



# Transparency: Promise, Practice and Perils

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# Learning Objectives

- Define the term precondition and its relevance to transparency
- Identify at least two reasons to embrace transparency
- Identify at least three levels of transparency
- Demonstrate an understanding of why being transparent is so difficult

# Conflict of Interest

I have nothing to disclose.

**U.S. News** & WORLD REPORT  
JULY 17, 2000

America's  
**Best Hospitals**



Where to find the best care near you in 17 specialties—including Cardiology, Cancer, Pediatrics, and Orthopedics



**Children's**  
HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

Sam Dougherty, 9, with his parents and Dr. Stephen Kurachek of Children's Hospitals and Clinics in Minneapolis-St. Paul



# Do Ask, Do Tell

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*“When harm is done and the cause of that is assigned to human error, learning stops because you have found a scapegoat.”*

*- Julie Morath, COO, Children’s Hospitals and Clinics*

*“However bad the truth might be – a patient was harmed or died – the only thing that could be worse than the truth is not knowing the truth.” –*

*- Brock Nelson, CEO, Children’s Hospitals and Clinics*

# Transparency Working Definition

The free, uninhibited flow of information that is open to the scrutiny of others.

# Transparency

The  
foundation of  
disclosure

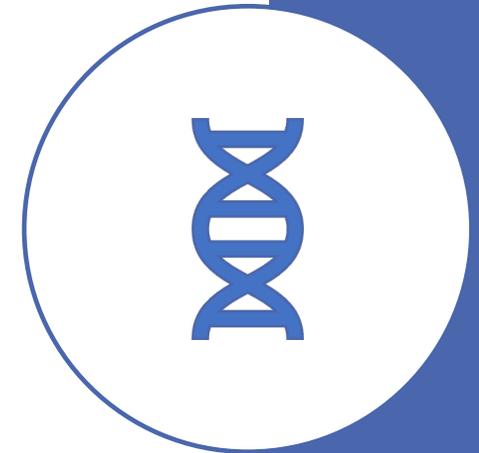
The basis for  
trust

A practiced value in  
everything we do

The most important  
characteristic of a  
safe and just culture

# Pre-Condition

- An ambient characteristic/behavior
- “Part of the DNA”
- Independent of business or budget cycles, external forces, strategy
- A practiced value



# SHINING A LIGHT

Safer Health Care Through Transparency



The National Patient Safety Foundation's  
Lucian Leape Institute  
Report of the Roundtable on Transparency

## Transparency

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- Four fundamental reasons
  - Promote accountability
  - Promote trust and ethical behavior
  - Catalyze improvement
  - Facilitate patient choice
- Essential for learning and improvement
- The most important characteristic of a safe and reliable culture
- Reveals variation in health equity, diversity, inclusion in access and outcomes
- Promotes compassion, healing and psychological safety

Source: Lucian Leape Institute Roundtable, National Patient Safety Foundation 2015.

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.npsf.org/resource/resmgr/LLI/Shining-a-Light\\_Transparency.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.npsf.org/resource/resmgr/LLI/Shining-a-Light_Transparency.pdf)

# 5 Levels of Transparency

- With patients/families
- With colleagues
- Within organizations
- Between organizations
- With the public

# The Spectrum of Transparency Practices

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Multiple Practices at each Level

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Mutually Reinforcing

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Lack consistent and reliable Processes, Education,  
Training, Evaluation

# Shared Vision with Variations in Implementation



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# With Patients and Families

- To promote trust, ethical care, and culture
- Disclosure in the event of error or harm.
- Comprehensive Communication and Resolution Program.
- Professional skill and responsibility
- Principles and Policy guidance
- Training and education

# With Colleagues

- To promote trust and ethical care
- Advance learning and improvement
- An accepted dimension of professional practice

The NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL of MEDICINE

## SOUNDING BOARD

### **Talking with Patients about Other Clinicians' Errors**

Thomas H. Gallagher, M.D., Michelle M. Mello, J.D., Ph.D., Wendy Levinson, M.D.,  
Matthew K. Wynia, M.D., M.P.H., Ajit K. Sachdeva, M.D., Lois Snyder Sulmasy, J.D.,  
Robert D. Truog, M.D., James Conway, M.A., Kathleen Mazor, Ed.D., Alan Lembitz, M.D.,  
Sigall K. Bell, M.D., Lauge Sokol-Hessner, M.D., Jo Shapiro, M.D.,  
Ann-Louise Puopolo, B.S.N., R.N., and Robert Arnold, M.D.

