The sounds of silence: Complexities in the study of team communication

Abstract

A growing research agenda maps the relationship between team communication and patient safety. However, little attention has been paid to the role of silence on teams. How is silence used in team communication? What makes it functional or dysfunctional?

Drawing on a 10-year research program exploring communication on peri-operative teams, and extending to consider silence in other team settings such as the clinical teaching unit, this presentation discusses the phenomenon of silence as a research, practice, teaching and assessment issue.

Learning objectives:

• To recognize the role of silence in team communication

• To consider the challenge that silence presents for the evaluation of team communication

• To approach silence as a sophisticated communication skill, and to consider its implications for both clinical practice and health sciences education

Wednesday, April 25, 2012
4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (please be on time)
MDCL 3020
(Michael G. DeGroote Centre for Learning & Discovery, McMaster University)
Reception to follow, outside MDCL 3020 – All Welcome

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Dr. Lingard’s research program has investigated the nature of communication on inter-professional healthcare teams in a variety of clinical settings, including the operating room, the intensive care unit, and the family health centre. She is particularly interested in how communication patterns influence patient safety, and how learning to talk in sanctioned ways shapes the professional identity of novices. In addition to her team communication research, she is currently intrigued by methodological challenges such as accounting for silence in the study of communication and conceptual projects such as critiquing the individualist discourse of competence.