



The Radical Common Sense of Human Understanding

Gregory Makoul, PhD MS

Chief Transformation Officer
NRC Health
gmakoul@nrchealth.com



Flow

What is Human Understanding?

Who cares?

Threats to common sense

Benefits of Human Understanding

Bottom line: What matters



In a few words, what does
Human Understanding
mean to you?

In-person: table chat
Virtual: chat function



What is human understanding?



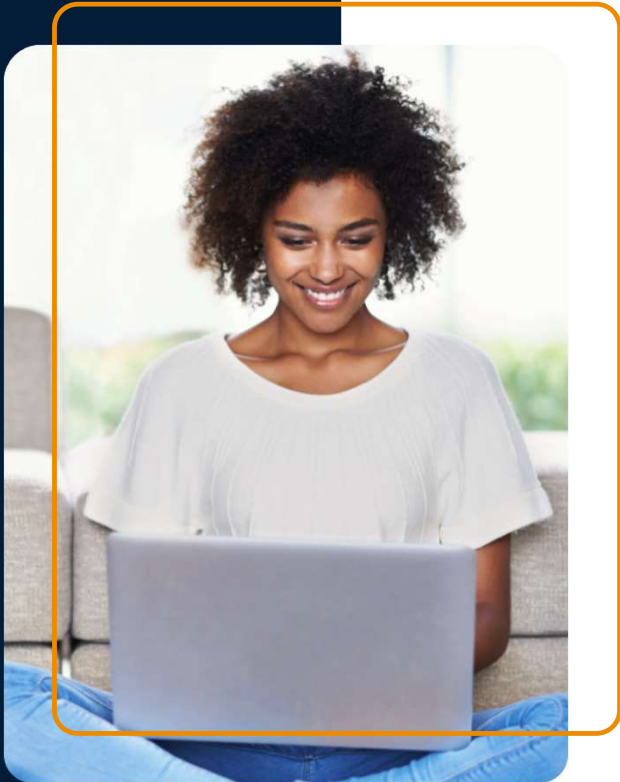
NRC Health 2021: Focus groups on human understanding in healthcare, reinforced by 3 national surveys (n = 86,613)



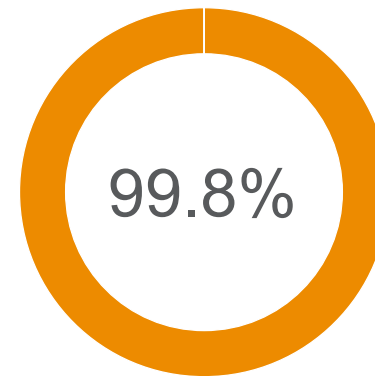
What is human understanding?

Understanding – and addressing –
what matters to each patient as a
unique person





Meet Aly

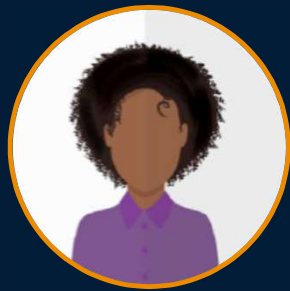


Life happens
beyond the care setting

16 waking hours/day × 365 days/year vs
1 × 15-minute visit every week of the year



Meetings between experts



Care providers are experts on clinical care.
Patients are experts on their lives.
Care works best when they share the expertise.

Tuckett D, Boulton M, Olson C, Williams A. Meetings Between Experts: An Approach to Sharing Ideas in Medical Consultations. London:Tavistock; 1985.



To what extent is human-centered / whole-person care featured in your mission, vision, billboards, or website?

0 = not at all

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

10 = central focus



Personalizing care to fulfill your promise

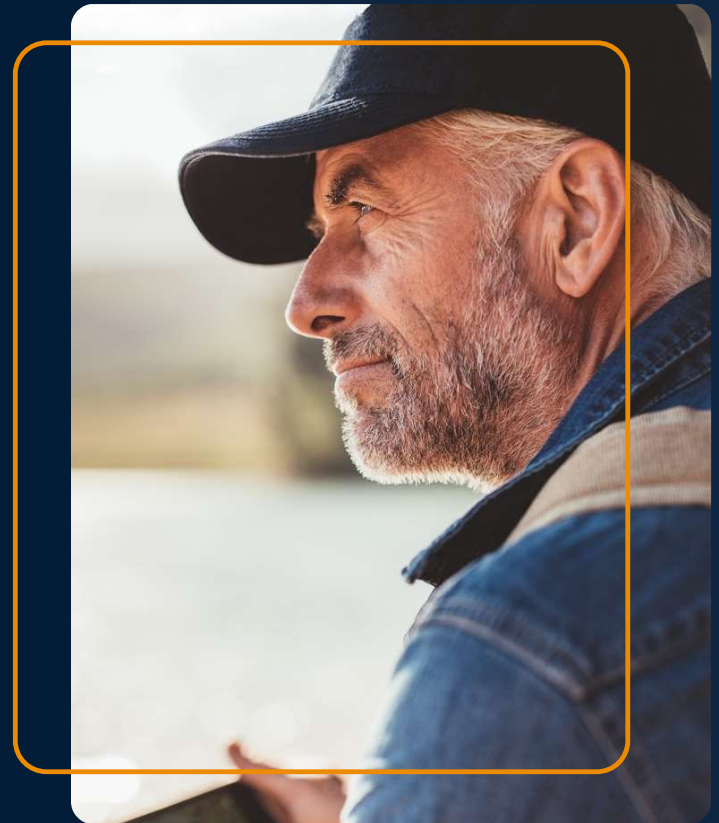
Did everyone treat you as a unique person?

