Nurse Point of View

We met with the laboratory manager this week to discuss this particular incident and identify what went wrong. It was a good exchange of information between our areas. I listened to issues that they were having with the clinic staff in terms of inadequate communication with the patient on the preparation requirements for various laboratory testing. I can see how what I told the patient about not eating breakfast was not complete enough. I guess I didn’t think about the patient having his morning coffee, but just assumed that he would understand that was a part of the not eating. I explained to the laboratory manager how hard it is to get these instructions across to patients because they may be elderly, forget what we say, may not hear us, or may even speak another language. We discussed ways that we might address this problem. Since the laboratory personnel have expertise in laboratory testing, I asked if we could collaborate to develop detailed instructions that the patient can take away with them. They have also agreed to follow up with a short in-service for the clinic staff on glucose and Hgb A1c testing that will emphasize the importance of proper patient preparation and how we can call the lab if we have any questions about lab test preparation or results. We all agreed that “the patient” was the most important aspect. We want patients to be confident that they are getting the best care.