# Within the Organization

- Culture of respect and psychological safety
- Policy and procedures
- Learning to predict and prevent
- Timely and robust RCA<sup>2</sup>
- Daily Huddles
- Communication of Lessons Learned

# Across Organizations

- Learning and improvement
- Collaboratives, curriculum, tools, methods
- Leverage Patient Safety Organizations (PSO)
- Alignment for national healthcare system
- Alignment and collaboration, when possible, with legal, regulatory, insurance, and payor organizations.

# With the Public

- Accountability
- Website posting of performance information
- National Research Agenda

# The Perils:

Why is  
Transparency  
so Difficult?

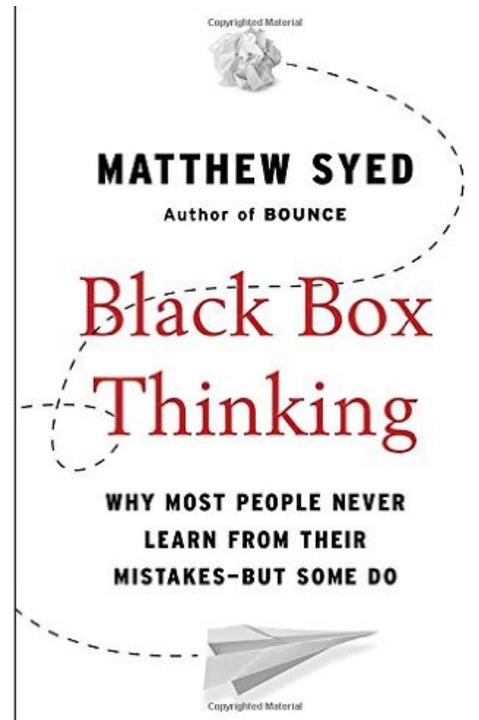
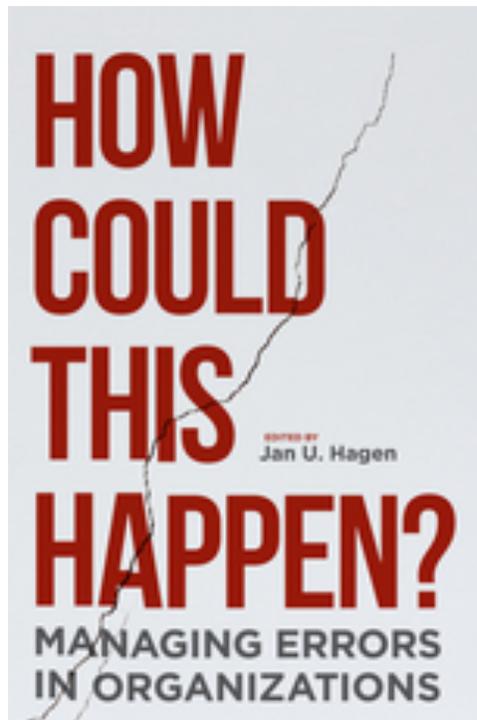
- Cultural response to failure in healthcare
- Secrecy is built into our system
- It is culturally, strategically, and technically difficult
- We're human
  - Cognitive biases
  - Fear of failure
  - Fear of judgment, shame, ridicule, negative consequences
- Measurement and performance information is often "weaponized" and used for purposes that does not serve improvement and engagement
- Risk of Provider/ caregiver reputation and license to practice their profession or even face criminal charges

# Transparency in the Face of Failure

- Includes:
  - Planned action not completed
  - Wrong plan
  - Errors/mistakes/lapses leading to unintended events
  - Omissions
- Human tendencies become magnified when there is harm
  - Attribution
  - Blame, shame, guilt
  - Cognitive biases
- System focus is not yet the norm
- Honesty and truth-telling to disclose is an ethical obligation
- Limited transparency promote distrust, damaged relationships, increased litigation, missed opportunities to learn and improve, and leaves emotional damage



# Learning From Failure through Transparency



# Performance Is In the Headlines

## Danger that sensational detracts from systematic

CAPITAL PUBLIC RADIO news arts & life music programs

shots HEALTH NEWS FROM NPR

TREATMENTS

Medical Errors Are No. 3 Cause Of U.S Deaths, Researchers Say

3:47

May 3, 2016 - 6:31 PM ET  
Heard on Morning Edition

Download Embed

MARSHALL ALLEN OLGA PIERCE

American Hospital Association®  
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### QUALITY IS THE CENTER OF PATIENT CARE

**Building healthy communities is a team sport.** Hospitals and health systems must involve patients, their families, local communities and the nation to improve individual and community health. And what characterizes the very best in health care? Quality – providing the safest, highest quality care possible for patients in all settings.

