

### **Sims-Giddens, S. (Ed) and Anderson, D. – “Handing Off” Communication**

A local in-patient facility was experiencing difficulty with nurses having access to pertinent information to share with the on-coming shift. A Kardex system containing all relevant client information was revised for ease of transferring information to the next shift. This change was based on the Joint Commission on Accreditation’s newly announced 2007 National Patient Safety Goals. An expert panel for this national accrediting body reviews and updates goals annually to recommend improvements in communication about patients in an effort to identify patients who might be at risk. These recommendations affect all programs certified by the Joint Commission on Accreditation. Challenges to the change included the belief that the change was not needed and would create more work. The plan for passing on vital information included revising the Kardex to be more user-friendly, tape recording individual client information for the on-coming shift, and having the off-going employees available to assist clients, as well as answer any questions for the on-coming staff.

The Interactional Leadership theory was used in this change process. This theory supports that a behavior is generally determined by the relationship between the leader’s personality and the specific situation. Schein was the first to propose a model of humans as complex beings whose working environment was an open system to which they responded. Schein’s model, based on systems theory, include the assumptions that people are very complex and highly variable, people’s motives do not stay constant but change over time, goals can differ in various situations, a person’s performance and productivity are affected by the nature of the task and by their ability, experience, and motivation, and no single leaderships strategy is effective in every situation.