2x more people

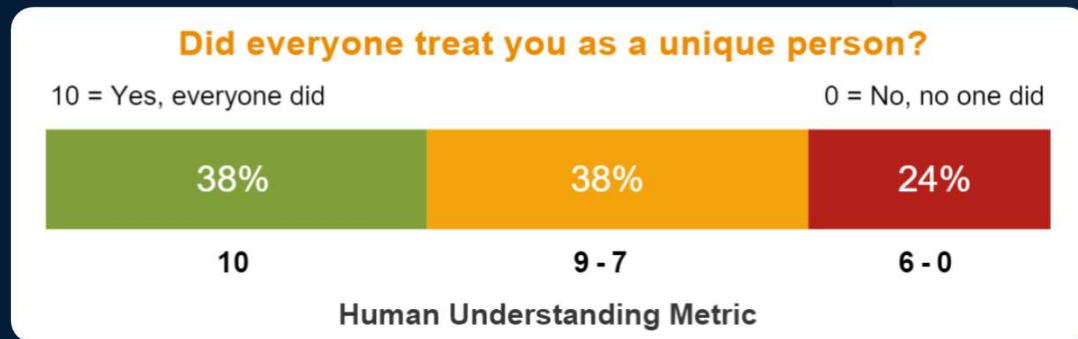
say being treated as unique is important in healthcare when compared to other services

38%

say it's actually happening

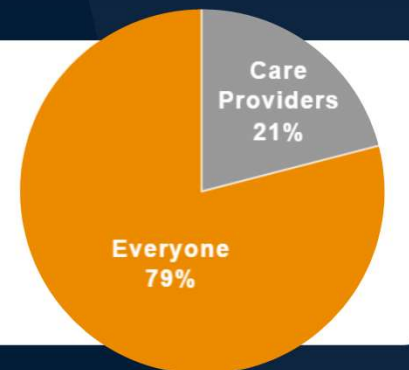


The Human Understanding Metric (HU^{me})

