

# Tell Me in Your Own Words:

Bringing Teach Back to Life in a Health System



Webinar Series

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# Tell Me in Your Own Words: Bringing Teach Back to Life in a Health System



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Patient & Family Health Education



**Mike Puchtler**  
Patient Experience



# Objectives

- Describe the framework for systemwide adoption of Teach Back in promoting patient understanding.
- Illustrate program development milestones, potential leading indicators and key drivers for sustainment of Teach Back



# Serving Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey

- Newark Campus
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- Cecil County Campus
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*ChristianaCare | GoHealth  
Urgent Care Centers*

*Practices & Locations*



12,181  
*Caregivers*



3,922  
*Nurses and  
Care Technicians*



850  
*Medical Group  
Clinicians*



281  
*Residents &  
Fellows*



*ChristianaCare Volunteers*

# Our Extraordinary People



# We serve together guided by our values

## Love & Excellence

We anticipate the needs of others and help with compassion and generosity.

We embrace diversity and show respect to everyone.

We listen actively, seek to understand and assume good intentions.

We tell the truth with courage and empathy.

We accept responsibility for our attitudes and actions.

We commit to being exceptional today and even better tomorrow.

We use resources wisely and effectively.

We seek new knowledge, ask for feedback, and are open to change.

We are curious and continuously look for ways to innovate.

We are true to our word and follow through on our commitments.



# Why Teach Back?

# A clinical intervention

## Negative Outcomes

When patients don't understand or remember the plan  
it impacts their health

- Increased preventable emergency visits
- Increased preventable hospital admissions
- Increased patient medication errors
- Increased mortality
- Missed follow-up services & tests
- Decreased use of preventative services
- Poor management of chronic conditions
- Poor understanding of nutrition labels



# Costs of Not Using Teach Back

Operational gains to be made

Teach-Back Not Used

Time spent on after visit questions

Time spent on subsequent avoidable visits

Patient's time calling, returning, waiting & worrying

Patient's negative experience & outcomes

Teach-Back Used

A few minutes to confirm understanding of important info and next steps

Costs



# The Experience Lens

## What do patients say?

*...And I think they should explain the risk to patients for any drug they prescribe without patients needing to ask if there are any risk.*

*...I was just given the discharge paper and explained nothing about them.*

*...I would have wished for even MORE information about my condition and options made available to me at this first appointment.*

*...I wouldn't explain the newborn book to mothers RIGHT AFTER surgery/delivery. I was so out of it, and I felt like I wasn't in the right head space to absorb the information in that rather good notebook.*

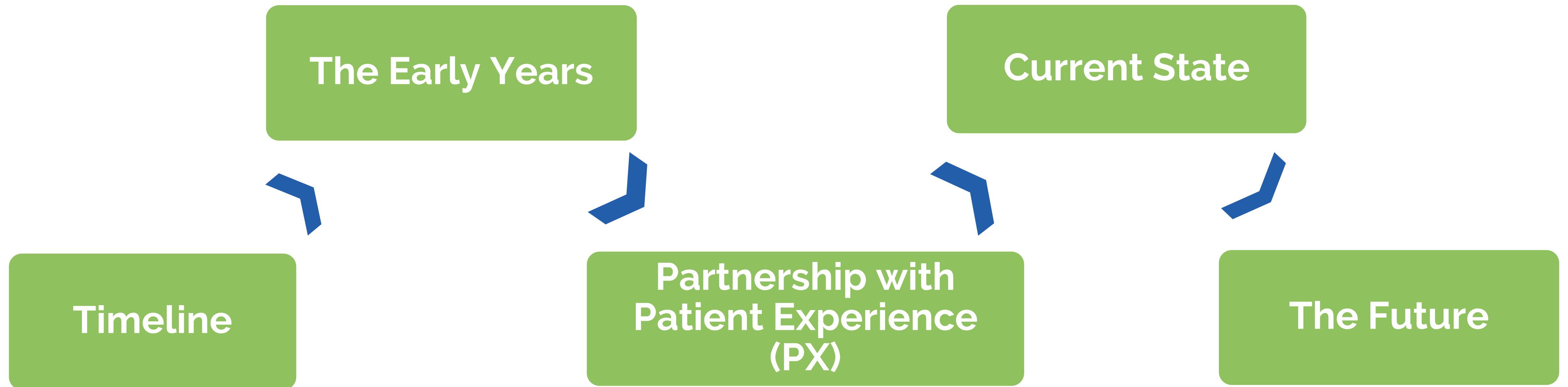
*...I felt very rushed and unorganized and could have probably used some more education prior to leaving.*



