The Lost Art of the Care Plan  
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**Introduction**

Care plans have existed for many years and are an integral part of care. Since the inception of the care plan, nurses and other disciplines often struggle with the challenge of making the care plan relevant, useful, individualized, and family-centered.

**Purpose**

To revitalize the importance and reflect upon the role of the care plan in today's rapidly changing healthcare environment.

**Interventions**

- Provide direction to initiate meaningful, family-centered, interdisciplinary, and individualized care plans.
- Use care plan examples and “Aha!” moments to illustrate successful care planning.
- Present case studies and dialogue on related events and care plans.

**Challenges/Opportunities**

- Utilize the care plan during report.
- Identify the care plan as a tool that can save time.
- Competing priorities, fast-paced environments.
- Mastering the art of collaboration with families and other disciplines.
- Identify the patient's and families needs and wants.
- Avoiding duplication of documentation.
- Driving force for providing direction for care.
- User friendly care plans.
- Seen as a valuable communication tool.
- Putting compassion in the care plan.
- Care plan is more than “check the box”.
- Advocacy for patients and their families.
- Share evidence that supports interventions.

**Implications for Practice**

- Provide renewed insight into the importance of the care plan.
- The nurse will have the necessary tools to be successful at careplanning.
- Improve patient and family satisfaction.
- Measurable outcomes.
- Part of performance evaluations.

**Language that Facilitates Collaboration**

- Introduce yourself by name and title or position.
- “Do you prefer us to call you by your first name or your last name?”
- “I know what I’m thinking, but I’m wondering how this will work for you.”
- “Tell me how can I help you.”
- “Our institution usually does ______. Would that work for you?”
- “These are the things I plan to do for your child today. Would you like to do some of those activities?”
- “What goals do you have for your child’s care?”
- “How does your child look to you today?”
- “Do you have any questions or suggestions about your child’s care?”
- “This sounds important; help me understand your concerns.”
- “What would you like to have included in discussion about your child’s care?”
- “Let’s talk about how much you want to be consulted.”

Some of these examples are excerpted or modified from:


Family Centered Care in Practice. (no date). British Columbia Children's Hospital.