Predictors of compassionate caregiving
Colleen Manning¹, Beth Lown²,³,⁴
¹Goodman Research Group, Inc., ²The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare, ³Harvard Medical School, ⁴Mount Auburn Hospital

Introduction/objectives
A recent survey of patients and physicians found broad agreement that compassionate care is “very important” to successful medical treatment. However, 47% of patients and 42% of physicians said the U.S. health care system does not provide compassionate care. Determining what influences compassionate caregiving and developing systematic approaches to enable health care professionals to provide compassionate and collaborative care is a priority.

Methods
Data for these analyses come from a cross-sectional survey of 827 caregivers at a large teaching hospital in the northeast. Caregivers completed an online questionnaire that included a 12-item scale measuring a unidimensional factor related to compassionate care. The questionnaire also included an open-ended question asking caregivers what additional support(s), if any, would help them provide more compassionate care to their patients.

Results
Multiple regression analysis was used to test if various caregiver characteristics and experiences significantly predicted compassionate caregiving. Results indicated that three predictors explained 24% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.238$, $F(13,684) = 16.808$, $p < .001$). The healthcare team’s compassionate care predicted caregiver compassionate care ($\beta = 0.366$, $p < .001$), as did the extent to which the hospital valued compassionate care ($\beta = 0.237$, $p < .001$) and the caregiver’s years of experience ($\beta = 0.046$, $p < .05$). Several variables, including discipline, gender, and opportunities to discuss the psychosocial or emotional aspects of patient care, did not contribute to the multiple regression model. The most common response to the question of what would enable them to provide more compassionate care was needing more staff and a better staff-to-patient ratio.

Discussion/implications
Results suggest that caregivers who perceive that their healthcare team and hospital value compassionate care feel they provide greater compassionate care themselves. These results underscore the importance of ensuring that compassionate care is a fundamental element in the education of health professionals and the design of healthcare systems.