ART OF MEDICINE

How to communicate with patients

Jie Wang, MD
Asia Pacific Health
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Four Habits Model

• Taught to thousand of clinicians at Kaiser Permanente since 1995.
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Four Habits Model

• Invest in the beginning
• Elicit the patient’s perspective
• Demonstrate empathy
• Invest in the end
Four Habits Model Goal

Establish rapport
Build trust rapidly
Facilitate the effective exchange of information
Demonstrate caring and concern
Increase likelihood of adherence and positive health outcomes
Habit One
Invest in the beginning
Habit 1
Invest in the beginning

• Creating Rapport Quickly
• Eliciting the patient’s full spectrum of concerns
• Planning the visit
Creating rapport quickly

• Being aware of and consciously using nonverbal clues and cues
• Handshake and eye contact
• Finding out the names of each person in the room and their relationship to the patient
• Acknowledge the wait
• Brief description of one’s approach to providing care
Eliciting the full spectrum of concerns

• Key to building trust—listening to patients attentively
• Encourage the patient to bring up additional symptoms or questions
• Soliciting the full agenda can reduce the likelihood of the “by the way” syndrome.
Planning the visit.

• Summarizing what the patient has stated and assessing for accuracy
• Proposing a simple plan for the rest of the interaction and checking for agreement
• Using positive language to set limits, prioritizing
Habit Two

Elicit patient's perspective
Habit 2
Elicit the patient’s perspective

- Assessing patient attribution
- Identifying patient requests
- Exploring the impact
Assessing patient attribution

• Ask patient’s view directly
• Assess the patient’s point of view
• Express respect towards alternative healing practices.
Identifying patient requests

Impact on patient satisfaction
Humanistic care rather than technical care correlated with patient satisfaction
Exploring the impact

• Determining the impact of the patient’s symptoms or illness.
Linkage of Habits 2 and 3 is one of the most powerful and efficient ways to get useful clinical details, personalized care and convey compassion.
Habit Three
Demonstrate Empathy
Habit 3
Demonstrate Empathy

• Responding to patients’ emotions
• Discerning empathic opportunities
• Expressing empathy
Responding to patients’ emotions

• Culturally appropriate manner

• Empathy, empathy, empathy (naming or supporting another’s distress)
Discerning empathic opportunities

• Nonverbal behavior
• Body posture
• Facial expression
• Tone of voice
• Good eye contact
Expressing empathy

• Convey empathy nonverbally
  • Touch, gaze, facial expressions, voice tone, body posture

• Convey in words
  • Encouraging the expression of emotion
  • Naming the likely feeling
  • Legitimating the emotion
  • Demonstrates appreciation of the patient’s perspective is an essential step in working through differences in values, attitudes and readiness for change
Making an empathic statement that demonstrates appreciation of the patient’s perspective is an essential step in working through differences in values, attitudes and readiness for change.
Habit Four

Invest in the End
Habit 4
Invest in the End

• Delivering diagnostic information
• Providing education
• Engaging in joint decision-making
• Closing the visit
Habit 4
Invest in the End

• Challenge: focus on the patient, demands of documentation and electronic order entry
Delivering Diagnostic Information

• Connecting patients to their illness narratives by using patients’ own words
Providing education

• Using plain language
• Check frequently to ensure information is understood
  • Ask patient to summarize
  • Ask patient to teach back
• Limit the number of message during the visit
Engaging in joint decision-making

- Providing information, ask patient’s opinion and preferences
- Assessing patients’ readiness to change
  - Physician as a “coach”
  - Reinforce patient autonomy
- Exploring barriers
- Supplementing with written materials or web based resources
Closing the visit

• Asking for additional questions
  • Specific related to this visit
• Confirming next steps
  • Verify understanding
  • Written summary of the visit, relevant websites
• Ending on a personal note
  • Positive way
Zhongshan Asia Pacific Hospital
中山亚太医院
No.3 Nanjiang Rd, Building No.1,
Shiqi District, Zhongshan, Guangdong
地址：广东省中山市石岐区悦来南南江路8号

• Jie Wang, MD
Asian Pacific Health
亚太健康 汪洁
Email: jie.wang@ap-health.com