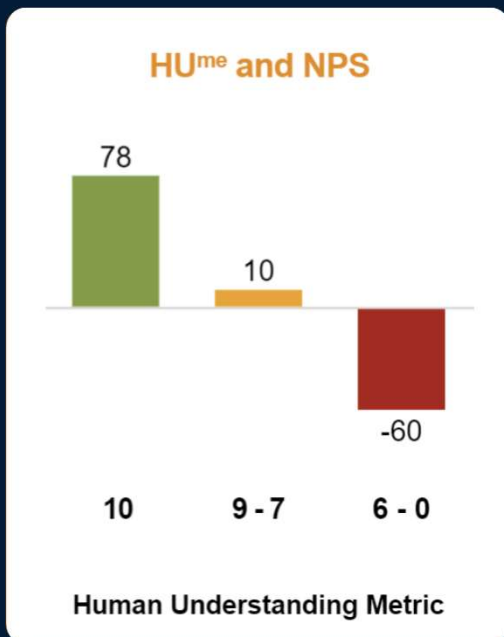


**Who should show
Human Understanding
in healthcare?**

Market Insights (May 2021) N = 23,738



Impact of Human Understanding on NPS



Human Understanding drives Net Promoter Score

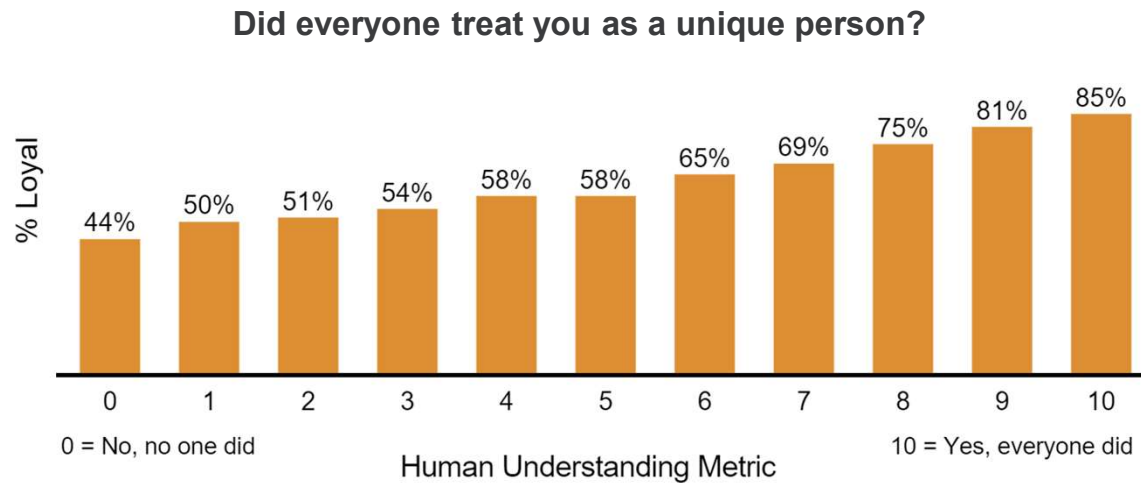
Did everyone treat you as a unique person?

- The odds of being a Promoter are 12 times higher if patients answer '10' (yes, everyone did).

Market Insights (January - June 2022) N = 94,113 people who had an experience with their top-of-mind hospital \leq 12 months prior to responding



Impact of Human Understanding on loyalty



Market Insights (January - June 2022) N = 94,113 people who had an experience with their top-of-mind hospital \leq 12 months prior to responding

THE VALUE OF DOING IT RIGHT

\$1.2 MILLION

average remaining lifetime spend for a 26-year-old healthcare consumer

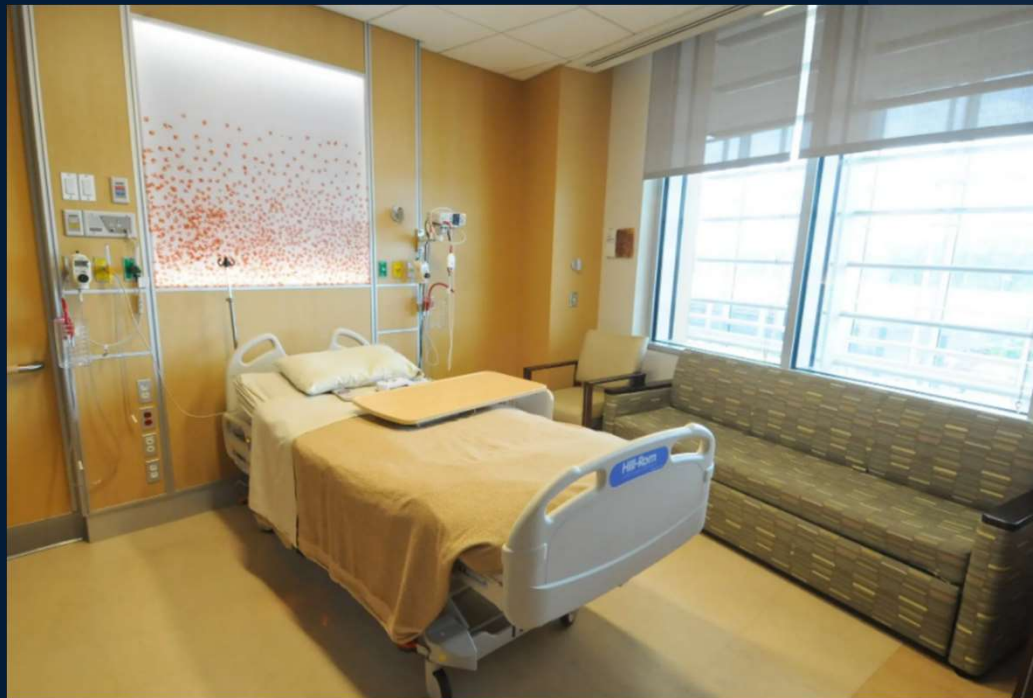
Estimate based on data from: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Mean expenditure per person with expense by age groups, United States, 1996 to 2019. Medical Expenditure Panel Survey. Accessed July 27, 2022; assumes average life expectancy to age 80.



Common sense.
What gets in the way?



