Abstract
The purpose of this poster is to describe a new research model that describes a novel way to studying the effectiveness of electronic documentation as a communication system. The model, which has been adapted from Gerbner’s (1956) General Communication Model and Effken’s (2003) Informatics Research Organizing Model (IROM), illustrates both the events that occur during the communication process and their relationships.

Problem
Although previous research suggests that electronic documentation systems can reduce documentation time and improve both the timeliness and quality of documentation, studies that have explored the effectiveness of electronic documentation as a communication system have reported mixed results. However, these studies have largely been atheoretical in nature—and only few have employed a conceptual framework. In addition, although the standardized nursing languages tested in these studies align with only 70% of nursing documentation, the impact that this might have on the overall effectiveness of nursing documentation and its ability to adequately describe patient status has yet to be explored.

Purpose
The proposed research model was developed by integrating Gerbner’s (1956) General Communication Model with Effken’s (2003) Informatics Research Organizing Model (IROM). The model is expected to serve as a useful conceptual framework for exploring electronic nursing documentation with embedded standardized languages as a communication system. The proposed model suggests both key components of communication and the associated complex relationships among the components needed for effective communication, such as perception of the event, negotiation of the documentation system, the completed documentation effort, and the effectiveness of the communication process.

Methods
Gerbner’s (1956) model describes communication generically as beginning with an event that is perceived by a human. The human then negotiates the means for communication, which produces the form and content of the communicated message, which leads to consequences of communication. This model has been adapted for nursing informatics research by integrating IROM constructs (Effken, 2003): client, context, intervention, and outcomes. In the adapted model, when a nurse (client) observes a patient experiencing a critical event (context), she/he must somehow negotiate the electronic documentation system with its embedded standardized languages in order to record, or document, the event. The content and format of the resulting documentation (intervention) may lead to positive or negative communication consequences (outcomes).

Conclusions
The model will be used to guide research on nursing documentation systems as a communication system. Results of the study are not yet available, but are expected to inform the informatics community about the strengths and limitations of standardized languages, as well as suggest ways in which their development and implementation could be enhanced to improve clinical communication.

References: