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Communication Skills for Patient Care using a Dental communication assessment tool by the Graduate Students in an Indian Dental School

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Context: Despite the importance of developing communication skills as a competence in dental education, systematic development of those skills in student practitioners tends to be limited and is often overshadowed by curricular time spent teaching technical skills rather than integrating behavioral and technical abilities. The aim of this study was to test the communication skills training program's effectiveness to identify and address areas in the student's communication for patient care.

Method: A one-group, pre-test, post-test pilot study (n = 17) was conducted amongst third year graduate students of 2014-15 batch. The objectives for the study came from ADEE's Domain II. Calgary Cambridge model was used to design a Dental communication assessment tool that includes Content, Process and Perceptual skills.

Results: The results from this study show that the program did improve the students' communication skills. Patient questionnaire surveys were used to assess the interpersonal skills and most of the patients rated the therapeutic relationship in this study as highly satisfied. The instrument demonstrated good inter examiner reliability before intervention (Cronbach's alpha value of 0.951) and the post intervention (Cronbach's alpha value of 0.957). The process used to determine Content validity and the inter-rater reliability proved to offer structure and consistency to the instrument development.

Conclusion: Therapeutic communication is vital to effective patient-centered care. As clinicians advance from novice to expert in the practice of a specialty, the definition of competence expands, the learner's performance should be assessed according to the appropriate level and complexity of general training and skill. The results support the Content validity and the inter-rater reliability of this checklist as a tool to assess the Communication and interpersonal skills during patient interaction.

Biography

Dr. Sunila B Sangappa aged 40 yrs is working as Associate Professor in the Department of Prosthodontics and Crown & Bridge at JSS Dental College and Hospital, a Constituent College of JSS University, Mysore. She has additional responsibilities of Institutional Coordinator for the Centre for Continuing Dental Education for the faculty and involved in Clinical training of Undergraduate and Postgraduate students in the home institution. She has also undergone Postgraduate Diploma in Health Professions Education in the year 2012 (KLE-UIC) and is also a FAIMER 2014 Fellow. Her special areas of interest include Patient centered practice, Scholarship in teaching and Oral Health Awareness amongst Allied Professions. She has National and International publications and has been awarded the Best Faculty Scientific Paper at two of the National Conferences of her Discipline.

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