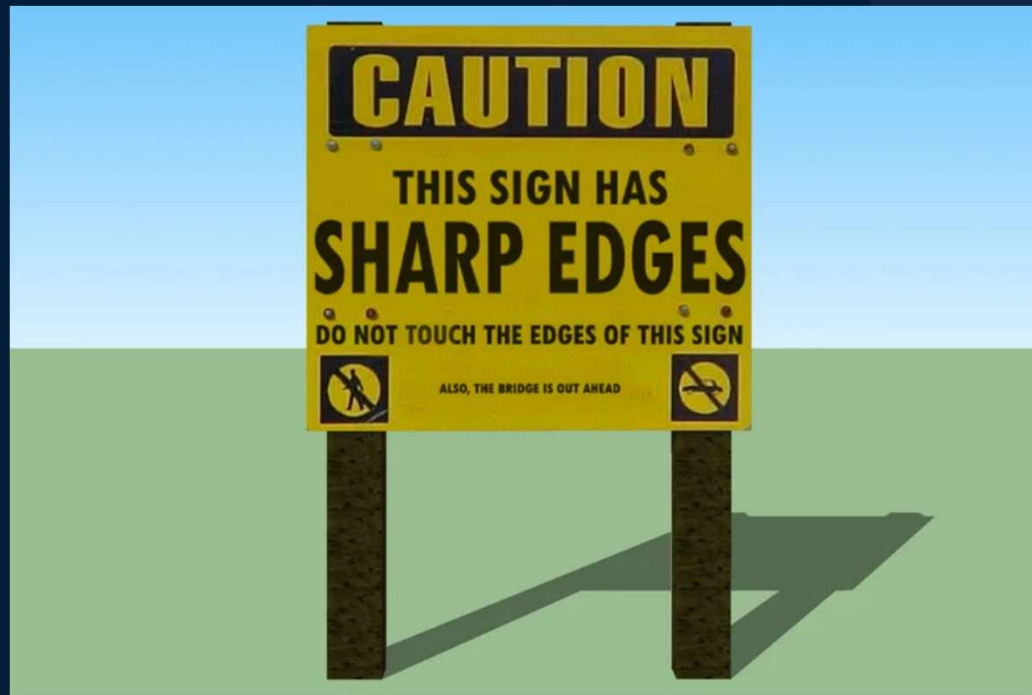
Common sense can get lost in the routine.



Laura Pedrick for The New York Times



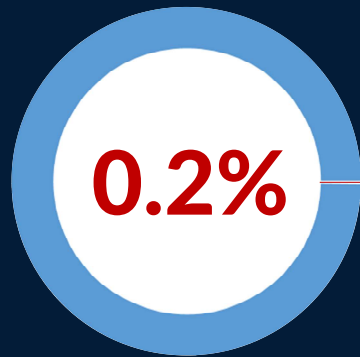
Common sense can get lost amid URGENCY.



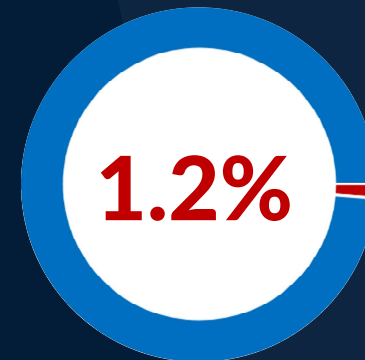
3D Warehouse



Common sense can be masked by a narrow focus.



99.8% of life happens beyond the outpatient setting^{*}



98.8% of life happens beyond the inpatient setting^{**}

^{*} 16 waking hours/day x 365 days/year vs one 15-minute visit every week of the year

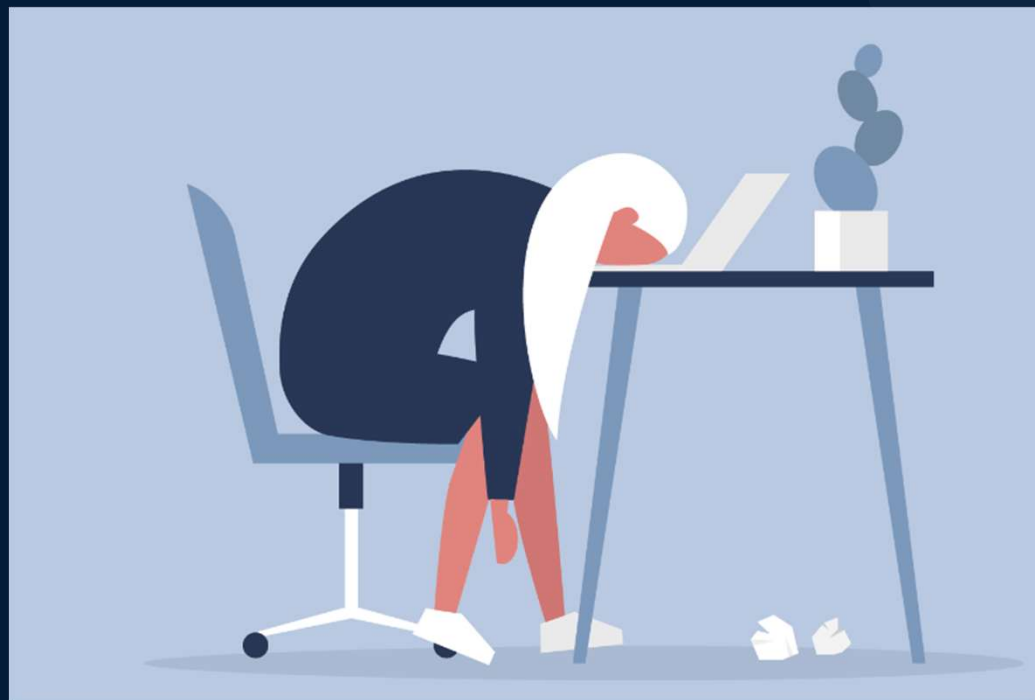
^{**} 365 days/year vs one hospital stay in a year at the national average LOS of 4.5 days



