

CASE STUDY

# How Carolinas HealthCare Trained Staff on Motivational Interviewing

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# Table of contents

Overview .....	pg. 03
Approach .....	pg. 04
Initiative 1 .....	pg. 05
Initiative 2 .....	pg. 06
Related .....	pg. 07

# Overview

## The challenge

Without key patient information, clinicians may unintentionally build care plans that patients cannot follow. Because key information may be uncomfortable for patients to share (for instance whether or not a patient can afford a prescribed medication), it isn't always effective to ask point-blank questions. The end result is that many patients don't adhere to their care plans and are readmitted.

## The organization

Carolinas HealthCare System<sup>1</sup> is a 7,460-bed health system headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, US.

## The approach

Carolinas HealthCare developed a training program to teach staff how to use motivational interviewing to engage patients in their care.

1. This case study was originally published in 2015. Carolinas HealthCare System changed their name to Atrium Health in 2018.

Source: RACE Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise, "Race In a Box," <http://www.raceconnect.ca/about-race/race-in-a-box>.

# Approach

Carolinas HealthCare trained their staff to conduct motivational interviewing to engage patients in their care. They did this by:

**01**

Creating an in-person training for care managers and health coaches who work with high-risk patients

**02**

Providing internal resources to support staff after their initial training so they can continue to hone their skills

# 01 Create in-person training for caregivers who work with high-risk patients

## Deploy motivational interviewing to engage patients in their care

Motivational interviewing is a patient-centered, collaborative communication style that can strengthen a patient's own motivation and commitment to change. This interviewing style helps clinicians engage patients by asking questions in a way that puts patients at ease and responding in a way that makes patients feel accepted, not judged. By using motivational interviewing techniques, clinicians can develop a stronger rapport with the patient and address barriers to patient engagement.

Leaders at Carolinas HealthCare System require all caregivers who work directly with high-risk patients in both inpatient and outpatient settings to complete motivational interviewing training. Other care caregivers are encouraged to attend the training sessions—but it is optional.

This two-day, in-person training uses evidence-based interviewing techniques. The goal is to equip clinicians with the skills to ask questions that encourage truthful responses and sharing from patients. The cost of a locally-offered two-day training session is \$100 per staff member, which is generally reimbursed by the department.

Once they complete the training, clinicians are expected to incorporate motivational interviewing techniques into all interactions with patients.

# 02 Provide supplemental motivational interviewing resources

To help staff improve their skills over time and to keep motivational interviewing top of mind after the training, Carolinas HealthCare put a number of supplemental resources in place. Staff can use these resources to share experiences, learn about upcoming trainings, and receive feedback from experienced peers.



## Online Webpage and Discussion Board

A way for staff to share their experiences with motivational interviewing and learn about upcoming trainings



## Face-to-Face Meetings

A quarterly forum for staff to meet in person to discuss insights and lessons learned from their experiences using motivational interviewing



## Coaching Network

A system-wide coaching network, through which experienced clinicians and health coaches shadow and provide constructive feedback to clinicians and coaches who are new to motivational interviewing techniques

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