SBAR Communication Template

What is SBAR?

SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation) is a structured communication framework designed for clear, concise, and relevant communication in medical settings. It helps ensure critical information is conveyed effectively during handovers, escalations, and team communications.

SBAR Template

S - SITUATION

What is happening right now?

- Patient identification
- Current immediate issue or concern
- Brief description of the problem

Example: "Mr. Smith, ICU nurse calling—his BP dropped to 80/40."

B - BACKGROUND

What is the context?

- Relevant patient history
- Current treatment plan
- Recent procedures or interventions
- Admission diagnosis

Example: "He's post-op from renal transplant, day 2."

A - ASSESSMENT

What do you think is going on?

- Your clinical evaluation
- Vital signs and observations
- Current patient condition

- Your professional judgment

Example: "He's pale with cold extremities; urine output ↓."

R - RECOMMENDATION

What do you want to happen?

- Specific actions you're requesting
- Suggested interventions
- Timeline for action
- Level of urgency

Example: "Recommend a stat fluid bolus and request ICU review."

Why SBAR Works

✅ **Clear Communication:** Provides structure for complex medical information

✅ **Reduces Errors:** Ensures all critical information is communicated

✅ **Saves Time:** Eliminates unnecessary back-and-forth questions

✅ **Hierarchical-Neutral:** Encourages assertive communication regardless of seniority

✅ **Safety-Focused:** Reduces "hint-and-hope" communication patterns

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Quick Reference Card

Component	Key Question	Focus
Situation	What's happening now?	Current problem
Background	What's the context?	Relevant history
Assessment	What do you think?	Your evaluation
Recommendation	What should we do?	Proposed action

This template is based on frameworks endorsed by AHRQ and NHS for effective healthcare communication.