# Teach Back at ChristianaCare



# Tell me in your own words





# Teach Back & Health Literacy

**2017**

**2019**


**2021**

- Health Literacy Strategic Plan
- Partnership with Patient Experience
- Sustainment & Growth



# In the beginning

# Promotional Materials



**Always Use Teach-back!**

*Teach-back is a way to make sure you explained information clearly.*

→ **Ask** —  
the patient or family member to explain information back in their own words.

↙ **Use** ←  
open-ended questions and a caring tone and posture.

**Confirm**  
if they are able to teach-back. If not, **try explaining again** and re-check with teach-back.

## Health starts with HEALTH LITERACY

- ▶ Prioritize information
- ▶ Use plain language
- ▶ Avoid medical jargon
- ▶ Include support person
- ▶ Use *Teach-Back* to confirm understanding



Co-Branded Business Cards

**9** out of **10 Adults** may lack the skills needed to **manage their health and prevent disease.**

*This can impact:*

- health outcomes
- emergency care use
- healthcare costs
- medication adherence
- mortality rates
- hospitalizations




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Abrams MA, Rita S, Kurtz-Ross S, Nielsen G. Always Use Teach-back! Toolkit. 2012. [www.teachbacktraining.org](http://www.teachbacktraining.org); Berkman, N. D., Sheridan, S. L., Donahue, K. E., Halperin, D. J., Viera, A., Crotty, K., ... & Tan, E. (2011). Health literacy interventions and outcomes: an updated systematic review. Evidence report/technology assessment, 199, 1-941; Kunic, M., Greenberg, E., Jin, Y., & Paulsen, C. (2006). The Health Literacy of America's Adults: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy. NCES 2006-483. National Center for Education Statistics; Rikard, R. V., Thompson, M. S., McKinney, J., & Brachamp, A. (2016). Examining health literacy disparities in the United States: a third look at the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL). BMC public health, 16(1), 975; Schilling, D., Plette, J., Grumbach, K., Wang, F., Wilson, C., Dahar, C., & Birdman, A. B. (2003). Closing the loop: physician communication with diabetic patients who have low health literacy. Archives of internal medicine, 163(1), 83-90. U.S.D.H.H.S. (2018) Quick guide to health literacy.

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# Framework for the long-term