Common sense can be twisted by numbers.



Common sense can be toasted by burnout.



[mindful.org](https://www.mindful.org)



Common sense can be trapped in silos.



hackman



Common sense can be held back by ego.



Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.

- Paul Batalden

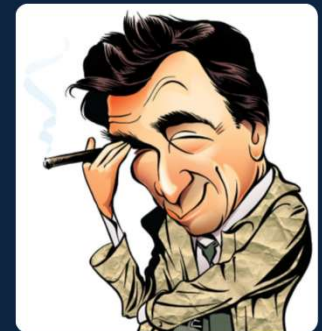
“I don’t have time to listen to patients. And that’s not good.”

“Our provider and employee engagement survey results have flatlined.”

“We thought we knew what the community needs. We were wrong.”

“This is how we’ve always done it.”

Need to step back and think about why.



What have you seen get
in the way of common
sense?

(check all that apply)

- Routine
- Urgency
- Narrow focus
- Numbers
- Burnout
- Silos
- Ego



Restoring common sense

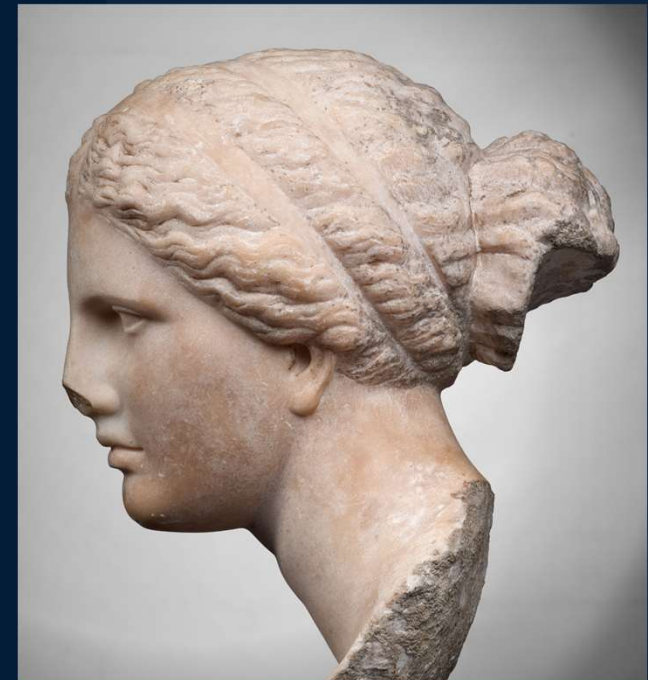
Always start with the problem to be solved.

Assume nothing.

Ask questions. And listen to the answers.

Focus. But look up and around.

Take care of yourself. And each other.



villachiragan.saintraymond.toulouse.fr

2022 NRC HEALTH SYMPOSIUM



What is empathy in the real world of healthcare?

Shared Feeling or Experience



What is empathy in the real world of healthcare?

2% **Shared Feeling or Experience**

85% { **Confirmation**
Pursuit
Acknowledgement

13% { **Implicit Recognition**
Perfunctory Recognition
Denial / Disconfirmation



Every patient has a story.