The AHA/HRET Hospital Engagement Network (HEN) has worked with more than 1,500 hospitals on specific areas of focus including reducing early elective deliveries, health care-acquired infections and readmissions.

*The AHA is committed to building on these successes, leading to better care and reduced costs for everyone.*

From the *Los Angeles Times*

## State found lapses in infection control

By Melody Petersen  
May 15, 2016

**Patient accuses Yale doctors of cover-up, removing wrong body part**  
By [Elizabeth Cohen](#), Senior Medical Correspondent, CNN Health

### Modern Healthcare

The leader in healthcare business news, research & data

Providers Insurance Government Finance Technology

#### IRS affirms board accountability

Not-for-profits are warned not to take rules lightly

By Cinda Becker | February 12, 2007

The Internal Revenue Service cast its attention on the governing boards of tax-exempt organizations, distributing guidelines earlier this month that contained no real surprises but nevertheless confirmed the notion that not-for-profit boards are going to be held fully accountable for their organizations' transparency and ethics.

## Trustee.

Governance Quality/Patient Safety Trustee Resources Magazine

Home » How to Create a Better Board-CEO Relationship

### How to Create a Better Board-CEO Relationship

06.08.15 by Bob Murphy R.N.

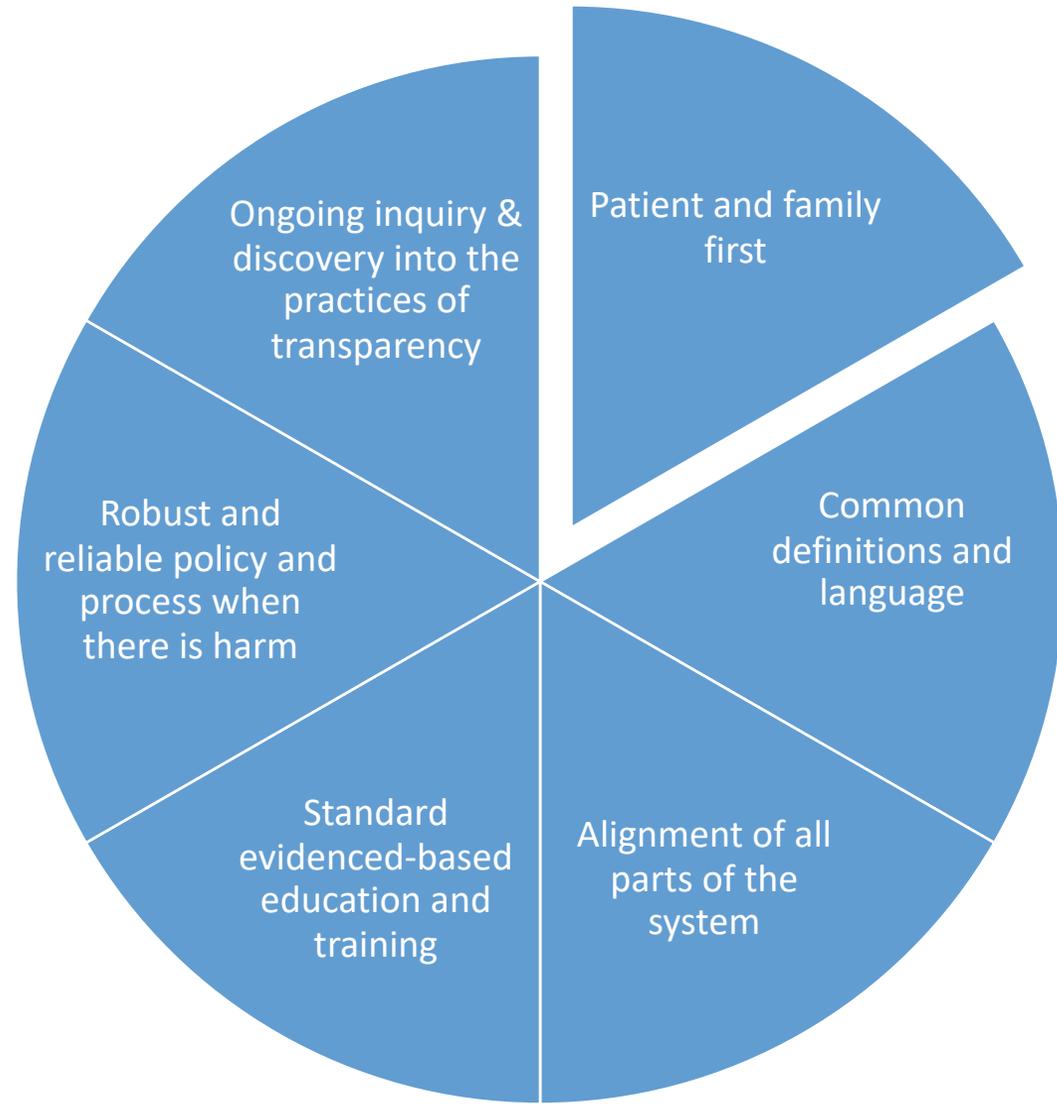
Effective board-CEO relationships are built on four best practices.