## Level 3: Behavior

The degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job

## Required Drivers

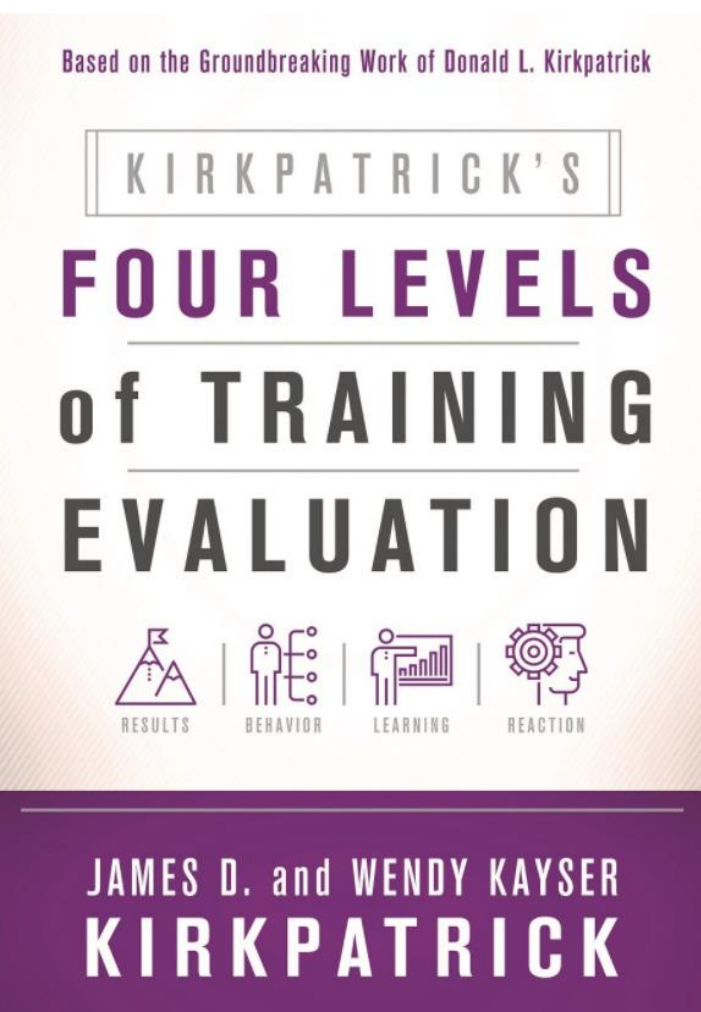
Robust, multimodal Teach Back Curriculum  
Leader Train-the-Observer Series  
1:1 Rounding with Real Time Development  
Interprofessional Onboarding  
Regional Academic Curriculum Collaboration  
Recognition Programs  
Preceptor Evaluation of Practice

## Level 4: Results

The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training and the support and accountability package

## Leading Indicators

Teach Back Patient Survey Data  
Staff Observation Data  
Patient Portal Utilization  
Readmission/Outcome Data  
Event Reporting Data  
Teach Back Documentation  
Education Content Utilization Data





# Early impact

Influence Leaders	Influence Process	Influence Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health Literacy Month National speakers</li><li>• Provider Peer Champion - Medical Director of Patient &amp; Family Health Education</li><li>• Expand Patient Ed Team</li><li>• Critical Partners</li><li>• Educate Nursing Professional Governance practice councils</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directly incorporate Teach Back into EHR documentation</li><li>• Redesign and standardize learning needs assessments, create model for teaching and discharge process</li><li>• Evaluate vendor content for health literacy</li><li>• Include Teach Back in Nursing Bundle</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase internal communication with Always Use Teach Back examples</li><li>• Promotional materials and resource website</li><li>• Increase presentation venues beyond nursing orientation</li><li>• Start skills practice workshops</li><li>• Nursing observations and skill assessments</li></ul>



# Always Use Teach-back

# PX Partnership & System Rollout

- **Background**

- Improved patient outcomes, experience and understanding
- PX focus on evidence-based practice
- Significant opportunities in “Communication” domains

- **Rollout Plan**

- Nursing practice council presentations
- Web Lesson Video to clinicians
- PX survey question
- Standardized patients to train observers
- Observation rounds
- Huddle integration
- Simulation opportunities this fall!



**After giving you information about your care,  
were you asked to demonstrate or explain things back  
in your own words?**



# What's your baseline?

QUESTION: Teach back

Group	YTD	Last 3 Months	Last Month	n-size
Rehab Services	72.4	74.3	73.5	2,524
Advanced Primary Care	71.2	72.5	88.2	297
Behavioral Health	64.3	65.5	65.4	2,953
Surgical Services	58.0	57.5	56.0	11,850
Primary Care	56.9	56.7	56.4	51,961
Neurosciences	56.0	57.7	52.4	445
Ambulatory Pediatrics	58.0	59.9	62.8	2,448
Consultative Specialties	54.3	55.3	54.4	25,229
Consultative Surgical Specialt	55.4	54.8	54.6	1,470
Unassigned	53.7	53.7	52.5	2,027
Medical	50.5	51.2	50.3	3,418
Cancer	52.7	53.2	52.8	10,183

Teach back	52.5	52.7	52.5	177,906
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What is a  
reasonable  
expectation?