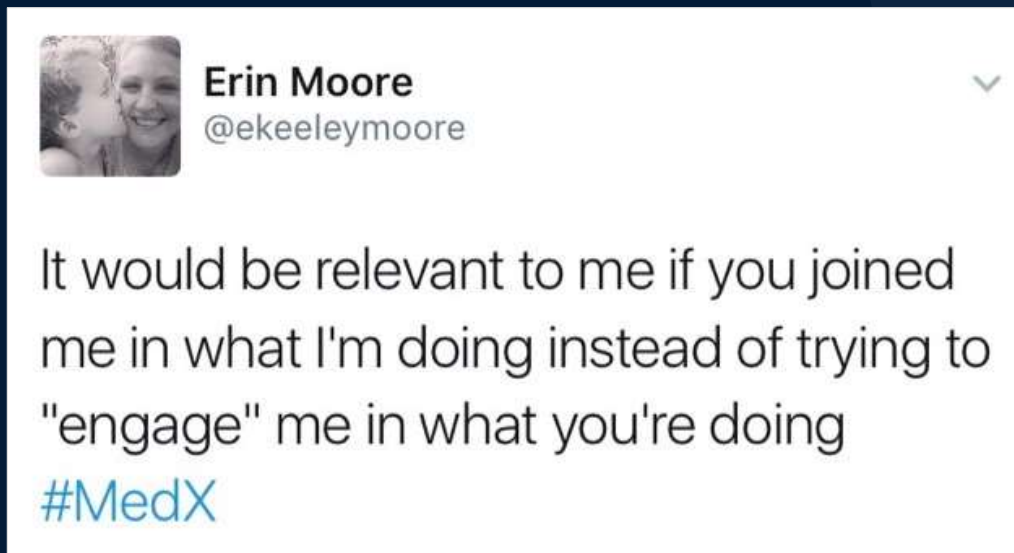
My Christmas present was finding out that I have pancreatic cancer.

Once my doctor understood that I want to live – not just be alive – we agreed to do chemo with ‘chemo vacations’.

I’m doing just fine. So lucky to have my family and friends around me. And a doctor who really cares.



Understanding what matters



Worried about how diabetes will impact pregnancy

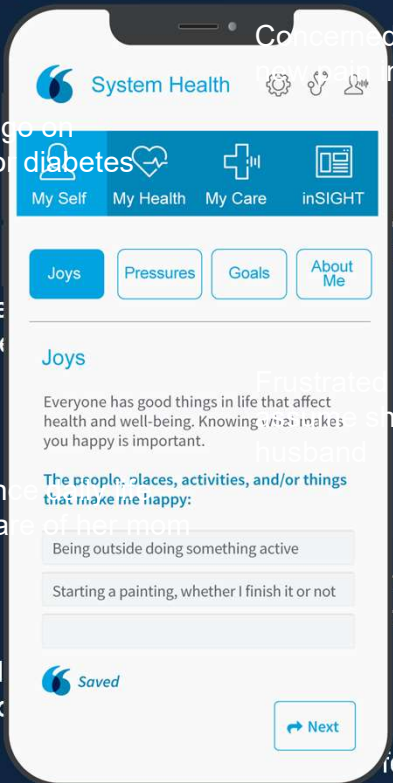
Not eager to go on medication for diabetes

Feels like she has no time to exercise

Hard to balance work with taking care of her mom

Prefers detailed communication

Loves to be outside doing something active



Concerned about her leg

about ing

Frustrated that people she has a husband

make herself

female OB



Humanizing care at n = 1

Alyssa Sample
Call me: Aly
Age: 35
Sex: Female
Seattle, Washington
Updated 08/05/2022

My Agenda
New pain in my legs -- could that be from diabetes?
I'm a little worried about how diabetes will affect my pregnancy

Makes Me Happy
Being outside doing something active
Starting a painting, whether I finish it or not

Health Priorities / Goals
Manage diabetes without meds as long as possible
Be able to do the activities I want to do -- no limits

Barriers to Staying Healthy
Finding time to exercise

Biggest Pressure / Worry
My mom is sick - I want to be there, but it's hard to balance everything and my sisters don't help at all.

How Health Affects Life
I have to constantly think about what I eat, and how it will affect my diabetes.

Advance Directive
I do not have one -- Ready to talk about it

Helps with Decisions
Tammy Sample (Spouse / Partner)