Snapshot

A positive relationship between the board and CEO is a prerequisite for hospital and health system success. Frequent, candid communication, alignment in goals, productive meetings and continuous learning strengthen this important partnership.

The best board-CEO relationships are greater than the sum of their parts. Working together, the board and CEO can foster a mission-driven culture throughout the organization, inspiring clinicians and staff to deliver high-quality, compassionate care consistently. They can make courageous decisions in the community's best interest, and they can develop innovative strategies to sustain long-term success.

# Consider this ....





Transparency is required to transform the health care experience.

Transparency is a skill that requires policy guidance, education and coaching

Transparency can create pathways for the workforce to find and sustain job meaning in their work

Transparency is a basis to mitigate the asymmetry in information and align actions

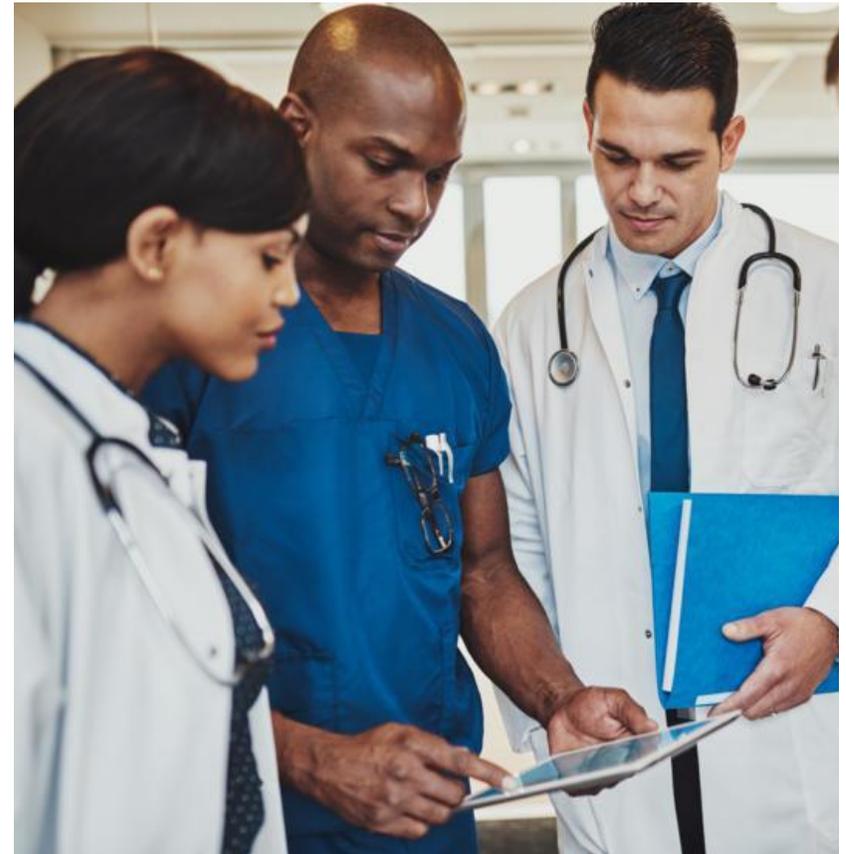
It is the right thing to do for ethical healthcare.

# Final Thoughts

## This is hard work and requires reflection

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- How would you expect and want to be treated?
- Do you talk about transparency as a value with others in healthcare?
- Do you have limits in tolerance that transparency may evoke?
- What is the worst imaginable consequence with transparency in practice?
- What do you need to better understand the role and promise of transparency as guideposts for future research?
- Is this the time?



# Final Comments