

Quality doctor-patient communication for better patient satisfaction in primary care practice

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Doctors' communication skills during consultation play an essential role in patient satisfaction. Good doctor-patient communication was associated with better patient satisfaction with their care, which led to better compliance with advice and treatment and thus better outcomes.¹ In this issue, we published two articles that provided additional insights about the importance of the quality of doctor-patient communication to improve patient satisfaction.^{2,3} Kabir MJ et al. reported that two-thirds of the patients were satisfied with healthcare service providers in Iran, and were most satisfied with the family physicians' behaviour and communication skills. The determinants of patient satisfaction included choosing a previously known family physician, acceptance of the family physician, and a positive attitude towards the importance of having a family physician.² In another local study by Leow HT et al., the perceived length of the consultation exceeding the expected length of the consultation was significantly associated with a higher satisfaction score.³ These two articles suggested that the main elements that may contribute to patient satisfaction were patient perception and attitudes. Therefore, in busy clinic sessions with time constraints, it is fundamental to ensure that quality consultation time is spent to ascertain and manage the expectations and psychosocial needs of the patient for better patient satisfaction.⁴ In the current era of information and communication technology, electronic communication and clarifying patients' needs prior to clinic sessions may also enhance the patient experience during the consultation without increasing the consultation time.⁵

References

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