

## THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTOR-PATIENT COMMUNICATION IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

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**Abstract:** Doctor-patient communication in the modern clinic is an essential element that permeates all stages of healthcare. This study highlighted the importance of building a solid trusting relationship and demonstrating empathy between doctors and patients, which are essential for effective communication. This communication goes beyond the simple exchange of clinical information, being essential at all stages of medical care, influencing diagnoses, treatments and the patient's experience. The pillars of this relationship are the building of trust and empathy, which improve the quality of service and shared decision-making. Communication is also linked to adherence to treatment, essential for therapeutic success. The text discusses cultural and linguistic barriers, time pressure and the complexity of information as challenges in doctor-patient communication. It concludes that investing in improving the communication skills of healthcare professionals and raising patient awareness is fundamental to promoting quality care in the modern clinic.

**Keywords:** Doctor-patient relationship. Medical communication. Modern clinic.

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between doctors and patients has always been a central pillar in medical practice, but in the modern clinic, doctor-patient communication takes on an even more crucial role. The interaction between healthcare professionals and those seeking assistance is no longer limited to the simple exchange of clinical information; It is an essential element that permeates all stages of medical care<sup>1</sup>. The quality of this communication plays a determining role in obtaining accurate diagnoses, choosing appropriate treatments and promoting a patient-centered care experience. As medicine advances and patients' expectations evolve,

understanding the importance of doctor-patient communication in the modern clinic becomes imperative<sup>2</sup>.

Trust and empathy are the pillars of this relationship. Building trust allows patients to feel comfortable sharing crucial information about their health, while the empathy shown by doctors creates an environment of support and understanding<sup>1</sup>. These aspects not only improve the quality of care, but also directly influence shared decision-making, allowing patients and doctors to work together to choose the best courses of action<sup>3</sup>.

Furthermore, effective communication is also directly linked to treatment adherence, a critical factor for therapeutic success<sup>1</sup>. When patients fully understand their medical conditions and proposed treatment plans, they are more inclined to follow medical advice, which can result in better health outcomes<sup>3</sup>.

In this context, we will examine the influence of building trust and empathy on the quality of care and shared decision-making. Additionally, we will cover the influence of adequate communication on treatment adherence, the impact on the quality of healthcare, common barriers that may arise, and how technology is shaping this vital interaction.

## METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory bibliographic review, organized through an integrative literature review. The collection of scientific data and the systematization of information come from scientific productions published from 2019 to 2023, in Portuguese and English, indexed in the Virtual Health Library (VHL), Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO) and Google Scholar. The collection of information used in the development of the work was based on the proposed theme, as well as its objectives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Doctor-patient communication is a critical component of modern clinical practice and plays a vital role in healthcare. Firstly, the quality of this communication is intrinsically linked to building a solid trusting relationship between doctors and patients<sup>1</sup>. When patients trust their doctors, they are more likely to share detailed information about their symptoms, medical history, and personal concerns. This exchange of information is essential for formulating accurate diagnoses and developing effective treatment plans<sup>2</sup>.

Empathy is another crucial element of doctor-patient communication. Doctors who demonstrate empathy understand their patients' emotions, concerns, and anxieties, which creates a more human and personalized care environment<sup>1</sup>. This is especially important in situations of serious diagnoses or complex treatments, where empathy can help patients face these challenges with greater emotional resilience<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, effective communication is essential for shared decision-making in contemporary medicine. Patients have the right to be informed about their medical conditions, treatment options, and their risks and benefits<sup>3</sup>. When doctors communicate this information in a clear and understandable way, patients are better able to actively participate in decisions about their own health care, which can lead to treatment choices that are more aligned with their needs and values<sup>2</sup>.

There are several positives and negatives that profoundly shape the healthcare experience. Among the positive points, the following stand out:

- **Trust relationship:** effective communication between doctor and patient can establish a solid trust relationship. This creates an environment where patients feel comfortable sharing personal and sensitive information,

allowing for more accurate diagnoses<sup>4</sup>.

- **Shared decision-making:** Open communication empowers patients to actively participate in decisions about their treatment. This can result in more personalized care plans aligned with individual preferences and values<sup>4</sup>.
- **Improved treatment adherence:** when patients fully understand the details of their treatment, they are more likely to follow medical advice, which can lead to better health outcomes and a lower incidence of complications<sup>3</sup>.
- **Promoting emotional well-being:** empathy demonstrated by doctors can reduce patients' anxiety and stress, promoting emotional well-being during the treatment process<sup>2</sup>.
- **Preventing medical errors:** Effective communication between healthcare professionals helps prevent medical errors by ensuring that all team members are aware of the critical details of the patient's treatment<sup>4</sup>.
- Among the positive points, the following stand out:
  - **Cultural and linguistic barriers:** Cultural and linguistic differences can create significant barriers in doctor-patient communication. This can lead to misunderstandings and make it difficult to provide adequate care<sup>1</sup>.
  - **Limited time:** In busy clinical environments, doctors often have little time to dedicate to each patient. This can make complete and in-depth communication difficult, leading to superficial diagnoses and a lack of understanding<sup>5</sup>.
  - **Complexity of information:** in some cases, medical information can be highly complex and difficult to explain in a simple way. This can result in confusion on the part of patients<sup>2</sup>.

- Difficult emotional situations: communicating serious diagnoses or challenging prognoses can be emotionally draining for both doctors and patients<sup>1</sup>.
- Excessive use of technology: communicating serious diagnoses or challenging prognoses can be emotionally draining for both doctors and patients<sup>4</sup>.

Treatment adherence is another area where doctor-patient communication plays a key role. When patients understand the details of their treatments and the expected benefits, they are more likely to follow medical advice consistently. This is essential for therapeutic success and the prevention of health complications<sup>3</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Doctor-patient communication in the modern clinic is a critical component that shapes the quality and effectiveness of healthcare. Positives, such as building trust, shared decision-making, and improving treatment adherence, highlight the importance of effective communication to promote positive health outcomes and a satisfactory experience for patients. However, challenges such as cultural and language barriers, time pressure and information complexity also deserve attention as they can negatively affect this crucial relationship.

Therefore, investing in improving the communication skills of healthcare professionals, as well as raising awareness and educating patients about the importance of this aspect, is essential to ensure that doctor-patient communication continues to play a central role in promoting healthcare quality in the modern clinic.

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