Daily Goals Fast Facts

Why communication matters
Communication failure is one of the most frequently identified root causes of sentinel events, year after year (1).

Communication failure is a leading contributing factor to medical errors, particularly in the ICU setting (2).

ICU rounds carried out by a multi-disciplinary care team are associated with decreased mortality among ICU patients (3).

High-performing ICUs with superior risk-adjusted survival have a team-oriented culture, share beliefs in providing excellent care, communicate in an informal but direct way, and take a collaborative approach to problem solving (4).

For over two decades, national critical care societies have been advocating for a multi-disciplinary approach and the use of protocols to deliver consistent care (5).

What is Daily Goals?
Daily Goals (6) allows providers to keep track of the care plan established on rounds and verify its completion.

The tool components, format, and implementation should be adapted to fit local context and culture.

Daily Goals improves communication and care delivery by:

- Standardizing communication to reduce encoding and decoding errors
- Diminishing perceptions of a hierarchy and fostering diverse and independent input
- Encouraging convergent thinking to direct teams to articulate and meet patient-centered goals
- Creating redundancy to help ensure patients receive evidence-based therapies

Daily Goals is not just a checklist of interventions
Efforts to deliver high-quality and reliable care require attention to both technical and adaptive work.

Examples of technical work include summarizing best evidence and developing policies, protocols, or checklists.

Adaptive work requires an understanding of the health care delivery system, how providers maneuver in this system, peoples’ values, attitudes, and behaviors, and how to foster engagement and ownership of the improvement process.

Address the adaptive challenges to ensure providers find value in completing the tool.

Work with your team to implement Daily Goals
1. Assess the current state of rounds on your unit
2. Look at the samples of Daily Goals rounding tools
3. Educate providers using the Daily Goals fast facts
4. Present the idea to your ICU team
5. Obtain support from an ICU physician to champion the effort
6. Draft a Daily Goals tool suitable for your unit
7. Pilot the Daily Goals tool during rounds and solicit early feedback
8. Finalize Daily Goals rounding tool

Where’s the evidence?
Daily Goals has been part of multifaceted interventions associated with significant and sustained reductions in healthcare-associated infections across diverse types of ICUs (7,8).

Several observational studies have demonstrated improved outcomes, most commonly length of stay, provider communication, and understanding of plan in adult ICUs, pediatric ICUs and non-ICU settings (9,10).

References