

SBAR



SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation)

Handoffs of information are risky for patients and associates and require complete and accurate communication to avoid errors. A handoff is intended to share situational awareness, a mental model of what is going on with a patient or a situation.

SBAR, a communication protocol developed by Kaiser Healthcare, is a good example of content formatting - a structure to aid in remembering specific types of information that should be communicated. Each letter stands for information that is important to communicate in a handoff. The best information to emphasize is what is different or unusual about that patient or situation. If one does not emphasize what is different or unusual, the receiver will assume what is typical and usual. This assumption often results in judgments made based on incorrect information.

Situation - What is the problem, patient, or project? Who or what you're calling about, the immediate problem, your concerns.

Background - What is the relevant information? Review of pertinent information, procedure, patient condition.

Assessment - What is your current read of the problem or patient? Your view of the situation now: "I think the problem is..." or "I'm not sure what the problem is."

Recommendation - What is your request or recommendation? Urgency of action: "I feel that someone needs to come to the bedside to see the patient."