Challenges
Isolation Time

Health Rating
Poor Excellent

Care Approach
Non-Medical Medical

Information Focus
Details Big Picture

Know When Need Care
No Yes

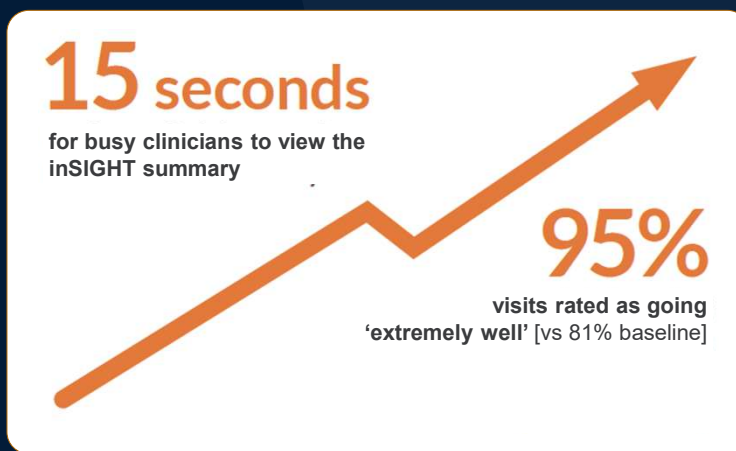
Decision Making
Myself Care Team

Decision Timing
Now Later

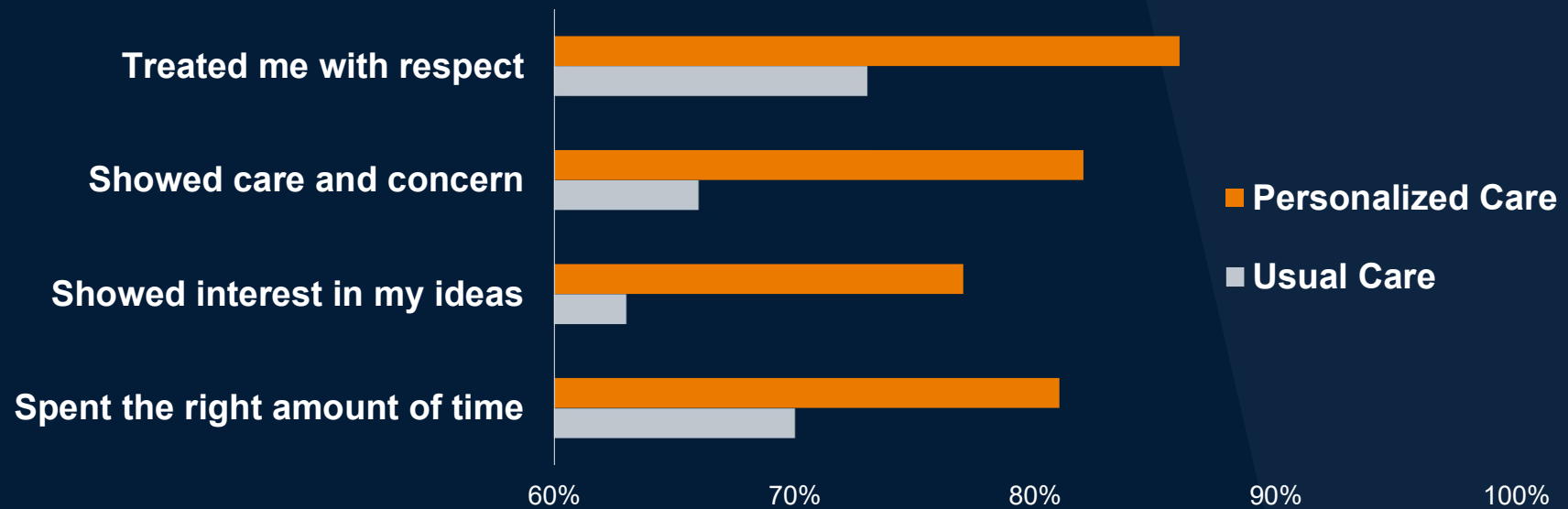
Treated as Unique

Copyright © NRC Health

Providing care for Aly, not people who look or sound like Aly



Improving communication



RCT with 301 patients | Outcome measure: Communication Assessment Tool | Treatment-on-Treated Analysis | $p < 0.05$ for all

Holt JM, et al. Impact of Pre-visit Contextual Data Collection on Patient-Physician Communication and Patient Activation: a Randomized Trial. Journal of General Internal Medicine. 2021; online>print.



The Power of Human Understanding

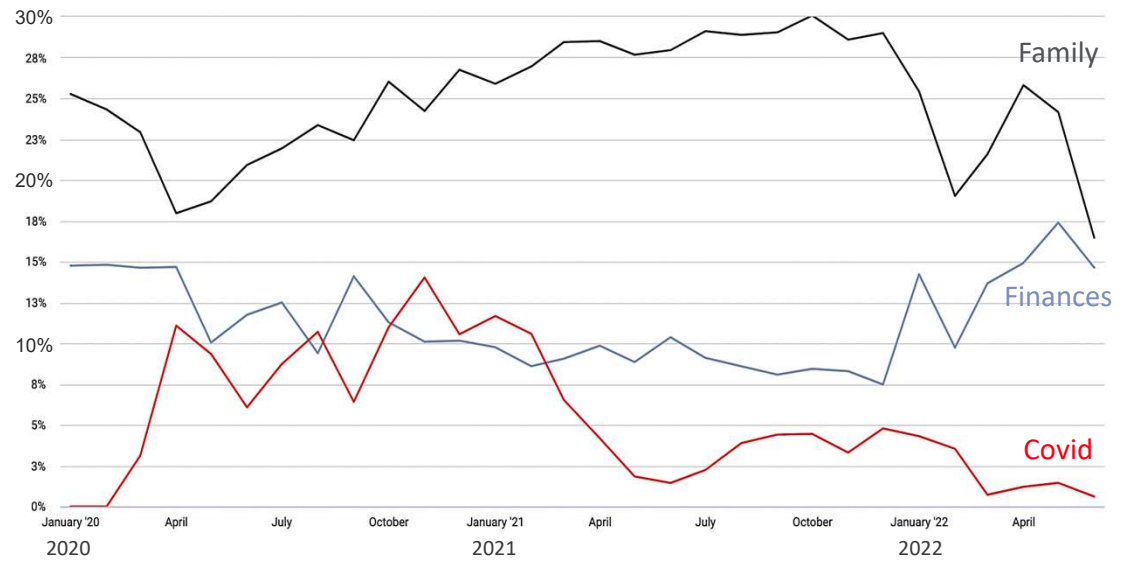
Our approach to personalizing care is associated with a **7-point jump in NPS** and **increases in every experience measure**:

