January Tool of the Month: TONES

ZERO HARM
Be compassionate. Be safe. Be reliable.

There is a space that exists between you and everyone you encounter. The Tones of High Reliability are the ways in which we fill the space between one another. We can choose to fill that space with fear & authority, or compassion & trust. Our Tones are portrayed through our body language, voice, facial expressions and eye contact.

1. Smile and greet

- Smile and say hello when you pass by others in the hallways.
- Try to be the one who initiates the greeting. The *hello zone* is an imaginary ring 5-10 feet around you. Be first to smile and greet those in your *hello zone.*

2. Introduce and explain roles

- Refer to others by their preferred - usually their first - name.
- Introduce other caregivers as they arrive and explain their role.

3. Listen with empathy and intent to understand

- Listening with empathy is giving of yourself. Turn and face the other person.
- Listening with an intent to understand is assuming real value in the message.
- Smile a little if you happen to have a stern resting face.

4. Explain positive intent

- Explain to team members, patients, and family *what* you are doing and *why* you are doing it.
- Explain how your actions will benefit them and contribute to attaining shared goals.
- Explain the positive intent of your action before applying tools. Asking a question can sometimes appear to question credibility. Consider using phrases like, "for your safety...", "for safety...", or "for clarity..."
- Use inclusive words such as *us* and *we* instead of *you, I* or *me,* and *them.*

5. Provide opportunities for questions

- Provide the opportunity for others to ask questions by pausing. People naturally fill gaps in the dialogue. If they have a question - they will ask.
- If you ask for questions - consider saying, "*What questions do you have?*" instead of "*Do you have any questions?*"
- Listen for signs of *hint* and *hope.* Team members, patients, and family are not always assertive when voicing concerns.