# Serious Illness Communication Skills Training For Emergency Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers: A Multi-Method Assessment of the Reach And Effectiveness of the Intervention

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**RESULTS** 

Commitment to

using acquired

skills in clinical

practice

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

- About half of dying patients visit the Emergency Department (ED) in the last month of life
- Emergency Medicine (EM) providers are well positioned to engage these patients in serious illness conversations
- EM Talk was designed to provide serious illness communication skills to EM providers as part of an overarching goal of improving quality of life of dying patients
- No study has evaluated the reach and the effectiveness of the EM Talk intervention

#### **PURPOSE**

**METHODS** 

**EM Talk Intervention** 

Occurred across 33 EDs

One-day, 4 hour training session

The target population were emergency

and small group practice sessions

 This study aimed to assess, using the RE-AIM framework, the reach and effectiveness of the EM Talk intervention among EM providers across 33 EDs

#### **METHODS**

#### **Reach: Quantitative Analysis**

- Design: Cross-Sectional
- Data Sources: ED administrative data, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- Measures:

**Reach of Intervention** 

**Number of EM providers trained** 

ratio (range across 33 EDs)

- 1. Percent of EM providers trained
- 2. Estimate of seriously ill patients reached
- 3. Ratio of seriously ill patients to trained EM providers

#### **Effectiveness: Qualitative Analysis**

- Design: Conceptual Content Analysis
- Data Source: Open-ended response to the question: "please reflect on your personal experience with this educational intervention"
- Theme was selected a priori to identify meaning units across domains of "Improved Knowledge", "Improved Attitude", and "Improved Practice"

Approximately 9 in 10 EM providers had serious illness communication skills training across the 33 EDs

It is estimated that 1 trained EM provider will engage 19 seriously ill patients in serious illness conversations every year

EM Providers expressed improvement in their communication skills, willingness to engage in serious illness conversations, and commitment to use the skills in practice

## CONCLUSION

• The EM Talk training reached a substantial proportion of EM providers working in the 33 EDs

**Improved** 

**Practice** 

Already utilizing

taught skills in

clinical practice

• EM Talk has the potential to improve EM providers' knowledge, attitude, and practice of serious illness communication skills

#### **FUNDING**

Attitude towards

receiving future training

in SI conversations

see the value the

"I would

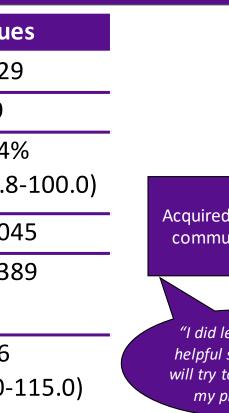
recommend all EM

doctors undergo

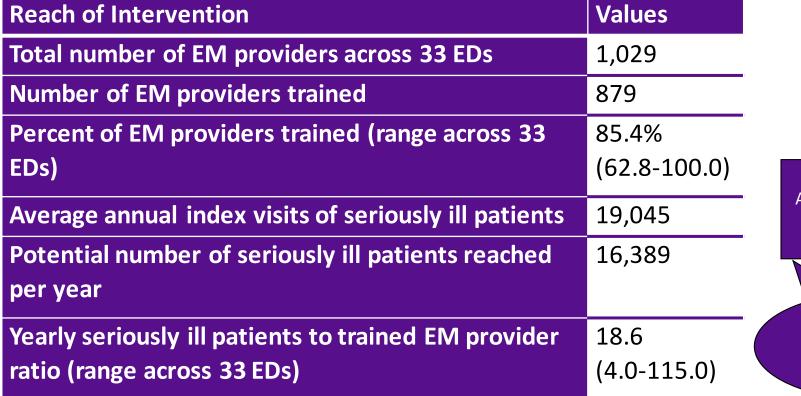
training such as

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### **RESULTS**



**Improved Knowledge** Acquired useful general Acquired serious illness Acquired empathy skills communication skills knowledge Learned a lot abou ´I did learn some "a pretty good helpful skills that empathetic skills learning experience will try to bring into that I can use in for me" my practice daily practice'



**Improved Attitude** Attitude towards Attitude towards engaging in Serious mproving patient care Illness conversations "I am more comfortable and at training brings to ease with end-of-life patients and their conversations'

 Topics and simulations covered included delivering bad news, discussing goals of care, role playing, and reflective exercises

physicians and advanced practice providers

The session comprised of large group lectures

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per year

EDs)