- Care providers explain things
- Comfort talking with nurses
- Good communication
- Had enough input/say in care
- Knew medical history
- Knew what to do if questions
- Provider listened
- Provider – would recommend

Experience data from a major health system using the NRC Health Human Understanding Program



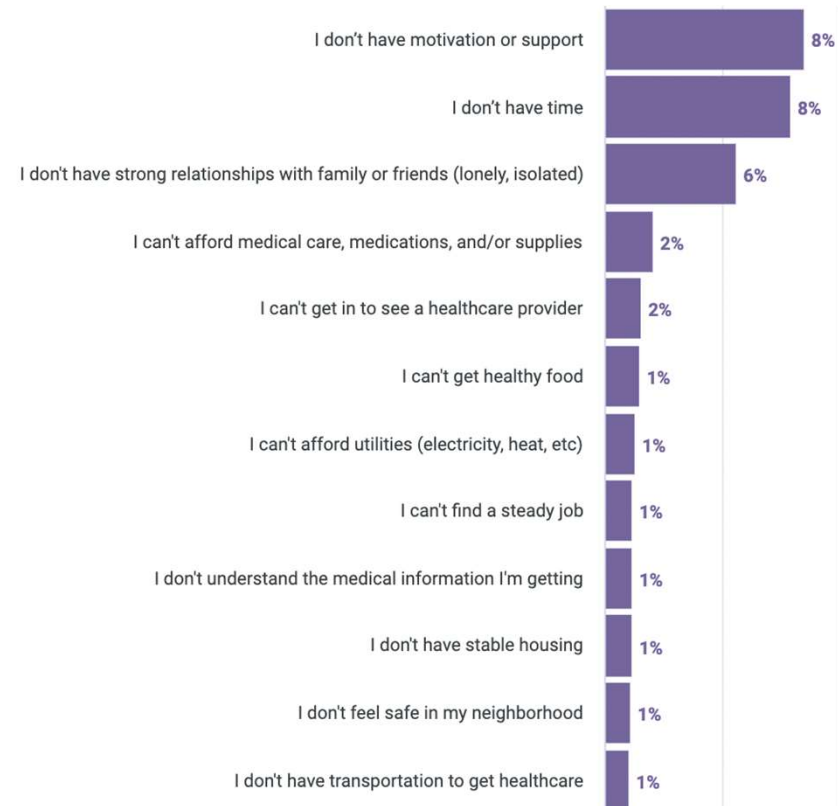
Revealing opportunities: Biggest pressure or worry



Revealing opportunities: Challenges

“There are more adults struggling with loneliness than have diabetes. Yet think about the discrepancy in the attention that we give to these two conditions.”

– U.S. Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, MD



There's data.
And there's
the feeling.



Human Understanding builds relationships.

FROM TRANSACTIONS

Patients as cases

What's the matter with you?

Within the care setting

Disconnected

Aggregated

TO RELATIONSHIPS

Patients as humans

What matters to you?

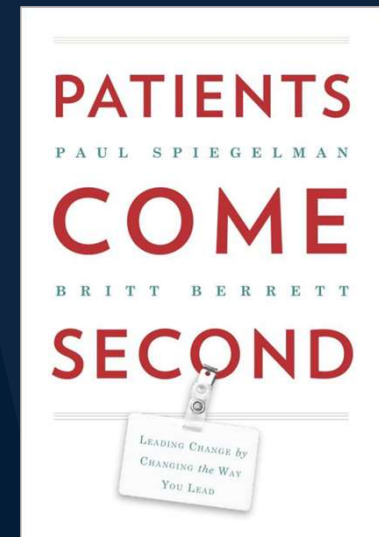
Beyond the care setting

Engaged

n = 1



Important on both sides of the stethoscope



Radical Common Sense

connection with our teams

Love for our teams

Sharing stories

Humanize

Mission

reminder that clinicians and staff are people too

Personal connection

Understanding what matters

Relationship building

Deliver appropriately sensitive care



Human Understanding builds relationships.

FROM WORDS

FROM ASPIRATION

TO BEHAVIOR

TO ACTION

