

# PHC

432 Handouts

## 6 Breaking Bad News



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# Objectives

No given Objectives

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## **Breaking Bad New**

### **Bad News Definition:**

“Any news that drastically and negatively alters the patients view towards his future.”

“Deficit in the cognition , behavior , or emotions in the person receiving the news that persists a while after the news is received.”

### **Examples:**

Cancer

Chronic diseases. DM, HTN.

Poor prognosis in chronic diseases.

IUFD

Child’s mental/physical handicap.

STDs.

Congenital anomalies.

Infertility.

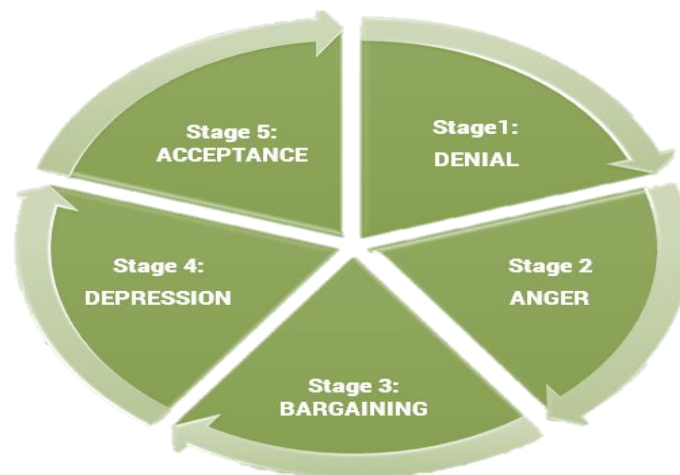
Non clinical situations e.g. feedback to poorly performing trainees or colleagues

### **Why is it important?**

Studies show that patients who have had an open, honest and empathic disclosure, are more likely to be compliant with their treatment plan and show an overall well being.

Breaking bad news to someone is never a pleasant task, but breaking it at the wrong time or in the wrong way can **be even worse**, so it's important to know the best approaches to breaking bad news.

## Five stages of loss and grief (Kubler-Ross)



### Stage 1: Denial

Initially, people are shocked when they receive bad news. After the initial shock has worn off, they pretend that the news has not been given. They effectively close their eyes to any evidence and pretend that nothing has happened.

Typically, they will continue their life as if nothing has happened.

### Stage 2: Anger

feelings of anger, irritation, jealousy and resentment arise. Anger and powerlessness are especially directed at their environment. They put the blame on other people, colleagues, employees and counselors.

### Stage 3: Bargaining

people are trying to get away from the dreadful truth in many different ways.

Bargaining is expression of [hope](#) that the bad news is reversible.

Bargaining includes seeking alternative therapies and experimental drugs.

### Stage 4: Depression

the person involved feels helpless and misunderstood. As a result, they will be withdrawn and avoid communications.

They do not answer the phone or respond to e-mails. There is a chance that they could take refuge in alcohol and drugs such as painkillers and sleep-inducing drugs.

### Stage 5: Acceptance

When the person involved becomes aware of the fact that there is no more hope, they can accept the bad news. They can recover from the previous stages and accept their grief. After some time they will feel like taking up activities again and they will start making plans again.

## SPIKES Protocol 6 steps :

### S (setting):

- ❖ Arrange for some privacy.
- ❖ Involve significant others.
- ❖ Manage time constraints and interoperation.

### P (perception of condition/seriousness):

- ❖ Determine what the patient knows about the medical condition or what he suspect.
- ❖ Listen to the patient level of comprehension.
- ❖ Accept denial but do not contort at this stage.

**I (invitation from patient to give information):**

- ❖ Ask patient if she/he wishes to know the details of medical condition and/or treatment.
- ❖ Offer to answer questions later

**K (knowledge; giving medical facts):**

- ❖ Use language intelligible to patient.
- ❖ Consider educational level, socio-cultural background, current emotional state.
- ❖ Give information in small chunks.
- ❖ Check whether the patient understood what you said.
- ❖ Respond to the patient's reaction.
- ❖ Give any positive aspect first.
- ❖ Give facts accurately about treatment options ,costs ,prognosis.

**E (explore emotions and sympathy):**

-Prepare to give an empathetic response :

1. Identify emotion expressed by the patient(sadness ,silence ,shock )
2. Identify source of emotion.
3. Give the patient time express his/her feelings, then respond in a way demonstrate you have recognized connection between 1 and 2.

**S (strategy and summery):**

- ❖ Close the interview.
- ❖ Ask weather they want to clarify something else

- ❖ Offer agenda for the next meeting.

## Summary

### **Bad News Definition:**

“Any news that drastically and negatively alters the patients view towards his future.” For ex: Cancer, IUFD

### **Five stages of loss and grief (Kubler-Ross)**

Denial>Anger> Bargaining>Depression> Acceptance

### **SPIKES Protocol 6 steps :**

Setting

Perception

Invitation

Knowledge

Explore

Strategy

## Questions

When breaking bad news to a patient , which of the following you should AVOID ?

- A. Give all the information in one go.
- B. Give information in small chunks.
- C. Regularly check of understanding.
- D. Be honest that you are unsure about something.

Which one of the quotes below represents the FIRST stage of a patient reaction towards a terminal illness?

- A. " i do not matter anymore " - Depression
- B. " life goes on " - Acceptance
- C. " how could this happen to me?" - Anger
- D. " it can't be true" - Denial

All of the following are examples of conditions requiring breaking bad news, EXCEPT:

- A. Twin pregnancy
- B. Infertility
- C. STDs
- D. Congenital anomalies

**Answers:**

1st Question: A

2nd Question: D

3rd Question: A