A trusting relationship with patients and their families is built on open, honest communication. However, today's health care environment makes good communication among patients, families, and caregivers harder and harder to achieve. Hospital stays are shorter, medical care is more technologically complex, resources are constrained, and there is a growing need for patients and families to have more information about, and involvement in, care decisions.

This Web Site is one of the resources the AHA supports to help hospitals do a better job communicating to patients and their families.

The Patient Care Partnership: Understanding Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities
Replacing the AHA's Patients' Bill of Rights, this plain language brochure informs patients about what they should expect during their hospital stay with regard to their rights and responsibilities. The brochure is available in multiple languages.

Strategies for Leadership: Improving Communications with Patients and Families. A Blueprint for Action
This organizational assessment will help evaluate how hospitals are doing at communicating with patients and families. Also, this workbook includes several real-world examples of "best practices" from the field.

Five Steps to Safer Care
Developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and supported by the AHA and the American Medical Association, this consumer poster succinctly summarizes the five steps patients can take to ensure safer care. Available in English and Spanish versions.

Patient Friendly Billing®
The PATIENT FRIENDLY BILLING ® Project is a collaborative endeavor spearheaded by HFMA, with support from the American Hospital Association, the Medical Group Management Association, providers, and other interested parties to promote clear, concise, and correct patient-friendly financial communications.

Communicating Outcomes to Patients
Developed by the Minnesota Hospital Association, this booklet discusses principles, and common terminology that hospitals can use to craft their own in-depth policies on communicating outcomes to patients and families.

For more information, please visit the AHA website at
http://www.aha.org/aha/issues/Communicating-With-Patients/index.html