedback from participants as allowed them to view their own communication not just of people in their department

Could be extended for use for issues with “problem communicators”

# Conclusions - video ethnography

Video ethnography is more time consuming and resource intensive than ordinary ethnography, however:

- More staff can be involved in reviewing practice and developing solutions
- Individual staff who have problems with communication can review their own actual practice
- Improvement can be monitored over time with comparison to earlier videos

# Questions?

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