

# COMMUNICOLOGY

## Communication for Healthcare Professionals

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### **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

- Enhance accuracy of diagnosis and treatment.
- Promote patient satisfaction.
- Allow patient to make informed decisions.
- Instill commitment to treatment.
- Assure appropriate use of healthcare services.

### **POSITIVE COMMUNICATION**

- Solicit and listen to patient's agenda.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Seek patient wants, needs, opinions and beliefs.
- Confirm understanding of patient's opinions.
- Invite expression of unexpressed feelings.
- Demonstrate empathy and compassion.
- Prioritize patient issues.
- Counsel appropriately.

### **MAKING IT CLEAR**

- Name the problem.
- Write down the diagnosis.
- Minimize medical terminology.
- Translate from medical to lay terms.
- Give examples and analogies.
- Tell typical patient stories.
- Draw pictures and/or diagrams.
- Present photocopied illustrations.
- Provide a set of rules.
- Use 3-D models.
- Offer literature to read at home.
- Focus on what to do and what not to do.
- Have patient repeat what they heard.

### **'ALWAYS ADDRESS' ISSUES**

- Is the diagnosis correct?
- What are the odds of a cure?
- What is the treatment and is it necessary?
- What are potential complications?
- Should the patient get a second opinion?
- What happens without treatment?
- How long will recovery take?

### **DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

- Treat every complaint seriously.
- Empower staff to handle minor problems.
- Become personally involved as needed.
- Listen and respond to suggestions in a private area.
- Express sympathy for patient's concerns.
- Don't be defensive. Tell own side of story.
- Show sincere commitment for resolution.
- Ask patient's advice and thank them.

### **CONVEYING BAD NEWS**

- Speak in private, comfortable place with no interruptions.
- Have patient bring relative or friend.
- State bad news. Let silence happen.
- Deal with anxiety, confusion and denial.
- Show empathy and understanding.
- Be thorough. Have tests with you.
- Remain honest, but offer realistic hope.
- Give reassurances of continued availability.
- Provide names and numbers of support groups.
- Promise patient won't suffer.
- Involve patient in developing treatment plan.



## **The Last Word**

### ***Other Representative Topics:***

Improving Interpersonal Communication; Understanding Intercultural Communication; Top Notch Customer Service;  
Surefire Sales & Negotiating; Leadership & Communication in the Workplace;  
Creating Winning Advertising & PR Campaigns; Red, White & Blue: The Spirit of America

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