Effective Health Communication

Instructions for UVa Clinicians
In order to demonstrate competence after completing the Net Learning module on Effective Health Communication:

- complete the following exercises
- provide materials generated to your manager to update your “Ongoing Competency Assessment form”

Competency Activity 1:
Able to find teaching materials appropriate to the learner:

Go to Micromedex Care Notes:

- Search for “Congestive Heart Failure”. Find and print “Discharge Care” This material will print in 12 point type.

(Optional: Note on the printout how the information meets the requirements in the Joint Commission Core Measures. For more information see: JCAHO Core Measures (Intranet - Medical Center employees only).

- Discharge instructions for patients with CHF must include information about:
  - Activity level
  - Diet
  - Follow-up appointment
  - Discharge medications including ACE/ARB medications
  - What to do if symptoms worsen
  - Weight monitoring

Competency Activity 2:
Able to identify strategies to meet barriers to learning

You realize your patient speaks very limited English but is fluent in Portuguese and Spanish and is from Portugal. You are relieved because this same material for Congestive Heart Failure is available translated into Spanish but you want to know more about the country he is from and you also need to arrange for someone to interpret your teaching to the patient.

- Identify the barriers to learning
- Visit the Patient and Family Education website (Intranet - Medical Center employees)
only) to identify strategies to address barriers

- Visit the Culture Clues™ website to develop an awareness of Latino cultural concepts and preferences.
- Identify how to access a live Spanish interpreter or a Portuguese telephone interpreter.

Competency Activity 3:
Able to evaluate the response of the learner

Review of the "Teach-back" method - Providing information isn’t the end of teaching. We need to ensure that the learner understands and can use the information.

- Knowledge can be evaluated by asking the learner to repeat the information in his or her own words.
- Skills can be evaluated through return demonstration.

Application of “Teach-back” Method

Consider the following case and describe to the evaluator what you would have done differently to determine that the family understood the instructions.

A 9-month-old child was seen by her pediatrician for a fever and decreased appetite. She was found to have otitis media and was prescribed amoxicillin. The doctor gave the first dose to the infant in the office, demonstrating step-by-step how to deliver the medicine via syringe.

At home, the father drew up the next dose without removing the syringe cap. He gave the dose to the child who suddenly had difficulty breathing and collapsed. When emergency medical services (EMS) arrived, the child was intubated and transported to a children's hospital. Despite intubation, she could not be adequately ventilated. The tube was removed and intubation was tried again, still without improvement. The infant was then taken to the operating room to undergo bronchoscopy. The syringe cap was found lodged in her trachea. Evaluation in the subsequent days revealed brain death. The infant was removed from life support and died shortly thereafter.
**Competency Activity 4:**
*Able to identify a strategy to increase effectiveness of communication*

We all have unrealized biases and misinformation about others which impact patient interactions and outcomes (including longer visit, delay in care, decreased satisfaction, etc).

An excellent way to become aware of your own bias (positive and negative) is consider various groups and your automatic thoughts about them. Awareness can lead to a different, more effective approach.

- Take a sheet of paper and across the top, write down three any three groups representative of various diverse characteristics.
  (For example - Students, Children, Lawyers)

- Under each heading write the word “all/always”

- Write the first three things that come to mind. Don’t stop to think. Just write.
  (For example - All _________ sleep late)

Why do you think about each group the way you do? Do you have personal experience with any or all of the groups? How do you think your thoughts influence communication?