#### Creating Positive Conversations With Patients

With a focus on Giving Bad News

with MYRA GOLDEN

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# It's at the point that we have to give bad news that things tend to escalate.

# How not to give bad news.

# Where did the employee go wrong with us?

#### LET ME KNOW NTHE CHAT.

# Adoctor inspired me to learn the best way to give bad news.

# **4 KEYS TO GIVING BAD NEWS** Clearly explain the situation Acknowledge concern Manage expectations Guide to the next steps

# Challenging scenarios we'll take on in this training.

A patient is significantly late to their appointment and the front desk staff member has to deliver the news that they will not be seen that day.

# Appointments are running behind schedule due to provider back-up.

A staff member is helping a patient who is irritated because their phone call has been transferred between a couple of different departments at the health center.

A patient returns to the health center after having a discussion with their physician regarding receiving a specific intervention/ referral (i.e., prescription, referral to a program, or a physician attestation regarding disability and/or illness). The physician has made a clinical decision to not provide this patient with that referral, and the front desk staff member must communicate this to the patient.

# We'll start with keys to bad news, and move on to other frameworks.

# **4 KEYS TO GIVING BAD NEWS** Clearly explain the situation Acknowledge concern Manage expectations Guide to the next steps

## **BECLEAR**

**KEY ACTION 1** 

How: Explain the issue.

Be brief - No preamble, no fluff, no excessive apology

Be assertive -not passive, not aggressive/ defensive

**Be confident in your delivery** 

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEIMPACT**

**KEY ACTION 2** 

Why: Recognizing the person's concern helps you preempt escalation and move the person from the emotional right-brain to a focus on resolving the issue.

**How:** One sentence to recognize the inconvenience:

"I know this delay throws off your entire day/schedule...."

"I realize this puts you in a bind."

"We want to get you in with the doctor as much as you want that."

#### **ALLOW THE PERSON TO** RESPOND **KEY ACTION 3**

Why: Pausing to let the person respond protects you from over-explaining or losing confidence, and it gives them a chance to express emotions or ask questions.

How: After key action 2, pause.

#### MANAGE EXPECTATIONS **KEY ACTION 4**

Why:

To prevent further disappointment by establishing what you can realistically achieve.

How:

**Be transparent** 

**Avoid assumptions** 

**Keep customers apprised** 

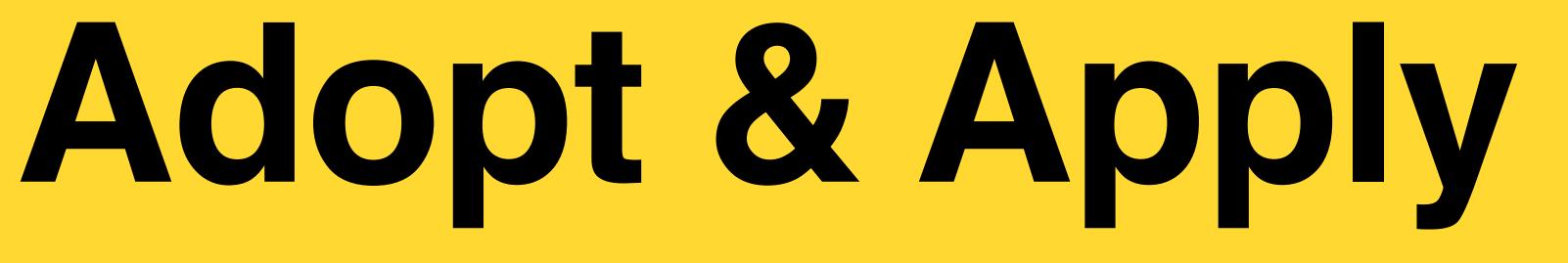
Are there options you can offer?

## **PRACTICE GIVING BAD NEWS**

**A.** Apply the 4 keys to this scenario: A patient is significantly late to their appointment and the front desk staff member has to deliver the news that they will not be seen that day.

**B.** Apply the 4 keys to this scenario: Appointments are running behind schedule due to provider back-up.

THE PERSON WHO MOST RECENTLY GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL WILL LEAD THIS DISCUSSION.



# More help for creating positive conversations

## **CREATING COMMON GROUND**

Validation

Optioning Pacing

# **VALIDATION** "It seems like..."

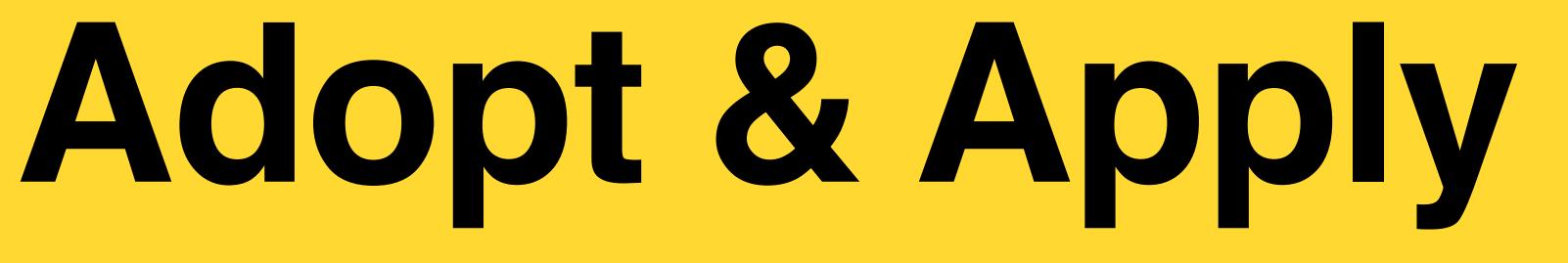
"It sounds like..."

"It looks like..."

# **OPTIONING** more likely they are to calm down without de-escalation tactics.

The more options a person has, the

# PACING Pace urgency Pace with agreement If you outpace, walk it back



## **PRACTICE OPPORTUNITY**

**A.** A patient returns to the health center after having a discussion with their physician regarding receiving a specific intervention/referral (i.e., prescription, referral to a program, or a physician attestation regarding disability and/or illness). The physician has made a clinical decision to not provide this patient with that referral, and the front desk staff member must communicate this to the patient.

Or

**B.** A staff member is helping a patient who is irritated because their phone call has been transferred between a couple of different departments at the health center.

#### THE PERSON WHO HAS THE MOST SIBLINGS WILL LEAD THIS DISCUSSION.

### Meeting un-expressed needs



## TAKE THAT FIRST STEP

## Pause & Capture Ideas



# Start Stop Continue



## Thank you!