

TIME TO TALK

COMMUNICATION TEACHING VIDEO: FACILITATOR INFORMATION

Introduction

- Attached is an interactive 20 minute video introducing the importance of good communication as a medical student. The presentation includes 3 cases that emphasise the impact of effective communication in clinical practice, and how this relates to the GMC and MSC's 'Achieving Good Medical Practice'.
- Students can watch this video in their own time and it does not require a facilitator, however below are some ways that you can ensure that students are able to make the most of the video, both before and after the session.

Aims of the session

1. To gain an understanding of 'Achieving good medical practice' (GMC and MSC), in particular Domain 3: Communication, Partnership and Teamwork
2. To develop communication skills by introducing common situations that medical students may encounter
3. To understand how effective communication can positively change the outcomes of challenging scenarios

Environment

This video is intended for remote online learning, but can also be used in a small-group seminar format. Students could also complete the session in pairs and discuss throughout, if they are comfortable doing so, and Covid-19 restrictions permit.

Materials

- **Summary sheet (includes placement diary)** - this should be readily available to the students to complete post-session, to restate the main points of the lesson and allow for reflection of their own experiences
- The **slides** are available for students to access after watching the video
- A **transcript** of the video is available for those hard of hearing / needing additional aid
- We recommend creating a **secure discussion forum / board** for your medical school, where students can reflect on their communication experiences (albeit in a confidential manner), ask questions and learn from one another
- Students ideally should be provided with a **name and email address / contact** to direct any concerns or questions

Overview of the session

Introduction (~3.5 minutes)

This gives an overview of the goals of the session, introduces the 'Achieving Good Medical Practice' communication-specific headings, and encourages students to reflect upon their previous experiences of communicating in a clinical environment.

CASE 1 - Teaching Trouble (~3.5 minutes)

- Case 1 introduces a scenario that many students may have found themselves in before; a teaching session that they simply didn't find useful. The case describes how the lead of the session asks a student for informal verbal feedback, and the student is required to speak their thoughts to the 'virtual teaching fellow'.
- This focuses on how honest and constructive communication regarding feedback is vital, as it allows the teaching session lead to reflect upon and improve their session, and also highlights the students ongoing confusion with the topic.
- In real life, many students may just agree that the session was fine, so we wanted to highlight how this may not bring the best outcome, and how they can approach the situation using effective communication skills.

Related 'Achieving Good Medical Practice' guidelines:

TEACHING, TRAINING, SUPPORTING AND ASSESSING - Domain 3, 51

"As a medical student, you'll be asked to give feedback on the quality of your placements and teaching. You must give this feedback when asked, as it will help your medical school to improve the overall quality of the education it provides. You must be fair, constructive and professional in your feedback and make comments based on your own experience. You should try to highlight areas of good practice as well as identifying areas where improvements could be made"

CASE 2 - PPE Predicament (~7 minutes)

- Case 2 involves communicating with a patient who is distressed by a student wearing a mask. The patient has Alzheimer's Disease and is scared by the mask, but the student is unsure why.
- This case highlights the potential challenges associated with wearing a mask during the pandemic, especially for patients that have cognitive difficulties. It also addresses how to overcome communication barriers, and what we can do to make things easier for both ourselves and for patients
- There are 2 videos - one highlighting poor communication and one demonstrating improved skills
- The students should realise the importance of
 - a) eliciting the patients specific concerns
 - b) speaking clearly and carefully with a mask and the importance of non-verbal communication
 - c) empathy and using communication to put patients at ease in difficult situations

Related 'Achieving Good Medical Practice' guidelines:
COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY - Domain 3, 44

"Take into account the patient's language and communication needs and other potential barriers to effective communication (for example, pain or anxiety) and ask for support to help you communicate effectively if necessary"

CASE 3 - Reasoning with a Relative (~4 minutes)

- Case 3 introduces the communication modality of telephone, which is especially prominent this year.
- Whilst talking to a relative on the phone to get a collateral history of one of the inpatients on the ward, the relative insists that she will be coming to visit her father that afternoon. However, due to a local Covid-19 lockdown in the area, visitors to the hospital are not permitted.
- This scenario involves a careful explanation of why the procedures have changed, potentially communicating with upset relatives, and reinstating that the visitor suspension is for the safety of the patients. The student should recognise the importance of empathy and understanding that the relative is obviously worried in this situation.
- It is also discussed how the student could arrange for the relative to speak to the dad on the phone, or to ensure that she is receiving regular updates about her dad from the medical team, as potential compromises to satisfy the relative and patient (that also do not break hospital policies)

Related 'Achieving Good Medical Practice' guidelines:
COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY - Domain 3, 44

"Be polite and considerate to anyone close to the patient, such as relatives, carers and friends at all times – not just during a consultation"

3 MAIN LEARNING POINTS AND SUMMARY (~2.5 minutes)

- 1) Honest and open communication, no matter how difficult, is key**
- 2) When faced with barriers, carefully think about how you can adapt your communication to overcome these**
- 3) Eliciting specific patient and relative concerns early is vital to ensure your communication is appropriate and personalised**

The summary will include these 3 key learning points, signposting to valuable resources to further develop communication skills, thank the students for watching, and encourage them to complete the post-session summary sheet.

Further reading resources included are:

- 'Achieving Good Medical Practice: Guidance for medical students' - GMC, MSC
- 'Good Medical Practice - GMC
- 'Good Medical Practice in Action' - GMC
- Communication-based resources specific to students' own Medical School

Post-session Summary Sheet includes:

- Reminder of 'Achieving Good Medical Practice' domains, and specifics of Domain 3
- Reminder of 3 key messages from 'Time to Talk' Communication teaching video
- Communication Diary (5x 'Placement Day' boxes, for reflection)