# Standardized Patients



# Cipher Observation Tool



*"I want to make sure  
I explained things clearly."*

◀ Search 2:44 PM 29%

Back Kristen Callaghan Submit

Q Jump to question

Teach Back

Teach-Back Prompt

One-Ended & Non-Shaming

Avoiding Yes/No Questions

Take Responsibility

Explain & Check Again

Teach Back Observation Rounding 0/14 X

Round

History

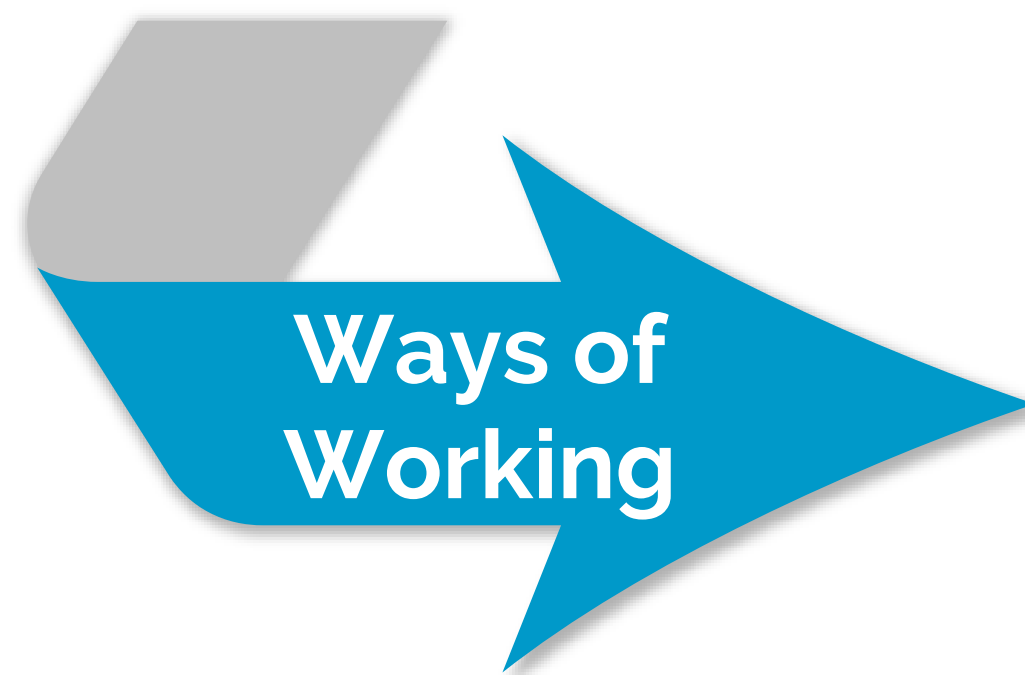
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Info



# Empowering Caregivers

**Making  
Tomorrow  
Happen**



**Share Teach Back success stories  
and highlight best practices**

- **Huddle tips**
- **Recognition**
- **Real-time practice improvement**

# When is Teach-Back Used?

## Add More Moments



Start

with one moment.

When that feels natural

add another important moment.

Keep adding moments to your practice.

Soon it will be a normal part of your conversation

and become the foundation of understanding and confidence

that your patients need to be safe, healthy & achieve positive outcomes.



# Teach-Back “Words That Work”

- We reviewed a lot of information and I want to make sure I was clear. Can you tell me in your own words what you should do when you get home?
- Since your wife isn't here with you to get these instructions, can you tell me how you will explain things to her later?
- Many parents have trouble understanding this information. Would you tell me how to make sure your baby is safe when you put him to sleep?
- Just to be safe, can you explain to me when you should call 9-1-1 for emergency help?
- What questions do you have for me?
- What would you like to know more about?



# Teach-Back “Words That Work”

## Non-Invasive Services

At ChristianaCare, we like to make sure that you have all the information you need and that you know what your next steps are.

So, to be sure I explained things clearly, can you tell me in your own words what your next steps are now that your test is complete?



# Teach-Back Times

This feedback was received on an NRC survey response in April 2021 from a ChristianaCare patient of Dr. Candacy George of Carneys Point Primary Care.

