Teaching residents effective communication skills

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UC San Diego Health
RETHINKING MEDICAL PHYSICS
What are the most effective methods of improving clinical communication skills?

- Experiential learning
- Structured feedback
- Small group exercises

Aspegren et al. and Smith et al.
1. The Essential Elements of Communication in Medical Encounters (Makoul et al.)

- Build a Relationship with the patient
- Open the Discussion
- Gather Information
- Understand the Patient's Perspective
- Share Information
- Reach Agreement on Problems and Plans
- Provide Closure
Clinical Communication Frameworks

2. Bayer Institute for Health Care Communication E4 Model (Keller et al.)
   - Empathize
   - Engage
   - Educate
   - Enlist
Communication Training Timeline

Clinician-Patient Communication Workshop
UCSD Medical School

1st assessment

Timeline (days)
01 15 20 30-90
Communication Training Timeline

Clinician-Patient Communication Workshop
UCSD Medical School

1st assessment

Radiation Oncology-Specific Communication Strategies Workshop

2nd assessment

Simulated Patient Training

3rd assessment

Timeline (days)
01 15 20 30-90
Simulated Patients

Patient: Robert Adams
Type: Prostate cancer
Characteristics: Non-technical, nervous, reserved

Patient: Jennifer Klogmire
Type: Breast cancer
Characteristics: Tech-savvy, highly educated, inquisitive

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Communication Training Timeline

Clinician-Patient Communication Workshop
UCSD Medical School

Radiation Oncology-Specific Communication Strategies Workshop

3rd assessment

Mentor-Observed Physics Consults

Timeline (days)
01
15
20
30-90
Participant-stated level of confidence was assessed across 5 patient communication categories:

1. speaking with patients
2. using a communication model (the 4 E’s)
3. responding appropriately to patients’ concerns about side effects
4. addressing radiation safety concerns
5. awareness of common questions
Effective Communication Strategies

- Speaking to Patients
- Using the 4 E's
- Responding Appropriately to Patients' Concerns About Side Effects
- Addressing Radiation Safety Concerns
- Awareness of Common Questions

Training Intervention:
- Clinician Patient Communication Workshop
- Rad Onc-Specific Comm Strategies Workshop
- Simulated Patient Training
Effective Communication Strategies

![Training Intervention vs Level of Confidence](image)

**Level of Confidence**

- Clinician Patient Communication Workshop
- Rad Onc-Specific Comm Strategies Workshop
- Simulated Patient Training

- **Faculty**
- **Residents**
Answers to common questions

Asked participants to respond in writing to 5 common questions from patients.

- Assessed at two timepoints
- Scored by faculty physicists
- Significant improvement between pre- and post-training scores
We would really like to see other residency programs implement communication training programs.

- Developing online modules
- Offering train-the-trainer workshops
- Petitioning CAMPEP to include communication training in their accreditation requirements
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RETHINKING MEDICAL PHYSICS

Collaborators

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