

Appendix 1. Guiding interview questions.

1. Questions to explore patients and family caregivers' experiences of communication practices while admitted to the GMU:
 - a. Can you tell me about your experiences communicating with the physicians?
 - b. If you think about the communication you had with the physicians, what made the communication effective and what could have been improved from your perspective?
 - c. Can you reflect on your experiences with the nurses and the communication you had with them?
2. Questions to explore aspects of communication that were most important to improving their overall satisfaction with the care:
 - a. In your opinion, what differentiates "very good communication" from "excellent communication"?
 - b. Tell me what you appreciate in terms of the communication styles of the physicians you saw.
 - c. What are some of the communication characteristics or skills that you want physicians and nurses to have?
3. Questions to explore ways to improve communication practices from their perspective
 - a. In your opinion, how can we improve our communication on the Geriatric Medicine Unit?
 - b. Most of the communication that happens in hospitals is often verbal. Would it have been useful to you if the information was in a written format and why or why not?

c. Would a formal family meeting have been something you or your family would have found useful, and why or why not?