*Candacy George was great! ... She explained everything to me of her concerns, testing, she listened, and I liked that she asked me to repeat my care to share with my family so she knew I was listening to the next steps of action. ... She took her service level to a 10 plus in my book!*



# Teach-Back Social Media

[← Back to Home](#)



**ChristianaCare**

Serving Together · an hour ago

## Teach-Back Success Story



Teach-back is a tool to successfully encourage clear communication with patients. Using teach-back, you learn immediately whether you explained information clearly by asking someone to explain things back using their own words. Teach-back works.

This feedback about Teach-back was received from a patient recently on an NRC patient satisfaction survey.

"Thank you very much! As a teacher, I appreciate the question that asked if the doctor asked me to repeat back in my own words the instructions given to me for my health care. Bravo! Please continue to grow initiatives like this! I am certain it will make a difference in communication and promote better understanding."

We appreciate your commitment to using Teach-back.

For more information and skill-building, [check out the Teach-Back Toolkit](#).

# Provider Feedback on Teach-Back

*At first, I thought it was very awkward and was uncertain how patients would respond. However, I found that most patients really like it, and it does uncover some gaps in their knowledge/understanding of the problem and the plan.*

*It does add a minute or two to my visits, but hopefully will save time in subsequent visits/portal message as they understand the plan.*





# Developing impact

Influence Leaders	Influence Process	Influence Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teach Back as Patient Experience AOP initiative</li><li>• Imbed Health Literacy in Professional Governance Founding Principles</li><li>• Specialized simulation training for all nurse leaders "Train-the-Observer"</li><li>• Expand beyond Nursing to interdisciplinary leaders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creation of Teach Back Steer and dedicated project manager</li><li>• Deployment of Teach Back specific question in all patient surveys</li><li>• Analysis of patient responses and support of best practice utilization</li><li>• Standardize education content vendors systemwide</li><li>• Research opportunities for nurses on clinical ladder</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expansion of Teach Back curriculum and training</li><li>• Expanded partnership with Virtual Experience Simulation Training Center</li><li>• Roll out Patient Education Team Rounding Support</li><li>• Additional rounding practice sessions with simulation center staff on units</li></ul>



# Teach Back Program Support



# How to use Teach-Back



## Teach-Back Observation Tool



Skill Type	Key Element	Did the ChristianaCare caregiver...	Yes	No	Comments
Non-Verbal	Caring Tone	Use a caring tone of voice and attitude?			
	Body Language	Display comfortable body language, make eye contact, and sit down?			
Verbal	Plain Language	Use plain language? Avoid jargon and abbreviations? Explain terms that need to be used?			
	Key Points	Focus on explaining a few key points or priorities at a time?			
	Teach-Back Prompt	Ask the patient to explain in their own words or demonstrate what they were taught?			
Questioning	Take Responsibility	Take responsibility for making sure they were clear? Own the helpfulness of their explanations?			
	Respectful Questions	Use non-shaming, respectful questions? Avoid testing, judgement, and assumptions?			
	Open-Ended Questions	Use open-ended questions? Avoid questions that can be answered yes/no?			
Re-Explaining	Re-Explain & Re-Check	Explain and check again if the patient is unable to teach-back or demonstrate?			
Supportive	Materials & Resources	Use reader-friendly print materials, websites, pictures, or other resources to support learning?			
	Home Caregiver	Include family members/home caregivers when appropriate (in-person, phone or virtual)?			
	Documentation	Document patient's response to teaching (able to teach-back, demonstrates, needs further teaching)?			

Green rows are the basic steps of teach-back. White rows are the best practices which help refine the teach-back technique.

# Teach-Back Toolkit

## Improving Health through Clear Communication

Below are a list of training tools and resources that you can use to help provide teach-back education to your staff. It is important to know your audience and determine how much time you will have to discuss using the teach-back method.

