



PROFESSIONALISM

Lecture 7:

The Concept of Communication Skills in Medicine

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Please note that this file contains summaries and important notes only, your original source for studying is the full lectures file made by team 434, which will be revised by team 435 after each lecture. Link: [Lectures file \(revised\)](#).

Objectives:

- ❖ Define communication, its theory and types.
- ❖ Discuss importance of communication in medicine.
- ❖ Demonstrate effective communication in day to day practice.
- ❖ Overcome barriers to effective communication.

Summary:

Communication definition:

- The act by which information is shared.
- It is the process by which we relate and interact with other people.
- It includes listening & understanding with passion & respect as well as expressing views & ideas and passing information to others in a clear manner.

Communication theory:

Communication is a learned skill based on **3 pillars**:

- Accuracy
- Efficiency
- Supportiveness

Types of communication:

Verbal (mainly focuses on questioning)	Non verbal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open (broad) – gives control to respondent, allows disclosure.• Open (focused) – gives control to respondent <u>within a given area</u>, encourages disclosure of feelings.• Closed – control is with interviewer, <u>checks</u> information.• Leading – control with interviewer, <u>suggests</u> desired response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening (active and passive)• Silence• Touch• Hand gestures• Eye contact• Posture• Facial expression

Effective communication

Effective communication is the ***key to success in professional career, and is the basis of mutual understanding & trust.*** Doctors cannot practice medicine without effective communication skills, as patients are humans with sensitive needs

Importance of communication in medicine:

- Increases job & patient satisfaction and health outcomes
- Reduces the risk of complaint and litigation
- Ensures good working relationship
- Increases patients understanding of illness & management

- Improves patients compliance with treatment
- Reduce medico-legal problems
- Reduce uncertainty
- Poor communication **causes a lot of misunderstanding & hinders work & productivity.**

What is required from the doctors

<i>Towards the <u>patients</u></i>	<i>Towards your <u>colleagues</u></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to patients and respond to their concerns and preferences. • Give patients information in way they can understand • Taking patient's views into consideration when assessing their condition • Respond to patients questions , keep them informed & share information . • You must make sure, wherever practical, that arrangements are made to meet patient's language and communication needs. • You must be considerate to relatives, carers and partners in providing information and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively with colleagues within and outside the team • Make sure your colleagues understand your role and responsibilities in the team and who is responsible for each aspect of patient care • You must treat your colleagues fairly and with respect

Where to apply our Communication skills?

- The medical interview is the usual communication encounter between the doctor and the patient
- It can be classified according to the purpose of the interview into 4 types:
 1. History taking.
 2. Consultations.
 3. Obtaining informed Consent.

Principles of effective communication:

- Planning
- Interaction rather than a direct transmission
- Flexibility in relation to different individuals and contexts.
- Ability to handle emotional outbreaks

Communication skills: Some techniques:

- **PRACTICE**- fluent dialogue with patient
- **USE**- silence effectively, allowing patient enough time to express thoughts or feelings
- **ENCOURAGE**- patients with your supportive words
- **UTILIZE** - non-verbal communication

Listening vs Hearing:

Hearing	Listening
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a passive activity; no effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention• Active involvement,• Full understanding• Takes time and effort

Barriers to effective communication:

- Personal attitudes
- Ignorance
- Human failings (tiredness, stress)
- Language
- Poor time management
- Strenuous working environment