Training Tool	Description	Approx. Time
<a href="#">Teach-Back Videos</a>	Select from a variety of videos which can help drive home the value of teach-back.	Times vary from 1-35 minutes
<a href="#">Teach-Back Articles &amp; Other Resources</a>	A collection of articles, websites and other resources about teach-back.	Times vary
<a href="#">Teach-Back Web Lesson slides</a>	These slides are taken from the web lesson which was initially launched to most patient facing staff and can be used to review with staff. If you would like to have the interactive web lesson assigned to staff in Learning Space again, please submit a request through the <a href="#">iLead Resource Center for Patient Education &amp; Health Literacy</a> . Use the option for Teach-Back Support and in request details reference course code MA_MULT_TBT.	15 minutes
<a href="#">Health Literacy and Teach-Back Presentation</a>	A PFHE team member can present to your unit/department/practice in-person or virtually. Please submit your request through the <a href="#">iLead Resource Center for Patient Education &amp; Health Literacy</a> . Use the option for Teach-Back Support.	30 - 60 minutes
<a href="#">Teach-Back for All Caregivers</a>	One page pdf that can be used as a poster or handout and describes how ALL caregivers can use teach-back not just patient facing staff.	1-2 minutes
<a href="#">Teach-Back Simulation Activity</a>	The PFHE team can provide simulated practice sessions so that staff can improve their teach-back skills. Audience size determines time. Submit a request through the <a href="#">iLead Resource Center for Patient Education &amp; Health Literacy</a> . Use the option for Teach-Back Support.	> 30 minutes
<a href="#">Teach-Back Huddle/Conversation Starters</a>	Use option 3 from the link on the left or select individual slides from the <a href="#">Teach-back Web Lesson slides</a> or use the <a href="#">Teach-back for All Caregivers</a> .	5-10 minutes
<b>Staff Observation &amp; Feedback</b> Facilitate the development of proper teach-back technique and sustain results. Observers should be specifically trained in a VEST center session or by PFHE staff.		
<a href="#">VEST Center Train-the-Observer Sessions</a>	Please check the Learning Space for current availability or submit a request through the <a href="#">iLead Resource Center for Patient Education &amp; Health Literacy</a> . Click the option for Teach-Back Support.	50 minutes
<a href="#">PFHE Training Session</a>	Submit a request using the <a href="#">iLead Resource Center for Patient Education &amp; Health Literacy</a> . Click on the option for Teach-Back Support.	> 30minutes
<a href="#">How to Use Cipher Rounds for Teach-back Observations</a>	Contains job aids and videos for using Cipher rounding for teach-back observations.	n/a
<a href="#">Teach-back Essentials &amp; Observer tips</a>	One page guide with the important elements of teach-back and observer tips.	n/a

# Patient Education Service Support

Patient Education and Health Literacy



## Health Literacy and Readab...



Submit materials for  
health literacy review

[View Details](#)

## Patient Education Charting...



Help with tracking and  
improving  
documentation

[View Details](#)

## Patient Education General...



Discuss a patient  
education need with a  
nurse educator

[View Details](#)

Need Help?



Submit a ticket!

## Teach Back Support



Help with all things  
Teach Back

[View Details](#)



# Teach-Back Education Curriculum

## Knowledge

Title	Description
Teach-Back Training	Interactive Web Lesson (self-paced without audio)
Getting Started With Teach-Back	Pre-Recorded Virtual Lesson Focused on basic health literacy universal precautions Not all teach-back skills are covered
Advanced Teach-Back Skills	Recorded Virtual Lesson Focused on advanced teach-back skills

## Application

Teach-Back Skills Practice	Small group, virtual, proctored class, interactive Practice learned teach-back skills in a small group setting
Teach-Back Train the Observer	Small group, interactive session in Simulation Center in-person or virtually hosted Practice learned teach-back skills and learn how to perform teach-back observations and give feedback to colleagues

## Sustainment

Teach-Back Talk	Small group, interactive Live Q&A Story Sharing Podcast style topic review
Teach-Back Retreat	All trainings offered in a day or two super session (4-8 hours) Proctored Live Workshops

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# What questions do you have?

**Please type your questions in the Q&A box.**

# Thank you for joining today's webinar



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